

Seventy-Five Years of Music:

A Music Bonanza

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The '40s

Foundations: Early Arrangers

The early Nassoons not only faced the challenge of establishing a reputation for themselves on and off campus, but also the task of building a repertoire of performable and entertaining music. Things were touch and go at first, as the group relied on arrangements from the Whiffenpoofs and the Princeton Glee Club, whose director Merrill Knapp (a former Whiff and honorary 'Soon) was closely involved on several fronts in the early years. Many of these so-called "traditional" arrangements, which were actually drawn from Knapp's Whiffenpoof days, won enduring popularity, including "**Honey (Slide Trombone)**," "**My Cutie's Due**" and "**Jungletown.**"

However, necessity being the mother of invention, and self-sufficiency being the mother of all necessities for the original Nassoons, there soon came a time when the members began to arrange music for themselves. Thus was born what is perhaps the Nassoons' greatest and most often overlooked tradition: the tradition of original, in-house arrangements. The musical seeds sown in those early days have blossomed into one of the finest repertoires of any college a cappella group. The sheer scale of the achievement is remarkable: setting aside the early records of the 1940s, when nearly all of the material was new, the Nassoons have included *on average* more than five new arrangements on each biannual album. No album has ever included fewer than two. Nor has the pace slackened over time: the albums over the last 25 years – since 1990 – have averaged more than six new arrangements each, with none having fewer than five. Today's arrangers and music directors truly have the luxury of standing on the shoulders of giants, and the Nassoons are in the enviable position of being able to accept and reject new material in light of the outstanding merits of past achievements. The group begins its fourth quarter-century with one of the largest, most diverse and consistently high-quality repertoires in the college singing world, and each of the recent albums includes arrangements from every decade of the group's history, the old alongside the new.

The following pages chronicle that tradition, listing the new arrangements that appeared on each album and providing a bit of information about where each song came from, how it came to the Nassoons, and something of where it fits into the history of Nassoon music. The recorded arrangements were selected as those that the various music directors believed to be the best and most representative of their eras; a comprehensive treatment would be an enormous and, at this stage, probably an impossible task. The information included is necessarily abbreviated, subjective, and incomplete, but hopefully the reader will not only find a collection of interesting facts and anecdotes, but also gain a sense of perspective and occasional awe at the good fortune the Nassoons have had in obtaining their most precious commodity: beautiful music. We begin with the heroic efforts of four early arrangers, along with the notable contributions of several others, which taken together form the foundation and core of the Nassoon repertoire.

James Lotspeich '44

As I Remember You (John MacFadyen '46, 1942) 1942, recorded again '47, '51, '55, '59, '69

Do You Believe in Lovin' 1942

East of the Sun (Brooks Bowman '35, 1935) 1961, recorded again '65, '72, '78, '84, '88, '92, '96, '00, '10, '14, '20

My Gal Sal (Paul Dresser, 1905) 1942

Nassoon Signature (Roxanne Twitchell, 1942) 1942, also '72, '94

Old Rockin' Chair (Hoagy Carmichael, 1929) 1947, recorded again '53, '59, '67, '76, '84

Poinciana (Simon/Bernier, 1936) 1947

Sunday Down in Caroline (Symes/Neiburg/Levinson, 1933) 1942

Thank God They're Not Rationing You (William Zinsser '44, 1942) 1942

The only Nassoon arranger of the pre-war period, Lotspeich accounted for nearly all of the original arrangements on the first album (released in 1942), and continued to contribute to the repertoire for many years. Heavily influenced by '30s-era singing groups such as the Merry Macs and the Modernaires, Lotspeich was among the first to realize the potential of the signature Nassoon 5-part sound, and helped the Nassoons break from the barbershop style favored by the Whiffenpoofs with songs gleaned from his "family collection" of records: "My Gal Sal," "Sunday Down in Caroline," and others. His arrangement of Brooks Bowman's 1935 Triangle smash "East of the Sun" (from the show *Stags at Bay*), written after the war and picked up by the Nassoons in the late '50s, remains one of the staples of the repertoire. The solo verse (after Tommy Dorsey's version featuring the young Frank Sinatra) was added by Wat Stewart '45, who was singing at that time with the Palmer Squares. Two other Lotspeich charts – the ballad "As I Remember You" and the war-era parody "Thank God They're Not Rationing You" – also come from Triangle; both were featured in 1942's *Time and Again*. "Poinciana" comes from a less conventional source: Lotspeich first heard the tune in a recording by Glenn Miller's Air Force Band while he was on an amphibious landing ship in the Pacific during the Second World War. The arrangement was worked out without a piano, sent to the Nassoons, and the arranger heard it performed for the first time at his 5th reunion in 1947.

While he is most distinctive for his elegant treatment of broadly-phrased ballads such as "East," "Poinciana," and "As I Remember You," the slyly witty barbershop number "Do You Believe in Lovin'" (with harmony "improvised" by the group, then written down and refined by Lotspeich) was a favorite of early Nassoon fans, and his arrangement of Hoagy Carmichael's "Old Rockin' Chair" epitomizes what became known as "brown" harmonies. The 1942 recording of the brief but charming "Nassoon Signature," composed by Roxanne "Riggy" Twitchell (Mrs. Richard Sly '44), is quoted at the beginning of the 1972 and 1994 albums.

Donald Finnie '47

Come Right In (Finnie) 1965

Deep in My Heart (John MacFadyen '46, 1946) 1947

Goodnight Little Girl (Hays/Macy, 1898) 1949, recorded again '51, '55, '65, '72, '06, '12

Minstrel Boy (trad. Irish) 1947, recorded again '63

People Know (Ayer/Brown, 1912) 1947, recorded again '61, '69

Shame On You (Smith/Larkins, 1904) 1947

Sweet Georgia Brown (Casey/Pinkard, 1925) 1951, recorded again '55, '63, '69, '72, '78, '84

You Gotta Have Everything (Mark Lawrence, 1946) 1947, recorded again '53, '57, '61, '65, '72, '78, '86

Described by one contemporary as a “Vince Lombardi-like” taskmaster, Finnie was appointed as the first music director of the post-war days by the original Nassoons after spending some time with a spin-off group called the Nass Hounds. In that capacity he faced the twin challenges of reviving the pre-war repertoire and continuing the tradition of writing original arrangements. He handled both tasks admirably, transcribing from recordings, drawing music from the University’s library collection and appropriating tunes from campus musical theater groups such as Triangle and Theater Intime. Where Lotspeich had a taste for ballads, Finnie’s choice of songs might best be characterized as cheeky. Numbers such as “Goodnight Little Girl,” “People Know (That You Are Married)” and “Shame On You (Deacon Johnson)” are hilariously irreverent, and were certainly risqué for their time – although the recent revival of “Goodnight Little Girl” is perhaps in questionable taste.

Still, just as Lotspeich found success outside of the “East of the Sun” genre, Finnie displays a more sensitive side on the 19th-century Irish folk song “Minstrel Boy” and the ballad “Deep in My Heart,” which was taken from the 1946 Theater Intime spring musical and first sung by the Nass Hounds. His most enduring arrangements were Triangle’s “You Gotta Have Everything,” from 1946’s *Clear the Track* (with lyrics updated every decade or so), and the spirited “Sweet Georgia Brown,” best-known as the theme song for the Harlem Globetrotters basketball team. “Come Right In,” written by his wife for the Nassoons, has become a kind of Nassoon theme song, and is still sung to new bids at the time of their induction.

Herbert Spencer '49

Blue Skies (Irving Berlin, 1927) 1949

Mandy (Irving Berlin, 1919) 1961

Mary Ann’s/Floatin’ Down (MacDonald/Carroll, 1913; Frost/Klickmann, 1919) 1949, recorded again '55, '59, '67, '86, '90

Teasin’ (Mack/von Tilzer, 1904) 1949, recorded again '57, '61, '69, '92, '00, '08

Toidy-Toid and Toid (Ben Ryan, 1926) 1957, recorded again '63

Also instrumental in reviving the pre-war repertoire was Herb Spencer, who edited and published three editions of the “black book” and added several barbershop-style arrangements of his own. It is said that when he first heard the melody for “Mary Ann’s” he preserved it for future use by writing it on the only available surface: the wall. Coupled by Ham Hamill with “Floatin’ Down,” another barbershop standard, that tune remained popular for decades, as did “Teasin’,” the Nassoons’ “Ode to Coy,” if you will. Rounding out the barbershop numbers is “Toidy-Toid and Toid,” a rollicking parody of life on the East Side of Manhattan which attracted countless spurious verses. Spencer also shows an affinity for ballads on Irving Berlin’s “Blue Skies” and “Mandy,” one of many arrangements from the '40s to resurface in the late '50s.

Chalmers (Ham) Hamill '51

All the Things You Are (Hammerstein/Kern, 1940) 1949, recorded again '61, '65, '72, '82, '86, '90, '92, '98

Cakewalk 1955

Charleston Rag (Mack/Johnson, 1923) 1953

Deep River (trad. spiritual) 1959, recorded again '65, '76

Exactly Like You (Fields/McHugh, 1930) 1949, recorded again '53, '57, '61, '65, '69, '76, '80, '84, '88, '92, '94, '02, '12

Fifteen Men on a Dead Man's Chest (trad. English folk song) 1949, recorded again '61

The Foggy Foggy Dew (trad. English folk song) 1949, recorded again '55, '59, '65, '69

Jeepers Creepers (Mercer/Warren, 1938) 1951, recorded again '55, '57, '61

Mountain Lullaby 1949, recorded again '53, '59, '65, '86

Rollin' to de Sea (trad. spiritual) 1961, recorded again '67

September in the Rain (Dubin/Warren, 1937) 1951, recorded again '57

Sit Down, You're Rockin' the Boat (Frank Loesser, 1950) 1953

What Is This Thing Called Love? (Cole Porter, 1930) 1951

A familiar presence at Nassoon reunions and gatherings, smoking his pipe and grinning enigmatically, Hamill is the most prolific of Nassoon arrangers. Music director of the group for several years, he was known to spend nights at the piano on his return visits to campus, pounding out songs with other arrangers and interested onlookers. The works in his opus have collectively been recorded fifty times at the time of this writing, dwarfing the total of any other arranger, and the breadth of his talent is reflected in the diversity and quality of that body of work.

It is perhaps this diversity that makes Hamill most important to the history of Nassoon music. A stylistic corner was turned in the early '50s as arrangers began to experiment with more sophisticated vocal writing, allowing voice parts to act as accompaniment instead of just harmonizing a melody. Few arrangements capture the flavor of swing jazz quite as well as "Exactly Like You" (from the 1930 musical *Sugar Babies*), and few can rival "All the Things You Are" for delicate beauty or "Mountain Lullaby" and "Sit Down, You're Rockin' the Boat" (from *Guys and Dolls*) for tongue-in-cheek humor. Hamill also contributed the spiritual "Deep River" – which, along with "All the Things," is still used during the tryout process – and folk songs such as "The Foggy Foggy Dew" and the dirge-like pirate's lament "Fifteen Men on a Dead Man's Chest." The "Charleston Rag" was once performed by the Nassoons with members of the Lester Lanin orchestra.

Other Nassoon Arrangements

Abadaba/Jungletown (Fields/Donovan, 1914), arr. Buck '46, 1951, recorded again '57, '61, '74, '78, '86, '92, '00

Tigertown Blues, (Richard Armstrong '46, 1946) & arr. Armstrong '46, 1947, recorded again '51, '53, '55, '57, '59, '61, '63, '65, '67, '69, '78, '84, '88, '92, '94, '98, '02, '06, '14

Given that these arrangements have collectively been recorded nearly 30 times it may seem odd to lump them together in an "other" category. Still, as one-time contributions by clearly gifted

writers, these gems can be considered as exceptions to the rule of “house arrangers” which dominated the early repertoire-building effort.

Jim Buck arranged “Abadaba Honeymoon” for the Suburban Squires, a Princeton-area a cappella group which he directed after graduation, and combined it with the traditional arrangement of “Jungletown” that he had sung as a Nassoon. He provided the medley to the group at their request in 1951, and it became a classic, the barbershop harmonies combining with a slapstick performance to make it a crowd-pleaser for audiences young and old.

Dick Armstrong composed the “Tigertown Blues” during the Second World War while he was in the Navy Supply Corps School at Harvard. Originally titled the “Senior House Blues,” after the house where he lived with several of his classmates, the tune was written and arranged for a quartet of ensigns (including himself) which disbanded at graduation. Upon joining the Nassoons after the war, Armstrong rewrote the words and taught the arrangement to the postwar group, which debuted it at their first public concert in November 1946. The lament to an all-male campus is not only a Nassoon standard – it was recorded on a remarkable 10 consecutive albums, and was considered the Nassoons’ theme song for many years – but a Princeton standard as well, appearing among the *Carmina Prinetonia* that are published by the University.

Outside Arrangements

Perfidia (Leeds/Dominguez, 1939), arr. Schuman ’42, 1942, recorded again ’47, ’53, ’59, ’63, ’67, ’78, ’84, ’88, ’90, ’92, ’94, ’96, ’98, ’00, ’02, ’04, ’06, ’08, ’10, ’12, ’14, ’16, ’18, ’20, ’22.

“Perfidia” was donated by non-Nassoon Jack Schuman ’42, who was stationed with the army in New Jersey at the time. He taught the arrangement, which is modeled after the Modernaires’ popular 1941 recording with the Glenn Miller Orchestra, from a piano without the benefit of written music. One of the first (and best) examples of a five-part Nassoon arrangement, the circumstances of its first performance have become the stuff of legend, and it remains the group’s signature song. Its recording history mirrors that of “Tigertown Blues”: where “Tigertown” was a staple of the early records, appearing on every Nassoon album from 1951 to 1969, “Perfidia” has appeared on every album from 1988 to the present, recently surpassing “Tigertown” (which remains active) as the most-recorded Nassoon arrangement. The repeat section – raised a half-step and with the driving “oom-bah” bass line – was added in the late ’50s.

J. Merrill Knapp

Alexander’s Ragtime Band (Irving Berlin, 1911) 1942

Away Down in My Heart 1942

Honey (Slide Trombone) (Williams/van Alstyne, 1912) 1942, recorded again ’49, ’59, ’84, ’88, ’92

I Had a Dream Dear (Daniels/Blackton/Brown/ Rice, 1908) 1942

I Said It’s Good 1942

Midnight Choo-Choo (Irving Berlin) 1947, recorded again ’53, ’59, ’63

My Cutie’s Due (Bilbo/Robin/von Tilzer, 1926) 1942, recorded again ’55

The Old Ark's a-Moverin' (trad. spiritual) 1942

Knapp took these arrangements from the Whiffenpoofs songbook and adapted them for use by the Princeton Glee Club and the Nassoons – a few of them he learned from Prescott Bush, the father and grandfather of the future presidents. “**Alexander's Ragtime Band**” and “**Midnight Choo Choo**” came to the Nassoons via the Glee Club, while the others were apparently given to the group directly. “**The Old Ark's a-Moverin'**” was arranged by Marshall Bartholomew for the Whiffs, and published by G. Schirmer in the *Songs of Yale* collection. Knapp also arranged several songs for the *Carmina Prinetonia* collection which were picked up by the Nassoons in the '60s.

Elliot Forbes

Lottery Blues 1942

Oh By Jingo (Brown/Von Tilzer, 1919) 1942, recorded again '51, '55, '59, '65

Elliot Forbes was Merrill Knapp's assistant at the Princeton Glee Club and went on to direct the Harvard Glee Club for many years.

Miscellaneous

Adios (Madriguera/Woods/Del Campo, 1931) 1955, recorded again '57, '63, '80

Mandy Lee (Thurland Chattaway, c. 1900) 1947

My Castle on the Nile/Black Salome (Cole/Johnson, 1901; Murphy/Wynn, 1908) 1949

Tear It Down 1949, recorded again '57

“**Mandy Lee**” and “**Tear it Down**” were collectively arranged by the group in “wood shedding” sessions, and later transcribed by Don Finnie. The medley of “**My Castle on the Nile**” and “**Black Salome**,” often attributed to Finnie, actually comes from a traditional arrangement that was transcribed by Dean Allen '47. Although “**Adios**” has been attributed to Robert Morgan '56, he says that it originated well before his time.

The '50s

Nassoon music in the '50s was dominated by two arrangers, although previously unrecorded arrangements by Hamill, Finnie and others appeared alongside the newer material on several records. The two contemporary arrangers were John Miller and Robert Morgan '56, each of whom came to the Nassoons in a unique way and made a significant and lasting contribution to the repertoire. Miller was neither a Nassoon nor even a Princeton student: he was a student at the Westminster Choir College in Princeton. During his senior year he was playing bass, singing, and arranging for a vocal trio in a small dance band. Morgan joined the band early in his freshman year and was “enthralled” by the trio's harmonies. He later learned that Miller arranged a cappella music for a group of Princeton singers called the Nassoons. At his friend's suggestion, Morgan began to write for the 'Soons as well, and after teaching the group several arrangements during his sophomore year he was invited to join, thus becoming perhaps the only member to be admitted without officially trying out.

A reviewer in 1956 divided the Nassoon repertoire into three parts: barbershop, “college type” (or “scat”), and ballad tunes, and although those categories often overlap they provide a useful way of thinking about the state of the repertoire at the time. Scat favorites like Finnie’s **“Sweet Georgia Brown”** and barbershop tunes like Spencer’s **“Toidy-Toid and Toid”** were first recorded in the ’50s, but the focus was on achieving a “modern” sound, which meant that the bulk of the new arrangements were ballads. Miller and Morgan proved to be masters of the genre, turning out unforgettable tenor features such as **“The Four Winds and the Seven Seas”** and **“While My Lady Sleeps.”** The technique of allowing a soloist to sing the verse over a flowing background and introducing a group section in the bridge or refrain persists up until this day, and other innovations such as the bass section solo in **“The Things We Did Last Summer”** (prescient of Peterson’s **“Fools Rush In”**) and more complex, layered harmonies made this a defining period for the development of the Nassoon sound.

1951

Nightherder’s Song (trad. Western folk song), arr. Miller. A later, more enduring arrangement of this cowboy song by Kent Mullikin ’64 first appeared on the 1965 album; that version features an altered melody and newly-composed lyrics for the third verse. Miller’s original has a stronger western flavor, with a twangy solo (including whistling) and jaunty accompaniment.

The Nightingale (trad. folk song), arr. Miller. A haunting folk song with an Irish flavor – in the tradition of Finnie’s “Minstrel Boy” – this arrangement is notable for the exclusive attention that it gives to the soloist: the background is made up entirely of flowing “oos” which don’t interrupt the solo’s lead.

Pilgrim of Love (Young/Herbert, 1910), arranger unknown. This irreverent parody of monastic life is taken from the operetta *Naughty Marietta*, and according to Finnie the arrangement was “from that show.” Whatever its origins (Hamill is a prime suspect), the performance is a delightful and dizzying play on words, from the playful introduction to the classically-derived central motive to the final major chord resolution.

Roll, Jordan, Roll (trad. spiritual), arr. Miller, recorded again ’57. The lesser known of Miller’s two spiritual arrangements, this one is truer to the genre than the more intricate “Swing Low.” The arrangement is in the form of a call and response between soloist and group, with a recurring refrain.

Swing Low, Sweet Chariot (trad. spiritual), arr. Miller, recorded again ’57, ’61, ’65, ’69; revised by Urquhart ’74, recorded again ’74, ’82, ’86, ’90. Fans of more recent, contemplative recordings of this spiritual will be surprised to hear the original, which is much more lively. Urquhart softened the opening chords and tinkered with the chorus section.

1953

The Four Winds and the Seven Seas (David/Rodney, 1949), arr. Miller, recorded again ’57, ’59, ’63, ’72, ’76. Miller’s most enduring arrangement showcases the traits for which

he was most distinctive: rich ensemble writing alternating with a lyrical tenor solo accompanied by a flowing background.

Laura (Mercer/Raksin, 1944), arr. Miller, recorded again '57, '63, '69. One of Miller's true gems, this lovely ballad from the 1944 movie of the same name is graced not only with a beautiful melody but memorable and evocative lyrics. Miller inverts his usual practice by giving the verse to the group and assigning the bridge to the soloist.

Out of Nowhere (Heyman/Green, 1931), arr. Miller, recorded again '57. From the same songwriting team that gave us "I Cover the Waterfront," "Out of Nowhere" lacks the easy lyricism of that popular standard, but features lush harmonies by Miller reminiscent of Lotspeich's best work.

St. James Infirmary (Joe Primrose, 1930), arr. Ford '54, recorded again '57. This rather long and bleak dirge must have held a curious place in the generally romantic and lighthearted repertoire of the time, but its very distinctiveness, featuring a strong solo and severe group writing, kept it active for years after its debut. The tune, derived from an Irish folk song called "The Unfortunate Rake," also forms the basis for "The Streets of Laredo," which has been arranged twice for the Nassoons, by Mac Mellor '63 and Alex Fiorentino '08.

Steps Song/Integer Vitae (Ernest Carter 1888, 1894; F. F. Flemming c. 1810/Quintus Horatius Flaccus), *Carmina Princetonia* arrangement, recorded again '63, '69, '80, '90, '94, '00, '12. Traditionally sung by Princeton seniors the night before graduation, this popular reunions song is a perfect showcase for the male collegiate sound. While the "Steps Song" is unique to Princeton, "Integer Vitae" is a widely used college tune with words taken from the 22nd Ode of Horace. A verse translation by Gordon R. Harrison '68 follows:

*Blameless in conduct, innocent of outrage
What need for lances, bows from far-off Carthage
What need for quivers, filled with arrows poisoned
Fuscus, what need have I?*

Who Knows? (Where I'm Going), arr. Miller, recorded again '59, '67. Miller continued the Nassoon tradition of adapting Triangle material with this ballad, taken from 1950's *Too Hot For Toddy*. Mistitled "Here Goes" on the '53 record, the arrangement is handicapped by an occasionally clumsy melody, but features Miller's distinctively rich harmonies.

1955

I Got a Nickel, arr. Miller, recorded again '59, '65. Miller shows a playful side in this narrative scat tune which traces the path from lucre to bliss: "I got a nickel, I got a beer, I got a jag..."

The Things We Did Last Summer (Cahn/Styne, 1946), arr. Morgan '56, recorded again '59, '65, '72. The first Nassoon arrangement to give the melody to the bass section, this sentimental tune was arranged by Morgan partly because it evoked the cloistered atmosphere of

pre-coed Princeton. Apart from the placement of the melody the arrangement is very much in the ballad style prevalent at the time.

While My Lady Sleeps, (Kaper/Khan, 1941), arr. Morgan '56, recorded again '61, '67, '76, '86, '94, '04, '08, '12, '16. Morgan shows his debt to Miller most clearly in this, his most enduring arrangement. Arranged as a feature for tenor and classmate Bob Cowden '56, it puts the floating solo lines and layered harmonies that Miller had pioneered to their most satisfying use. Morgan first heard the song performed by a band in Nashville. Cowden had an unfortunate habit of intentionally mangling the words in rehearsal, and the original recording reflects that tendency. The song was featured in the 1941 musical *The Chocolate Soldier*.

1957

Blue Moon (Rodgers/Hart, 1934), arr. Morgan '56, recorded again '61, '67. This song is more familiar to recent Nassoon fans from its incarnation as a “greaser”-style dance number – that version first appeared on the 1974 album. The original, reflecting the song’s origins as a ballad, is much slower and features the melody sung in parallel fourths – an unusual and striking effect.

Christopher Robin (Milne/Fraser-Simon, 1935), arr. Morgan '56, recorded again '63, '67, '72. Morgan arranged this whimsical prayer, based on the poem “Vespers” from A. A. Milne’s *When We Were Very Young*, to impress a certain female at the Princeton Theological Seminary. The religious theme failed to win her, but the arrangement remained popular for years afterward.

Long Ago and Far Away (Gershwin/Kern, 1944), Morgan '56, recorded again '65. Originally sung as a quartet, this difficult piece was rescued and commandeered as a group number by Bob Cowden '56. A sentimental ballad in the tradition of “Laura” and “Out of Nowhere,” the song is not to be confused with the James Taylor tune of the same name, which was arranged by Jeff Shaw '73 and first appeared on the 1974 album.

1959

Fools Rush In (Mercer/Bloom, 1940), arr. Peterson '60, recorded again '67, '74, '80, '96, '04, '12. Morgan pioneered the practice of featuring the bass section in “The Things We Did Last Summer,” but it was left to Peterson to perfect the idea. “Fools” is one of his most beautiful arrangements, second only to “I Cover the Waterfront” in popularity. It highlights above all his ability to maintain the line of a melody as it is passed seamlessly between the bass section, the tenor soloist, and the entire group.

I Remember You (Mercer/Schertzinger, 1942), arr. Peterson '60, recorded again '63. The lesser known of Peterson’s three ballads, this arrangement is harmonically darker than “Fools” and “Waterfront,” and the extensive use of sevenths and suspensions creates a constant tension which moves the song forward, much as a barbershop performance might – though the song otherwise owes little to the barbershop tradition. The arrangement was reportedly done on a piano in the second entryway of Brown Hall.

Scandalize My Name (traditional spiritual), traditional arrangement, recorded again '65. This spiritual, popularized by Paul Robeson, gained some currency during the McCarthy period. The arrangement is distinctive for using a call and response interaction between the soloist and group.

The '60s

Perhaps the Nassoons were never blessed with as many gifted arrangers at one time as in the early '60s. The 1961 and 1963 records feature the finest arrangements of Dick Peterson '60 along with the classic work of Mac Mellor '63 and Kent Mullikin '64. A list of the new arrangements on those records is a roll call of sentimental favorites: "**I Cover the Waterfront,**" "**Shenandoah,**" "**Danny Boy,**" "**If I Fall In Love,**" and "**Steal Away,**" among others. Mullikin added "**The Land of the Sea and Sun,**" "**Nightherder's Song**" and "**I Wish You Love**" on the '65 and '67 records, and Mellor's breathtaking "**Scarlet Ribbons**" rounds out the set. What is more, the early '60s also saw the first recording of Lotspeich's "**East of the Sun**" and the transformation of "**Perfidia**" into its current form, with the addition of the key change and driving bass line. Also of note was a new focus on the songs of Princeton, with Peterson's arrangement of the "**1905 Reunion Song**" joining traditional arrangements of "**The Orange and the Black,**" "**Come Ye Men of Princeton**" and the "**Princeton Medley**" of fight songs.

The output was less dramatic in the latter half of the decade, but the first hints of a new direction can be found in the albums of that period. Rock and roll music exploded onto the scene and diversified into countless sub-genres during the 1960's, and the arrangements by Jack Howe '69 of "**Cherish,**" and the Beatles classic "**Yesterday,**" along with Roger Bates '67's rendering of the folk favorite "**Today**" were the first of their kind. Generally simpler harmonically and less thickly textured than earlier works, this new breed of arrangement marks the beginning of an effort to come to terms with the recent seismic changes in popular culture – one that is only hinted at in this chapter of Nassoon history. Not to be overlooked is a lovely arrangement of the bossa nova classic "**The Girl From Ipanema**" by David Robinson '67.

1961

1905 Reunion Song (Irving MacNeice '05, 1957), arr. Peterson '60, recorded again '72, '76, '82, '96, '02. Irving MacNeice '05 sent this poignant reunions song to the Nassoons for arrangement and Peterson was quick to oblige, turning out a lovely block arrangement in traditional collegiate style. His arrangement appears in the 1967 edition of the *Carmina Princetonia*, and is often sung by Nassoons past and present to commemorate the passing of one of our own.

Go Down Moses (trad. spiritual), arr. Peterson '60, recorded again '67. While the Nassoons have performed many spirituals effectively and even movingly, there is something incongruous about hearing a group of Ivy Leaguers croon "let my people go." Questions of propriety aside, the arrangement features a dark and severe call and response section in alternation with a surprisingly delicate refrain.

I Cover the Waterfront (Heyman/Green, 1933), arr. Peterson, '60, recorded again '65, '72, '78, '82, '86, '90, '94, '00, '06, '12, '16. Possibly the finest five-part arrangement

in the repertoire, Peterson's treatment of the Heyman/Green standard balances quartet, solo and group parts with great finesse. The chromatic ending has been widely quoted in subsequent arrangements, among them Mellor's "Danny Boy" and Mullikin's "Nightherder's Song."

The Orange and the Black (Sadie Ray/Clarence B. Mitchell 1888, 1894), *Carmina Princetonia* arrangement, recorded again '67, '78. Formerly Princeton's official alma mater, this reunions song weds a previously existing melody to a Princetonian text, and is popular among alumni from all classes. The *Carmina Princetonia* arrangement was done by Ernest Carter 1888.

Tenderly (Lawrence/Gross, 1947), arr. Morgan '56, recorded again '67. This lovely ballad was a personal favorite of Morgan's. The accompaniment for the soloist consists largely of the group echoing the lyrics as he sings them; other interesting features include the striking barbershop-influenced chord at the end of the quintet section, and the unison octaves in the tenor and bass that conclude the piece.

1963

After Dark (trad.) This piece – a lighthearted, mid-tempo barbershop number in the tradition of "Do You Believe in Lovin'" and "Goodnight, Little Girl" – might more plausibly have been included on the first Nassoon album than in the midst of the complex harmonic innovations of the early sixties. The arrangement was apparently taken from a published barbershop collection.

Come Ye Men of Princeton (Ballin '09/Hewitt '07), *Carmina Princetonia* arrangement, recorded again '74, '84. The decades keep changing, but the "golden days of glory" stay the same. Coeducation has caused this reunions classic to fall out of favor. The *Carmina Princetonia* arrangement was done by Merrill Knapp.

Danny Boy (trad. Irish/lyrics by F. E. Weatherly, 1913), arr. Mellor '63, recorded again '67; revised by Urquhart '74, recorded again '76, '80, '84, '90, '98, '00, '04, '08, '10, '14. Probably the best-known tenor feature in the English-speaking world, "Danny Boy," a text set to the traditional Irish "Londonderry Air," has been a vehicle for great soloists since its inception. Mellor adds a harmonically daring showcase for the group in the second verse, which was later revised by Urquhart to reflect a smoother, warmer sound.

If I Fall In Love (Albert Selden, 1952), arr. Mullikin '64, recorded again '69, '80. The actual title of this song is "When I Fall in Love," but it was misnamed by freshman Mullikin, who didn't have a copy of the words at hand (the title appears correctly on the 1969 record). The elegant arrangement was written at the suggestion of Pete Clark '63 and later became the theme song of the V squad. Mullikin revised the original arrangement several times.

September Song (Anderson/Weill, 1938), arr. Mellor '63, recorded again '00. Mellor notes that the "brevity and simplicity" of this arrangement can be attributed to the fact that it was written during the academic year. Nevertheless, his sensitive treatment of the hit from *Knickerbocker Holiday* stands out as one of his loveliest, if more conventional, settings.

Shenandoah (trad. American folk song), arr. Mellor '63, recorded again '67; revised by Urquhart '74, recorded again '74, '78, '92, '96, '98, '02, '12, '18. Mellor began arranging folk music as a freshman after being discouraged by Peterson from treating rock and roll. "Shenandoah," incongruously written on a beach in Jamaica, was his first effort. The arrangement was originally a tenor vehicle similar in many ways to "Danny Boy," although it has often been performed by a bass soloist. The group writing in the second verse, with Urquhart's revisions to the final bars, is some of the loveliest in the repertoire.

Steal Away (trad. spiritual), arr. Peterson '60, recorded again '67, '74, '78, '90, '96, '08, '14. Spirituals have always played an important if underappreciated role in Nassoon music: Merrill Knapp included several in the original repertoire, and great arrangers like Ham Hamill ("Deep River") and John Miller ("Swing Low, Sweet Chariot") added to the collection of sacred songs. Widely performed by choruses, "Steal Away" is one of the best-known gospel hymns. Peterson's treatment is uncharacteristically straightforward, allowing the powerful text to ring out in a dialogue between the high and low voices.

1965

Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes (trad. English/lyrics by Ben Jonson, c. 1610), arr. Mellor '63. This folk melody, wedded to a 17th-century poem by Ben Jonson, was a popular college tune in the nineteenth century. Mellor's arrangement has an almost hymn-like quality, with uncharacteristically straightforward block harmonies and a brief tenor solo taken straight from the John Miller playbook. One wonders if the choice of song was prompted by Peterson, who later pursued a career as a distinguished Jonson scholar.

In the Still of the Night (Cole Porter, 1937), arr. Morgan '56. Morgan returned to Princeton as a teaching assistant in the music department in 1959 and wrote this arrangement at Peterson's request. It is one of his most difficult works, and took several years to become established in the repertoire. Unfortunately, the challenging nature of the piece causes the recorded performance to suffer from a certain choppiness. Not to be confused with the doo-wop tune of the same name that first appeared on the 2006 album.

The Land of the Sea and Sun (Irving Burgie, 1961), arr. Mullikin '64, recorded again '69, '74, '82. This "West Indian love song" was popularized by Harry Belafonte, and the arrangement, inspired by fond memories of tours to Nassau in the early '60s, falls squarely in the ballad tradition of "The Four Winds and the Seven Seas" and "While My Lady Sleeps."

Liza (George Gershwin, 1929), arr. Mullikin '64. As music director Mullikin inaugurated the practice of having quartets from within the group perform during sets in order to give the other voices a chance to rest. Misprinted as "Lisa" on the album sleeve, his arrangement of this delightful Gershwin tune was inspired by a rendition by the Duke Harlequins.

Nightherder's Song (trad. Western folk song), arr. Mullikin '64, recorded again '69, '74, '80, '90. This cowboy lullaby was arranged in an effort to improve on a version sung by the Yale Duke's Men. It differs significantly from the earlier Nassoon arrangement by John Miller that appears on the 1951 album (which Mullikin hadn't heard), and uses a somewhat

different melody. The inspiration for the contrapuntal trio came from Mellor's "Streets of Laredo"; Mullikin envisioned a solo-duet-trio progression and so was obliged compose original lyrics for a third verse, which came to him "in the still of the night as if in a dream." The bass pedal and ascending chords were modeled after Miller's "Four Winds" and Morgan's "Christopher Robin."

The Streets of Laredo (trad. Irish/words anon., c. 1860), arr. Mellor '63. Arranged on the beach in Nassau during Spring Break (a favorite workshop: Mellor had written "Danny Boy," "Scarlet Ribbons" and "Shenandoah" on previous beaches), this cowboy tune, derived from an Irish folk song called "The Unfortunate Rake," flips the "Scarlet Ribbons" concept on its head; the arrangement begins with a trio performing in front of the group and ends with a soloist. The "St. James Infirmary Blues," arranged by Jerry Ford '54, is derived from the same tune. A later arrangement of the same song by Alex Fiorentino '08 appears on the 2008 album.

1967

Dream (Johnny Mercer, 1945), arr. Robinson '67. Another example of the late-60s "quartet" tradition. Robinson based his arrangement of this whimsical Johnny Mercer tune on the version by the popular 40's-era quartet The Pied Pipers, which was a big hit in 1945.

The Girl From Ipanema (Jobim/Gimbell deMoraes, 1964), arr. Robinson '67, recorded again '69, '78, '84, '88. A #5 hit and Grammy winner for saxophonist Stan Getz and vocalist Astud Gilberto in 1964, this famous Brazilian bossa nova features lush harmonies and (since 1969) a rare foreign language solo (the Portuguese title, "A Garota de Ipanema," is used on the 1969 record). A later arrangement of the song by Robert Olson '11 appears on the 2010 album; Olson quotes Robinson's group writing in the bridge.

I Wish You Love (Beach, 1957/Trenet, 1943; from the French '*Que reste-t-il de nos amours?*'), arr. Mullikin '64, recorded again '92, '96, '02, '08, '14. Also performed as a quartet on the 1967 record, this arrangement is based on the performance by the Eligibles. It was later transcribed by Robinson and has become a sentimental favorite of the group. The opening line was rewritten from the original: "Good-bye, no use leading with our chins," proving that Mullikin's sense of style stretched beyond musical matters.

Princeton Medley (Kenneth S. Clark '05, 1910/Hewitt '07/Osborn '07, 1906), *Carmina Princetonia* arrangements, recorded again '98, 04. A rousing medley of the traditional Princeton fight songs "Goin' Back" and the "Princeton Cannon Song." The *Carmina Princetonia* arrangements are by Merrill Knapp; the Nassoons have used a slightly modified transcription by Jack Serabian '78 and Tim Heidmann '80 since the original score was lost in the late '70s.

Scarlet Ribbons (Segal/Danzig, 1949), arr. Mellor '63, recorded again '72. Mellor carries the device of a "group within a group" (also featured in "The Streets of Laredo") to its logical conclusion in this ballad, building up to an entire quintet which "solos" in front of the group's flowing accompaniment. The finished product is justly described on the liner notes to the 1967 album as "perhaps the most beautiful and intricate of Nassoon arrangements."

1969

Cherish (Terry Kirkman, 1966), arr. Howe '69/Kaspers '70. Arranged as a “natural” for the Nassoons, this #1 hit for the Association from 1966 is one of the first to try to replicate distinctly instrumental effects with voices, evoking xylophones and strings in a way that prefigures later arrangements in the same genre.

My Romance (Rodgers/Hart, 1935), arr. Sollis '68. A transcription of the Hi-Lo's intricate arrangement of this well-known Rodgers & Hart tune, which has since been picked up in similar form by the Tigerlilies. The 1969 performance leads into an impromptu rendition of Finnie's “People Know” which isn't listed on the album sleeve – an early example of what later became known as a “bonus track.”

The '70s

The sheer number of new arrangers whose work is featured on the four albums of the '70s (12) is just one measure of the fundamental changes that Nassoon music underwent during the decade. Not since the early '50s had the repertoire been infused with such a quantity of fresh and original material. Influences as diverse as classical, bluegrass and Motown were recorded, with new methods and styles of arranging accompanying the new choice of songs. Moreover, the period saw a shift in the Nassoons from being a showcase for the talents of a few writers to something more like a workshop for aspiring arrangers. The result is a combination of great creative ferment and sometimes mixed quality; many of the works of the era are innovative and more accessible to young audiences than their old-fashioned forebears, but some suffer from a questionable choice of material or lack of polish in the ensemble writing.

Some of the changes that took place were complete departures from previous Nassoon practice, such as Peter Urquhart '74's arrangement of J. S. Bach's **Three-Part Invention** (inspired no doubt by the Swingle Singers' contemporaneous experiments with Bach) and the use of guitars on Chris Stifel '71's “**Holy Unto the Lord.**” Others, however, were simply belated acknowledgments of developments in popular music during the '60s. Many Beach Boys hits were obviously suited for a cappella performance – witness Urquhart's “**I Get Around**” and Ben Indig's “**Darlin**” – and the songwriting team of John Lennon and Paul McCartney took its place alongside Irving Berlin, Cole Porter and others with arrangements such as Jackson Howe '69's “**Yesterday**” and Bob Peskin '78's “**In My Life.**” Arrangers continued to favor solo-oriented material – indeed, many of these arrangements depend on a good soloist to carry the performance off – and backgrounds tended to become more rhythmic and syllabic, often imitating instruments as in Howe's “**Cherish.**”

The leading figure during this period of transition was Urquhart, whose energetic arrangements of Beatles classics such as “**(With a Little Help From My) Friends**” and “**Getting Better**” were popular in their own right, and set the standard for future arrangements of their kind. Urquhart added another twist to the musical changes of the time: many older arrangements had become distorted after years of being passed down orally; he went back to the original scores and “saved” pieces such as Finnie's “Sweet Georgia Brown” and Lotspeich's “Old Rockin' Chair.”

He also revised a number of scores in an effort to keep them in the repertoire, a gesture that was not always popular with the original arrangers.

1972

I Bowed My Head and Cried Holy (trad. spiritual), arr. Stifel '71. In the late '60s and early '70s it became fashionable for many close-harmony groups to use guitars and other instruments in their performances, a phenomenon that persists today. This recording represents one of the Nassoons' few nods to that tradition: a gospel-bluegrass tune accompanied by banjo, guitar and electric bass.

I'll Fly Away (trad. spiritual), arr. Stifel '71, recorded again '02. Chris Stifel was a proficient banjo player, and at his instigation some bluegrass music was added to the repertoire. This brief but exuberant piece is sung as a quartet with an unabashedly southern flavor, and remained a common feature in sets for many years. The group has used it more recently as a lead-in to "Tigertown Blues."

Offering (Carpenter/Bettis, 1969), arr. Urquhart '74. Actually called "Invocation," this meditative Carpenters tune was arranged at the request of an older Nassoon. The religious theme is matched by an almost Renaissance-style ensemble sound, closely modeled on the original.

The Shadow of Your Smile (Webster/Mandel, 1965), arr. Kaspers '70. The theme song from *The Sandpiper*, starring Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor, this ballad won both a Grammy and an Oscar in 1965. Kaspers' arrangement allows the soloist to carry the beautiful melody alone, relegating the group to a subdued and haunting "oo" accompaniment.

Today (Randy Sparks, 1964), arr. Bates '67, recorded again '76, '80. Treatments of folk songs such as Mellor's "Shenandoah" demonstrate how a simple tune can be wedded to a complex and intricate harmonic structure. Bates steers away from such embellishments, turning in a relatively simple arrangement that is faithful to the original feel of the song. The movement between group, solo, and duet parts, along with the simpler harmonic structure, are forebears of the '70s sound.

Yesterday (Lennon/McCartney, 1965), arr. Howe '69, recorded again '80, '84. A favorite of Howe's, this much-covered tune was a #1 hit for the Beatles in 1965. The arrangement features an original melody in the introductory quartet, unadorned accompaniment and somewhat clumsy group writing in the bridge. The Nassoons recorded the Boyz II Men version of this song for the 2002 album.

Your Mother Should Know (Lennon/McCartney, 1968), arr. Urquhart '74, recorded again '76, '80. Urquhart's first attempt at a pop arrangement attempts to replicate the distinctive back beat with a percussive "doot" in the upper parts and a syncopated bass line – a technique that he refined and enlarged upon in later works. The song is taken from the Beatles' *Magical Mystery Tour* album.

1974

Blue Moon (Rodgers/Hart, 1934), traditional arrangement, recorded again '94, '00, '08, '12. This updated version of the Rodgers/Hart classic is modeled after the performance by the Marcels (#1 in 1961), which they recorded in an impromptu 8-minute session at the end of a day in the studio (it is said that the famous opening bass riff was improvised on that occasion). This was the Nassoons' first "greaser" number, featuring organized choreography in the loosest sense and a soloist parody of the stereotypical 1950's "tough." The song had previously been arranged as a ballad by Robert Morgan '56; that version appears on the 1957, 1961 and 1967 albums.

(With a Little Help From My) Friends (Lennon/McCartney, 1967), arr. Urquhart '74, recorded again '82, '86, '92, '12. Urquhart showed a bit more sophistication in his later Beatles arrangements, including this one, which features some fine group writing in the bridge section and an outstanding resolution at the end. The song was written as a vehicle for Ringo Starr (a.k.a. Billy Shears) on the Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* album. The Nassoons once performed it at a prep school with a young Sean Lennon in the audience.

Getting Better (Lennon/McCartney, 1967), arr. Urquhart '74, recorded again '78, '88. Also taken from *Sgt. Pepper's*, "Getting Better" features some clever echoing in the upper parts and a syncopated bass line modeled after McCartney's original.

In My Room (Brian Wilson, 1963), arr. Urquhart '74. A more laid-back Beach Boys number than the better-known "I Get Around," Urquhart's setting of this wistful ballad from the *Surfer Girl* LP balances quartet and full group sections and thickens up the harmonies toward the end, but otherwise sticks closely to Brian Wilson's original.

Lazy Day (Powers/Fischhoff, 1967), arr. Gregory. This #14 hit for Spanky and Our Gang was arranged by Whiffenpoof Richard Gregory, Yale '56, a prolific arranger whose work found a home in the repertoires of many East-coast singing groups. The Nassoon recording features accompaniment by twin guitars.

Long Ago and Far Away (James Taylor, 1971), arr. Shaw '73, recorded again '78, '82, '94, '00, '04, '12. Shaw intended his arrangement to imitate the sound of a plucked acoustic guitar, after the James Taylor original. The descant part, modeled after Joni Mitchell's performance on the Taylor recording, has been gradually enlarged to play a role almost as great as the solo itself. A Jerome Kern tune of the same name was arranged by Robert Morgan '56 and appears on the 1957 and 1965 albums.

Three-Part Invention #11 (J. S. Bach, c. 1720), arr. Urquhart '74. "Why not?" says Urquhart, when asked why he chose to arrange one of Bach's keyboard pieces for a cappella performance. He describes the arrangement as the "ultimate extension" of the trend toward syllabic accompaniment. A notable precedent would have been the Swingle Singers' innovative forays into jazzy settings of Bach, released to great acclaim in 1963 and 1968.

1976

Christmas Song (various; trad. Christmas), arr. Gregory, recorded again '88, '92, and on *Christmas with the Princeton Nassoons*. Also "donated" by Yalie Richard Gregory and brought

aboard by Urquhart, this intensely clever medley of Christmas songs has been widely pirated by other college a cappella groups.

Darlin' (Wilson/Love, 1967), arr. Indig '76. This Beach Boys hit was arranged in the summer of '74 in what was by then the typical "boppy" style of the time. Lacking modern digital equipment, Indig was faced with the daunting task of transcribing the sometimes obscure lyrics. He notes that any errors that he may have made are unlikely to have compromised the artistic integrity of the song.

Get a Job (Beal/Edwards/Horton/Lewis, 1958), arr. Arnold, recorded again '90. Another "greaser" number, the 1976 recording of this Silhouettes classic features a bizarre human kazoo solo in the bridge, which was later replaced by an equally bizarre dialogue between the parents and the unemployed young misfit.

I Get Around (Wilson/Love, 1964), arr. Urquhart '74, recorded again '88, '90. Urquhart's most enduring arrangement, this remarkably faithful rendition of the #1 Beach Boys hit (their first) became a fixture in sets for younger audiences. The Nassoons do get around, after all.

I Got Rhythm (Gershwin/Gershwin, 1930), arr. Indig '76, recorded again '82. Debuted in the fall of 1974, this arrangement of the famous Gershwin tune is based on the performance by the Happenings, which scored a #3 hit in 1967. Original soloist Dave McCormick '76 added an improvised introduction that was later written into the score.

Isle of Surprise (Walley/Harris, 1920), arr. Urquhart '74. Urquhart proves himself to be adept at more traditional arranging styles with this Triangle ballad, taken from the 1920 show of the same name. The song was arranged at the request of a reunions class, and was used for a time in the tryout process.

Sugar Magnolia (Hunter/Weir, 1970), arr. Indig '76. Indig's earliest recorded work shows at once a daring choice of material (a song by the Grateful Dead) and an unpolished arrangement, bolstered by a gritty solo from Marc Chamlin '77.

1978

Golden Lady (Stevie Wonder, 1973), arr. Peskin '78, recorded again '86, '92. Peskin arranged this Stevie Wonder tune from *Innervisions* as a new bid at the "suggestion" of senior Steve Bogardus '76. The arrangement is built around a rhythmically independent tenor-baritone part, an original device that Peskin and others were to use in later arrangements.

Hooked on a Feeling (Mark James, 1969), arr. Dieck '78. This exuberant slice of '70s pop became popular among later groups for expressing spontaneous outbursts of musical emotion. Dieck's technique of moving the solo line between different voice parts within a single phrase is also found in his and Peskin's arrangement of "Please Please Me."

In My Life (Lennon/McCartney, 1965), arr. Peskin '78. Peskin's contrapuntal treatment of this sentimental Beatles tune (from 1965's *Rubber Soul*) is based on the cover by Judy Collins. The result is a lush and intricate arrangement that bears little resemblance to the Fab Four original.

It's Only Love (Lennon/McCartney, 1965), arr. Indig '76, recorded again '84. This Beatles tune, taken from the *Help* soundtrack, includes a quartet, solo, and flowing background; Indig wanted to replicate the "traditional" Nassoon sound in the context of a more contemporary song.

I Wonder Why (Weeks/Anderson, 1958), arr. Serabian '78. This rock and roll classic was a hit for Dion and the Belmonts in 1958. Serabian arranged it as a "greaser" solo in the tradition of "Blue Moon" and "Get a Job" after hearing it performed at the University of Virginia. Unfortunately, ambition got the better of the group, and an attempt to add choreography rendered the song unperformable (rumor has it that a TF pyramid was part of the act).

The '80s

The first half of this decade saw a consolidation of the innovations that took place during the '70s, along with a quiet shift back to a more traditional style of arranging. While arrangements of popular music by Van Morrison, Stevie Wonder, and the Doobie Brothers were recorded along with the ubiquitous Beatles, the sound of the early '80s was generally smoother than the frenetic '70s style, and arrangers tended to show off the vintage Nassoon "group sound" more in bridges and choruses, borrowing from the techniques of the '50s and '60s. Several of these arrangements have demonstrated their enduring value; among them "**Moondance**," "**Faithless Love**," and "**On and On**."

The later eighties saw a resurgence of interest in more traditional material which in many ways represented a return to roots for the group. The Triangle standard "**Love and a Dime**," and the rearrangements of the "**Princeton Medley**" of fight songs and the "**1907 Reunion Song**" still please alumni crowds, and standards such as Duke Ellington's "**Take the A-Train**" and Irving Berlin's "**How Deep Is the Ocean?**" as well as the unique Nassoon take on Charlie Parker's "**Yardbird Suite**" harken back to the standards that have always been the core of the repertoire. The 1988 album is graced by a lovely arrangement of Christopher Cross's "**Sailing**" by Deborah Hurwitz '89, a Tigression music director who also arranged extensively for that group.

1980

Bird of Beauty (Stevie Wonder, 1974), arr. Peskin '78. Peskin's second Stevie Wonder arrangement is similar in many ways to "Golden Lady," although it's considerably more up-tempo and features a Spanish solo. Both represent a culmination of the experimental style of the '70s, successfully treating modern songs with the textured sound of older arrangements.

Faithless Love (J.D. Souther, 1974), arr. Peskin '78, recorded again '90, '94, '96, '98, '02, '04, '06, '10, '22. This ode to infidelity, written by J. D. Souther and popularized by Linda Ronstadt (Peskin's arrangement borrows from both versions), has long been a vehicle for soulful soloists. It also features one of the loveliest and most intricate background accompaniments in the repertoire.

Moondance (Van Morrison, 1970), arr. Blaxill '80, recorded again '84, '90, '94, '98, '06, '08. The title track from Van Morrison's 1970 album is a perennial favorite, as Blaxill's arrangement balances the grittiness of the original version with the natural smoothness of the Nassoons sound. An extended intro and conclusion were added on the 1994 album and subsequent recordings.

My Cherie Amour (Cosby/Moy/Wonder, 1969), arr. Bushong '80. Bushong arranged two hit songs from 1969; "My Cherie Amour" features a duet with group accompaniment. Stevie Wonder penned this #4 hit for a girlfriend; the original title was "Oh, Marcia."

Please Please Me (Lennon/McCartney, 1962), arr. Peskin '78/Dieck '78, recorded again '88. This treatment of the #3 Beatles hit epitomizes the bouncy, energetic arrangements of rock and roll classics that were a staple of the '70s repertoire. Dieck and Peskin wrote the arrangement on the porch of Ivy Club. A slightly different arrangement, attributed to "Worthington '82," is featured on the 2012 album.

Workin' on a Groovy Thing (Sedaka/Atkins, 1969), arr. Bushong '80. Although no-one had seriously used the word "groovy" for years, this is an elegant and surprisingly effective treatment of the 1969 hit by the 5th Dimension. The harmony in the chorus section is particularly effective, and Bushong turns in a soulful solo.

1982

Lately (Stevie Wonder), arr. Spina '83. Spina is featured as soloist and arranger on yet another Stevie Wonder tune, which was learned during spring break at St. Thomas in preparation for the recording of the album. The arrangement suffers a bit from an over-reliance on the "bo" syllable, but otherwise captures the wistful feel of the original nicely.

Love and a Dime (Brooks Bowman '35, 1935), arr. O'Brien '81, recorded again '88, '92. The other Brooks Bowman hit from *Stags at Bay* became the B-side to the more popular "East of the Sun." O'Brien arranged the song at the request of the class of 1935 on the occasion of their 45th reunion, for which the Nassoons, starving artists that they are, were paid an extra \$100.

On and On (Stephen Bishop, 1977), arr. O'Brien '81, recorded again '88, '92, '96, '06, '12, '16. Arranged at summer camp and debuted to raves at Smith College in 1979, this tropical ballad by two-hit wonder Stephen Bishop continues to thrill female audiences without fail.

Precious and Few (Walter Nims, 1972), arr. O'Brien '81. O'Brien arranged this golden oldie by the Association at the suggestion of John Wood '83, just in time for the album sessions. The melody of the song bears more than a passing resemblance to Howe's "Cherish," another Association tune, and the songs share the same hippie-ballad feel.

Takin' It to the Streets (Michael McDonald, 1976), arr. Blaxill '80, recorded again '98. A soulful protest anthem by the Doobie Brothers, "Takin' It to the Streets" represents a rare example of the Nassoons singing a political song.

1984

Just My Imagination (Whitfield/Strong, 1971), arr. Ban '84. This eerie ballad by the Motown songwriting team of Whitfield & Strong scored a #2 hit for the Temptations. The Nassoons version was arranged and recorded by Ban for the album.

Take the A-Train (Billy Strayhorn, 1941), arr. Shepp '84, recorded again '88, '92. Billy Strayhorn's tune became Duke Ellington's signature song, and Shepp's arrangement showcases the rich harmonies and swing rhythms that Duke was famous for. The "radio announcer" spot, a vehicle for off-the-cuff ramblings including nickname recitations, was the brainchild of former DJ Ban.

1986

1907 Reunion Song, (Arthur H. Osborn '1907) arr. Peterson '60/Mehnert '87, recorded again '00. Originally written for the class of '07 by Peterson, this arrangement was revived and first recorded under Mehnert's leadership in the '80s. Mehnert reports that the version of the score that he worked from was sloppy enough to make its attribution to Peterson dubious; presumably it had been transcribed and corrupted over time. Nevertheless the spirited tune, with Mehnert's quotation of Finnie's "Come Right In," has become a fixture in reunions sets.

How Deep Is the Ocean? (Irving Berlin, 1932), arr. Mehnert '87, recorded again '90, '96, '00, '04, '10, '14. Mehnert discovered this Irving Berlin masterpiece when he found the title couplet cited in a rhyming dictionary as "a perfect marriage of lyric and music." Intrigued, he acquired the sheet music and donated the ballad to the 'Soons, who join Sinatra and Crosby as illustrious performers of the song. A tenor feature followed by a masterful group section, it shares a structure with Mellor's "Danny Boy" and "Shenandoah."

Nassoons Rap (written & performed by Hicks/Hicks '86). Nassoons go hip in self-aggrandizing street medium. Written in the shower, debuted at Yale and recorded on a whim during the album sessions, this track allows the Hicks twins to display their unique rhythmic gifts while extolling the virtues of a cappella singing, Nassoons style.

Saints and Sinners (Henderson-Mills/Hendricks), arr. Mehnert '87, recorded again '90. Based on the Manhattan Transfer's performance of Fletcher Henderson's "Down South Camp Meetin,'" this jazzy invitation to a revival – half deep-South gospel, half Midwestern hustle – was arranged by Mehnert as part of a successful bid to become music director. The highly syncopated backing parts are fiendishly difficult to perform.

Yardbird Suite (Charlie Parker, 1946 and Byron; original lyrics by Byron/Salles '86 et. al.), arr. Byron '86, recorded again '98, '04. Charlie Parker's tune was provided with lyrics by Byron and Salles (with help from others), who allegedly composed part of their paean to unrequited love on the inside of a pizza box. Byron also composed the melody to the second verse, basing it on Bird's inimitable solo style.

1988

Mighty Love (Todd Rundgren, 1985), arr. Stewart '90. This tune from Todd Rundgren's *A Cappella* album became popular among college a cappella groups both because of its obvious suitability for vocal performance and its *à propos* subject matter: boy meets girl, sings song about her, etc.

Sailing (Christopher Cross, 1980), arr. Deborah Hurwitz '89. This deceptively simple ode to canvas by Christopher Cross is rhythmically daunting, but the finished product, directed by Tigression music director Hurwitz, is one of the standout tracks on the 1988 album.

The '90s

The five albums of the '90s brought nearly forty new songs into the recorded repertoire, more than any other decade except the (abbreviated) '40s. Arrangers drew from source material that spanned all genres, from the swing jazz of Cole Porter's "**Just One of Those Things**" to the soulful grooves of Stephen Stills' "**For What It's Worth**"; from the emo pop of George Michael's "**Heal the Pain**" to the ersatz 50's rock of "**Shama Lama Ding Dong.**" Cross-cultural offerings from locations as far-flung as Hawaii, India, Israel and South Africa were introduced, and beat-boxing became a regular feature of recordings and live performances. The group also recorded traditional choral arrangements and partnered with female vocalists for the first time – in the case of Franz Biebl's "**Ave Maria,**" on the same track.

Two factors help to explain this florescence. The first is the increasingly competitive nature of a cappella singing at Princeton. Popular songs that lent themselves well to vocal performance were increasingly leapt upon by campus arrangers, and the race to claim songs for each singing group created a trend toward increasing contemporaneity. Whereas not a single Beatles song was arranged by a Nassoon until several years after the Fab Four had disbanded, the two calypso numbers from Disney's 1989 movie *The Little Mermaid* were being sung under the arches at Princeton within a matter of months: one of these, the parody song "**Princeton Is Free,**" has become a Nassoon staple.

The second and probably more important factor is the fact that a cappella singing itself went mainstream starting in the late '80s, with groups such as the Bobs, the Manhattan Transfer, the Nylons, Rockapella, and Take 6 introducing a slicker, jazzier sound, and Bobby McFerrin, Boyz II Men and others taking that sound to the top of the charts. Eight of the newly-recorded arrangements of the '90s were either borrowed directly from or modeled closely after originals that were themselves a cappella, and several of these, including Todd Rundgren's "**Hodja,**" the Nylons' "**Please**" and the Manhattan Transfer's "**The Duke of Dubuque,**" remain active.

The '90s also saw the beginning of what has become a longstanding musical relationship between the Nassoons and Jamie Rankin, a senior lecturer in Princeton's German Department who was a close friend of Thad Persons '92, and who is the first non-Nassoon to make a significant contribution to the repertoire since John Miller in the '50s. Rankin contributed four tracks to the albums of the '90s, the most enduring of which have been the Christmas song "**Thou Who Was Rich**" and the quasi-religious love song "**I Will Be Here.**" He was made an honorary Nassoon in 2002.

1990

Hodja (Todd Rundgren, 1985), arr. Cooper '89, recorded again '98, '02, '06, '10, '14, '18, '22. Also from Todd Rundgren's *A Cappella* album, this up-tempo tribute to a medieval Persian mystic was a favorite of many Nassoons before Cooper finally arranged it for the group. Although Rundgren's recording features a tenor solo, the Nassoons adapted it for a bass-baritone.

I've Got a Feelin' I'm Fallin' (Waller/Link/Rose, 1929), arr. Blau '90. Inspired by the performance by Nell Carter in the musical *Ain't Misbehavin'*, this swinging Fats Waller tune makes a fine addition to the Nassoons' show music repertoire. The arrangement uses the device of combining a "doot" chordal background in the upper voices with a syncopated bass line that was popularized by Urquhart in the '70s.

Johnny's Room (Madsen/Greene, 1987), arr. Blazer '90. This raucous number by the Bobs added a new dimension to the Nassoon sound with its formidable bass line and irreverent lyrics. Performances were part-music, part-skit, as the incorrigible Johnny performed various antics for the audience.

O Holy Night (Dwight/Adam, 1858), arr. Blau '90. One of the loveliest Christmas melodies of all, "O Holy Night," with its contrapuntal trio evocative of Mullikin's "Nightherder's Song," was arranged in an effort to augment the Nassoons' then-meager holiday repertoire. The song was a sentimental favorite of Blau's from his high school days. A later arrangement of the same song by Brian Gurewitz '09 appears on the 2010 album.

Please (Connors/Cooper/Mann, 1982), arr. Blau '90, recorded again '94, '98, '04, '08, '12. This Nylons tune was a favorite of Maura Fitzgerald '90, a Nassoon fan and friend to many members of the group. Shortly after the song was arranged, Maura learned that she had leukemia. She died within the year, and "Please" was performed at her memorial service in Princeton.

This Masquerade (Leon Russell, 1976), arr. Yin '89. One of the most difficult arrangements in the repertoire, this soulful ballad was a #10 hit and Grammy winner for George Benson in 1976. Yin tirelessly revised his score to capture the thick harmonies of the original.

1992

Amazing Grace (John Newton, c. 1800), arr. MacGilvray '93. Based on a piano improvisation by MacGilvray, this haunting rendition of the traditional spiritual was debuted at his church during a tour of Texas. In order to teach the arrangement on tour, the arranger had to copy the score from memory on the airplane – the original had been left in Princeton. The solo in the second verse quotes "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen," another popular spiritual.

The Duke of Dubuque (Merchant/Royal/Faber, 1941), arr. Mark '91, recorded again '94, '98, '02, '06, '10, '14, '20. Patterned after the performance by the Manhattan Transfer, this up-tempo swing number features a scat solo and hornlike riffs in the upper parts. The distinctive entrance by the bass section prefigures Mark's arrangement of "For What It's Worth."

For What It's Worth (Stephen Stills, 1966), arr. Mark '91, recorded again '94, '02, '06, '08. This Vietnam-era protest song was a #7 hit for Buffalo Springfield in the spring of 1967. A vehicle for soulful soloists, Mark arranged the tune on a whim in the van returning from a spring break tour of Florida. The bass part is masterful.

Princeton Is Free (Ashman/Menken, 1989; original lyrics by MacGilvray '93), arr. MacGilvray '93, recorded again '94, '96, '04, '08, '12. Sung to the calypso melody of "Under the Sea" from Disney's 1989 feature *The Little Mermaid*, this parody of spiraling tuition costs proved very popular on campus and among alumni. MacGilvray claims that the lyrics came to him while shaving.

Shama Lama Ding Dong (Mark Davis, 1978), arr. Mark '91, recorded again '94, '08. Arranged as a dance number, this doo-wop tune by the fictional Otis Day and the Knights was taken from the soundtrack for the campy teen flick *Animal House*. The final chord was worked out in the recording studio after several unsuccessful attempts to end the song gracefully.

1994

Diamonds on the Soles of Her Shoes (Paul Simon, 1986), arr. MacGilvray '93, recorded again '98, '02, '04, '10, '14, '20. MacGilvray arranged this tune from Paul Simon's *Graceland* album as a feature for the 1992 orientation week arches. The arrangement quotes "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" in the introductory section, partly as an homage to an earlier pop appropriation of South African music, and partly to spare the group from having to learn the Zulu lyrics performed by Ladysmith Black Mambazo on the original. The latter concern proved to be unfounded, as the Nassoons later added a transcription of "Homeless," a track featuring Ladysmith from the same album, as a companion piece. Subsequent recordings have included both songs as a medley.

Heavenly (Connick/McLean, 1990), arr. Tirres '94, recorded again '02. Tirres arranged this a cappella track from Harry Connick Jr.'s *We Are in Love* (1990) in the summer of 1991. On returning to campus he discovered that Beata Boodell, the mother of Peter Boodell '93, had also attempted an arrangement that summer. The collated version was, Tirres remarks, "a pretty accurate transcription of the original!"

I Need You (True Image), arr. Tirres '94. True Image's "I Need You," featured on the soundtrack for Spike Lee's 1990 documentary *Do It A Cappella*, was transcribed by Tirres in an effort to bring "a more contemporary hip-hop sound" to the group. It is performed as a quartet with a slammin' beat box in the break, and features Tigerlily Kara McClendon '94 – the first female vocalist on a Nassoon album – in duet with the Nassoons' own Jacques Smith '93.

I'll Be Seeing You (Fain/Kahal, 1938), arr. MacGilvray '93. "I'll Be Seeing You" was arranged in memory of Michelle Goudie '93, a Tigerlily who was killed in a small plane crash in the spring of 1992. The recording was a joint effort of the Nassoons, the Tigertones, the Tigerlilies, and a few other singers, and the Tigertones and Tigerlilies also included it on their respective albums that year. The arrangement is largely an adaptation for mixed voices of the

Whiffenpoofs' lovely version of the song; MacGilvray added the extreme dissonance in the middle of the piece to mark the emotional circumstances. Singers from the class of '93 have continued to perform the piece at major reunions as part of the memorial for deceased classmates.

Just One of Those Things (Cole Porter, 1935), arr. Matthews '90, recorded again '96, '02, '06, '12. Matthews arranged this Cole Porter tune for the 1989 Yale Jamboree to add a "standard" to the group's up-tempo repertoire, then made up mostly of barbershop and more contemporary songs. He reports that he was inspired by Ella Fitzgerald's version from the *Songbook* series.

Lagta Nahin Hai Dill Mera (Zafar/Tripathi, 1960), arr. Ramabhadran. Sanjeev Ramabhadran '94 is an accomplished singer of Indian classical music, and the Nassoons put his talents to use in this setting of a 19th-century *ghazal* by the Mughal emperor Zafar. The "arrangement" consists of the group singing a drone in parallel fifths behind Ramabhadran's melismatic vocals. The Hindi lyrics can be translated as follows:

*My heart has no rest in this barren land
Who has found fulfillment in this vain world?
Tell these longings to dwell elsewhere
What room is there for them in this besmirched heart?
I asked for a long life, I received four days
Two passed in desire, two in waiting
How unfortunate is Zafar! for his burial
Not even two yards of land could be found, in the land of his beloved
My heart has no rest in this barren land*

The Star Spangled Banner (Francis Scott Key/trad. English, 1814), arr. Rankin. The Nassoons were invited to perform the national anthem at the Lipton International tennis tournament in Key Biscayne in the spring of 1992, and Rankin produced this jazzy arrangement – his second for the group – for the occasion. The arrangement is rhythmically and harmonically ingenious, but has not always been popular with more traditionally-minded audiences.

Thou Who Wast Rich (Houghton/trad. French), arr. Rankin, recorded again '96, '02, '06, '10, '16. Rankin's first arrangement for the Nassoons – written in just three days – this adaptation of the French carol "*Quelle est cette odeur agréable?*" features some of the lushest harmonies in the repertoire. The arrangement was debuted at the Christmas Arch in 1991 with Rankin as soloist. The 2010 recording is also featured on *Christmas with the Princeton Nassoons*.

1996

Ave Maria (Franz Biebl, 1964). Performed live in the University Chapel by the Nassoons and the Katzenjammers, this mixed-voices setting of the *Angelus* and *Ave Maria* texts by the 20th-century German composer Franz Biebl was brought to the United States by the Cornell Glee Club and made popular by Chanticleer.

Cultural Interlude (Peter Schickele, 1974). A live recording of “Please, kind sir” from Peter Schickele (a.k.a. P. D. Q. Bach)’s *The Art of the Ground Round*, performed by Jason White ’96 and Will Black ’96.

Heal the Pain (George Michael, 1991), arr. Braun ’96, recorded again ’98, ’06. This track from George Michael’s *Listen without Prejudice, vol. 1* – one of Braun’s favorite albums from his college days – was a natural to adapt for a cappella performance, with its “do-do-do-do” opening trio and layered vocals in the chorus. Braun’s use of a “dzn” to replicate the rhythm guitar sound gives the arrangement a distinctive feel. He wisely omits the song’s bridge.

I Will Be Here (Steven Curtis Chapman, 1989), arr. Rankin, recorded again ’00, ’04, ’10, ’14, ’16, ’22. Rankin’s fondness for what one Nassoon of the time calls “sonorous emo-religious ballads” is nowhere better epitomized than in this tune, arranged for a Nassoon wedding in 1994. The striking harmonies in the opening bars introduced a new set of colors to the Nassoon sound and proved influential among later arrangers. The 2010 recording is also featured on *Christmas with the Princeton Nassoons*.

The Minstrel Boy (trad. Irish), arr. Braun ’96, recorded again ’02, ’06. Braun first heard this Irish war ballad in an episode of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. It stuck with him and he wrote the melody down, working from a VHS tape. He later fleshed it out into a dramatic full arrangement – his “personal favorite” of the songs that he arranged. An earlier arrangement by Don Finnie ’47 appears on the 1947 and 1963 albums.

The Muppet Medley (Henson/Pottle, 1976; Umiliani, 1968; Williams/Ascher, 1979), arr. Braun ’96, recorded again ’04. Braun arranged this medley of madcap muppetry at the suggestion of classmate Will Black ’96. He reports that it was “enormously fun to cobble together, and on account of some great choreo was also super fun to perform.”

Straight to My Heart (Sting, 1987), arr. MacKinnon ’94, recorded again ’02, ’08. The only Nassoon song in 7 time, this deep track from Sting’s 1987 *...Nothing Like the Sun* – a cassette that MacKinnon “wore out” in high school and college – features a tenor part solo over a distinctive bass line (partly worked out by the bass section itself), a strong beat box (replaced with percussion on the ’08 recording), and lush part writing in the chorus. MacKinnon recalls that he “thought the subject matter was timely, considering the song’s theme of good old fashioned love defeating modern technological and pharmacological substitutes.”

Today (Owen Braun ’96, 1993), arr. Braun ’96, recorded again ’00, ’04. Braun composed this wistful love song during his freshman year; with its distinctive melodic line, rich harmonies and somewhat unusual structure it is a worthy successor to the great tenor features of the 1950s.

Wa Oke Ani Ani (trad. Hawaiian), arr. Lo ’96. This Hawaiian folk song was performed by Lo (a Hawaiian himself) during his successful audition for the Nassoons, and was debuted by the group – this time with vocal accompaniment to his slack-key guitar – in the fall of 1993. A hula dancer was also featured as part of the performance. The lyrics describe the “cold crystal waters” of Ke Aniani, a ridge in the Moanalua Valley.

Zombie Jamboree (Conrad Eugene Mauge, Jr., 1953), arr. MacGilvray '93, recorded again '04. A second offering from Spike Lee's *Do It A Cappella*, Rockapella's rollicking performance of this Caribbean tune was transcribed by MacGilvray and features elaborate (and suitably ghoulish) choreography. The song, originally called "Jumbee Jamboree," dates back to the 1950s and has also been recorded by the Kingston Trio and Harry Belafonte.

1998

Across the Universe (Lennon/McCartney, 1968), arr. Forrest '98, recorded again '02. A flowing arrangement of John Lennon's dreamy ode to meditation. Forrest notes that he may have made a few mistakes transcribing the lyrics, working as he was in the infancy of the internet. The use in the third verse of a small ensemble singing in canon with the backing of the full group echoes '60s-era arrangements such as "Nighthunder's Song" and "Scarlet Ribbons."

Ev'ry Time I Feel the Spirit (trad. spiritual), arr. William Dawson. In 1997 the Nassoons decided to repeat the experiment of performing choral repertoire in the University Chapel, an idea that gave rise to the recording of the Biebl "Ave Maria" for the 1996 album. William Dawson's all-male setting of this familiar spiritual was selected for the occasion because it was "loud and fun."

Fee (Trey Anastasio, 1988), arr. Roberts '97. Roberts is a Phish fan and arranged a slightly abridged version of the sprawling opening track from 1988's *Junta* – a kind of bastard child of "Rocky Raccoon" and "Copacabana" – to broaden the group's horizons a bit. The song is performed as a quartet behind Roberts' spirited solo, and is the only Nassoon tune to prominently feature the word "nipple."

Honolulu City Lights (Keola Beamer, 1978), arr. Rankin. This warm setting of the popular Hawaiian song was arranged to commemorate the Nassoons' first tour to the islands. Rankin – who lived in Honolulu himself for a time – performs the solo on the album, the first and only time (to date) that he has done the honors.

Indiana (Sean Altman, 1992). The late '90s and early '00s saw the inauguration (or revival?) of a tradition in which the senior class would perform a specially-arranged "senior song." The class of '98 chose this rollicking tribute to the Hoosier state – from which none of its members hail – as written and performed by (New York-based) Rockapella.

O Filii et Filiae (Volckmar Leising). A second choral offering from the 1997 University Chapel concert, this performance of the 17th-century German composer Volckmar Leising's antiphonal setting of a traditional Easter hymn is musically more ambitious than its spiritual counterpart.

Thriller (Rod Temperton, 1982), arr. Forrest '98. Arranged as "an excuse for some fun choreo," this setting of the monstrous title track from Michael Jackson's blockbuster 1982 album, with its triple threat of daunting solo, demanding group parts and challenging choreography, was seldom performed after its debut at the 1997 Yale Jamboree. It nevertheless makes an effective opening track for the 1998 album.

Wild World (Cat Stevens, 1970), arr. Roberts '97. Roberts' spare setting of Cat Stevens' much-covered tune from 1970's *Tea for the Tillerman* was arranged as the "senior song" for the "sappy bastards" of '97, and is performed here as a quartet.

Yerushalayim Shel Zahav (Naomi Shemer, 1967), arr. Forrest '98. Forrest wanted to add some Jewish music to the repertoire and adapted this popular Israeli song – sometimes called Israel's "unofficial national anthem" – from the haunting (and fragmentary) a cappella version that Phish includes at the end of 1994's *Hoist*. The arrangement is also featured on *Christmas with the Princeton Nassoons* – an odd choice, since it's not a Chanukah song. The Hebrew title translates as "Jerusalem of Gold."

The '00s

As the '80s followed the '70s, so too did the '00s follow the '90s with a slower pace and somewhat more conservative approach to repertoire-building. The practice of borrowing material from other a cappella acts continued, with six "new" arrangements having this origin – three of them, including the doo-wop classic "**In the Still of the Night**," by the top-selling quartet Boyz II Men. Jamie Rankin contributed three lush and innovative new settings, including a stunning "**Over the Rainbow**."

On the whole, the decade seems to have found arrangers in a nostalgic mood. Three more Beatles songs, among them an infectious version of "**You Won't See Me**," entered the repertoire – these, along with Jamie Forrest's "**Across the Universe**" from the 1998 album, were the first new Beatles songs to be recorded since "Please Please Me" in 1980. There was a similar revival of interest in classic R&B – a genre that the Nassoons had neglected for nearly 20 years – with soulful renditions of Marvin Gaye's "**Let's Get It On**" and Stevie Wonder's "**Signed, Sealed, Delivered**" entering the repertoire. Arrangers began to mine the rich vein of '80s pop for the first time, most notably in a setting of Toto's "**Rosanna**."

It's tempting to think that in a time when rappers (Eminem, Jay-Z) and divas (Beyoncé, Britney Spears) ruled the charts, the Nassoons were obliged to look backward for new material. Indeed it may not be an accident that the two contemporary songs that the group recorded during this period – "**I Want You Back**," by the boy band NSYNC, and "**Where is the Love?**" by the hip-hop ensemble the Black Eyed Peas – were each performed with tongue at least partly in cheek.

2000

Angels We Have Heard on High (trad. French), arr. Rankin, recorded again '06, '16. This highly syncopated setting of the traditional French carol departs significantly from the familiar version. It seems to be based, at least rhythmically, on the rendition by Steven Curtis Chapman from his 1989 album *The Music of Christmas* (Chapman also composed Rankin's "I Will Be Here"). The arrangement is also featured on *Christmas with the Princeton Nassoons*.

Flower of Beauty (Bell/Clements, 1960), arr. Reid '99. Reid sang a mixed-chorus arrangement of this pastoral love song in high school and reconstructed it for male voices upon joining the

Nassoons. He notes that he “took liberties with the rhythm and counterpoint, and shifted a climactic harmony to satisfy the 20th-century music theorists in our fan base [cricket, cricket].”

Hard to Say I’m Sorry (Cetera/Foster, 1982), arr. Reid ’99. Reid found this #1 Chicago hit to be “ripe for cherry-picking” as the “senior song” for the class of ’99 after a tumultuous few years in which some members did indeed “need a little time away.” The arrangement, performed here as a quartet and later adapted for performance by the full group, is based on the top-10 cover by Boyz II Men knock-off Az Yet.

Have You Seen Her (Acklin/Record, 1971), arr. Garland ’01. With its smooth doo-wop harmonies, soulful fronting trio, high tenor solo, and melancholy voice-over (delivered by the “once-in-a-lifetime midnight-thunder-style bass voice of Scott Levy ’02”), this setting of the ultra-mellow Chi-Lites classic is an updating of a version that Garland wrote in high school. Thankfully the Nassoons did not attempt the 1990 cover by MC Hammer.

It’s Alright with Me (Cole Porter, 1953), arr. Reid ’99. Reid decided to set a Harry Connick, Jr. number after dating a girl who was crazy about the New Orleans crooner. The up-tempo arrangement, which clocks in at five and a half minutes, throws in everything but the kitchen sink: daring harmonies, dramatic tempo shifts, a frantic walking bass, a quintet, a chorale, a fugue, and a culminating effort to replicate the sound of a full big band. Reid remembers fondly “the uptick in therapeutic drink and debauchery associated with any rehearsal of the piece.”

King of Spain (Moxy Früvous, 1992), arr. Forrest ’98, recorded again ’06. This quirky updating of the prince and the pauper story was a #1 hit in Canada for the Ontario-based Moxy Früvous. Forrest transcribed the a cappella original and the group added choreography, making it a crowd favorite.

Let’s Get It On (Gaye/Townsend, 1973), arr. Forrest ’98, recorded again ’08. Forrest decided to try his hand at a classic R&B song after hearing the Whiffenpoofs perform their perennial crowd-pleaser “Midnight Train to Georgia,” and thought it would be “a little bit funny to hear some Princeton kids trying to do their best Marvin Gaye.” It doesn’t sound very promising on paper, but with the right soloist the arrangement – which, like “Midnight Train,” makes deft use of a trio – has a certain slow-jam charm.

2002

It Had to Be You (Kahn/Jones, 1924), arr. Garland ’01. Based on the Grammy-winning version from the 1989 hit movie *When Harry Met Sally*, this arrangement is remarkably faithful to the original, reproducing the horn fills, sighing string lines and easy syncopation of Harry Connick’s big band. Garland even set the bombastic opening bars, although these were dropped for the recording. The Blair Arch debut featured a sax solo by Garland’s roommate, a member of the Princeton Jazz Ensemble.

Pater Noster (Joseph Wang ’01), arr. Wang ’01. Wang composed this four-part chorale “in the style of Bach” as a final project for Music 105 (he got an A). In his junior year the Yale

Jamboree was held in the University Chapel, and he donated the piece to the Nassoons to take advantage of the religious venue.

Water Runs Dry (Babyface, 1994), arr. Garland '01. This track from Boyz II Men's sophomore album *II* was a #2 hit in 1995. Their rendition features acoustic guitar and strings; this is a "true" a cappella version in six parts, performed as a "senior song" by the class of '01.

The Wonder (Paul Griffin '01, 2000), arr. Griffin '01. Griffin composed "The Wonder" in the summer before his senior year simply because he thought that the Nassoons "needed more originals." Musically it hovers somewhere between folk song and pop song territory, but the cascading vocal lines sustain a rapturous mood throughout, and Griffin adds some striking contrapuntal writing in the final verse.

Yesterday (Lennon/McCartney, 1965). Sung as a quartet by the class of '02 – presumably as a "senior song" – this performance of the much-covered Beatles tune is based on the 1994 version by Boyz II Men, also off of *II*. An earlier arrangement of the song by Jackson Howe '69 appears on the 1972, 1980 and 1984 albums.

2004

Over the Rainbow (Harburg/Arlen, 1939), arr. Rankin, recorded again '10, '14, '16, '22. One of Rankin's many talents as an arranger is his ability to build a song to a climax, and this rather free adaptation of the *Wizard of Oz* classic – widely considered to be the greatest movie song of all time – provides a memorable example.

Signed, Sealed, Delivered (Wonder/Garrett/Wright/Hardaway, 1970), arr. Huang '01, recorded again '10, '22. Like Forrest's "Let's Get It On," Huang's "Signed, Sealed, Delivered" was inspired by the Whiffenpoof's "Midnight Train to Georgia," and follows its lead even more closely, incorporating a trio, some light choreography (step, sway, snap, repeat), and a simple but catchy group part. Despite its origins as a Stevie Wonder single (#1 in 1970), the arrangement is less soloist-dependent than either "Let's Get It On" or "Midnight Train."

So Many People (Stephen Sondheim, 1954), arr. Effinger-Dean '06, recorded again '10. The only Sondheim song in the repertoire, "So Many People" first appeared in the 1980 revue *Marry Me a Little* but was originally written for *Saturday Night*, a show that Sondheim wrote in the early 1950s as his Broadway debut only to have the financing fall through (it was staged for the first time in the late 1990s). This was Effinger-Dean's inaugural attempt at an a cappella arrangement, and he handles Sondheim's dense and slippery harmonies with aplomb.

Title of the Song (Sabourin/Greene, 2000), arr. Effinger-Dean '06/Augustine '04. This droll send-up of boy-band ballads is based on the version by the DC-based a cappella quartet/comedy group Da Vinci's Notebook. The song was co-written by DVN's own Paul Sabourin and Richard Greene, longtime basso for the Bobs. Effinger-Dean takes credit for notating the bass line. The "senior song" for the class of '04 – the last class to record one.

Where Is the Love? (Adams/Timberlake/Gomez/Pineda/Board/Fratantuno/Pajon/Curtis, 2003), arr. Garland '01. After suffering “a cappella withdrawal” post-graduation, Garland left this arrangement on the choo rug for the current group and was pleasantly surprised to see it appear on the 2004 album. A top-10 hit in 2003 for the Black Eyed Peas featuring an uncredited Justin Timberlake, it is the only Nassoon recording to include (apparently) non-ironic rapping, with each verse handled by a different member as in the original. It almost works.

2006

I Want You Back (Pop/Martin, 1996), arr. Huang '01, recorded again '12. Here again Huang was inspired by the Whiffenpoofs, this time by a Backstreet Boys medley that they performed to great acclaim at the 1998 Yale Jamboree: “If they could do it,” he thought, “then why not us?” He chose NSYNC’s debut single (#13 in 1996), recruited four soloists, and commissioned choreography from a member of the Expressions dance troupe. By all accounts the debut was a rousing success.

In the Still of the Night (Fred Parrish, 1956), arr. Lo '96, recorded again '08, '14. Boyz II Men had a top-5 hit with this '50s-era doo-wop tune in 1993, and the Nassoons began performing it shortly afterward. Originally recorded by the Five Satins, it’s sometimes credited with originating the term “doo-wop” because of the backing vocals in the break (rendered here as “shoo-wop”). Not to be confused with the Cole Porter song of the same name, arranged by Robert Morgan '56 and featured on the 1965 album.

Istanbul (Not Constantinople) (Kennedy/Simon, 1953), arr. Fiorentino '08. Fiorentino made his first stab at arranging during his freshman year, setting out to “recreate some of the fun, frenetic energy of Jamie Forrest’s ‘King of Spain.’” He chose a geographical point somewhat to the east of Iberia and took They Might Be Giants’ snappy cover of the '50s-era swing classic as a model. The final product was a bit hectic and hard to pull off live, but dueling soloists Dave Jangraw '07 and Dave Page '07 carry off the album performance with panache.

Rosanna (David Paich, 1982), arr. Jangraw '07, recorded again '08, '14. Jangraw heard this Grammy-winning Toto hit on the radio as a sophomore, was attracted to its “rolling rhythms and big major chords,” and decided to make it his first and only foray into arranging. He sets it as a group piece with the melody handed off between the sections, as in the 70’s-era “Hooked on a Feeling” and “Please Please Me.” The concluding trio at the end was contributed by music director Jeff Bullian '05, who often used the piece as a set-closer.

You Won’t See Me (Lennon/McCartney, 1966), arr. Fiorentino '08, recorded again '08, '12. This tune from *Rubber Soul* was the first of two Beatles songs that Fiorentino arranged during his “college obsession with Lennon and McCartney.” He credits the enduring popularity of the arrangement to its being “catchy, up-tempo, and easy to learn.”

2008

Cradle Song (trad. Flemish), arr. Rankin, recorded again '14; also on *Christmas with the Princeton Nassoons*. With its long unison intro and melody sung largely in canon, this is an

uncharacteristically understated Rankin setting until the final verse, when the radiant harmonies burst forth in full force. The arrangement seems to be modeled in part after the lovely SATB setting by the English composer and choral conductor John Rutter.

Greensleeves (trad. English), arr. Braun '96, also on *Christmas with the Princeton Nassoons*. Braun wrote this elegant setting of one of his favorite melodies “for fun”; it features an intricately flowing background that lets the famous melody speak for itself. He can’t recall whether it was ever performed during his college days, but it was later picked up in its “What Child Is This?” incarnation when there was an urgent need for holiday repertoire.

The Streets of Laredo (trad. Irish), arr. Fiorentino '08. Fiorentino arranged “The Streets of Laredo” as a way of trying to “retain his sanity” while taking organic chemistry during the summer of 2005. He set out to recreate from memory “the serene, sad feeling of the song” that he remembered singing as a child, and hit upon the effective device of setting the melody in canon and raising the key after each verse. An earlier arrangement of the song by Mac Mellor '63 appears on the 1965 album.

When You Say Nothing At All (Overstreet/Schlitz, 1988), arr. Gurewitz '09, recorded again '12. A Princeton alumnus commissioned this arrangement of Keith Whitley’s country music chart-topper in the spring of 2006, for a surprise proposal to his girlfriend. The Nassoons were strategically placed in Prospect Garden, greeted the couple, and “graciously offered to sing them a song” – which turned out to be “their song.” The proposal was a success, although Gurewitz asks forgiveness “for writing 10,000 more ‘doo’s’ for the Nassoons to sing.”

You Never Give Me Your Money (Lennon/McCartney, 1969), arr. Fiorentino '08. Fiorentino arranged this Beatles tune, taken from the medley portion of *Abbey Road’s* B-side, during a year off from Princeton. The arrangement handles the hairpin turns of the original surprisingly well, although the arranger notes with some chagrin that he was obliged to replace the “terrific George Harrison guitar solo” with “a big fat arpeggiated dominant seventh chord that had all the subtlety of a blunt object to the head.”

The '10s

The Nassoons’ eighth decade began, musically speaking, with a continuation of the trend toward setting the popular music of the '70s – the Eagles’ “**Take It Easy**” and Three Dog Night’s “**Shambala**” – and '80s – Jackson Browne’s “**Somebody’s Baby**” and Extreme’s “**More Than Words**.” However after an extended period in which oldies had been the order of the day, the group was, in the words of one recent graduate, “desperate” for arrangements of current popular music. Two notable efforts to fill the gap appeared on the 2014 album: a setting of Beyoncé’s exuberant “**Love on Top**,” and one of up-and-coming country star Hunter Hayes’s bouncy “**Everybody’s Got Somebody But Me**” – one of the group’s few forays into that genre. Several more contemporary songs debuted on the 2016 album, including a rollicking version of “**Hello!**” from *The Book of Mormon* (with customized lyrics), a thumping rendition of Hozier’s breakout hit “**Take Me to Church**” and a trio of soulful ballads from the prolific John Suh '17. One arranger notes that the current group is benefiting from the fact that “popular music has finally moved back toward genres and songs that could actually make good arrangements.” Another

points out that, as in the early '90s, a cappella music has come back to the forefront of popular culture, due in part to the hit movie *Pitch Perfect* (2012) and popular TV shows such as *Glee* and *The Sing-Off* – the latter of which has featured several college a cappella groups, including Princeton's Footnotes, as contestants.

The decade kicked off with a double album release in 2010: the traditional biannual recording and the Nassoons' first Christmas album, aptly titled *Christmas with the Princeton Nassoons*. The latter provided an opportunity to gather the group's holiday repertoire into one place and (one hopes) create an evergreen sales opportunity. It also required that the group assemble a significant chunk of new material on short notice. Six new arrangements appear on the album; several are borrowed from other artists but among the originals is a vocalese-style "**Carol of the Bells**" by honorary Nassoon Jamie Rankin and a swinging rendition of Harry Connick Jr.'s "**I Pray on Christmas**" by Billy Hepfinger '10.

Three of the five albums of the 2010's feature memorable solo turns by Associate Dean of Undergraduate Students Victoria (Tori) Jueds, who met several of the Nassoons in the fall of 2009 when they were brought before her for engaging in some "vaguely nefarious" activities. The disciplinary context was soon set aside as they discovered a common love of singing, and Jueds proposed that she and the group perform together. The first product of this collaboration was an exquisite rendition of George Gershwin's "**Summertime**," captured on the 2010 album; equally impressive in its way is the meditative setting of Sting's "**Fields of Gold**" from 2014. Jueds was made an honorary Nassoon in 2012.

2010

The Girl from Ipanema (Jobim/Gimbel/de Moraes, 1964), arr. Olson '11. One of a cluster of Brazilian songs that the group arranged for their tour to Rio in the winter of 2009. Olson admired the earlier version of "Ipanema" by David Robinson '67, which first appeared on the 1967 album, but "felt the need to do a new version to commemorate the group's most exotic tour in many years." He quotes Robinson's arrangement in the repeat of the bridge to showcase "the older Nassoon sound," and otherwise relies on a pair of syncopated patterns in the upper voices in lieu of the familiar bossa nova beat. Olson recalls "pretzels littering the ground by the boatload" as the group learned the piece, which is full of tricky harmonies and modulations.

More Than Words (Cherone/Bettencourt, 1990), arr. Hepfinger '10. Hepfinger and Jonathan Schwartz '10 found themselves belting out this #1 ballad by Extreme while walking back from rehearsal one night and thought, "Why not arrange it?" They reprise their late-night duet on the album, and Hepfinger, who turned in a spare but effective setting, reports that it was one of the most-requested songs during their time in the group.

O Holy Night (Dwight/Adam, 1858), arr. Gurewitz '09, recorded again '18. A transcription of the lone a cappella track on NSYNC's *Home for Christmas* album of 1998. This recording is also featured on *Christmas with the Princeton Nassoons*. An earlier arrangement of the same song by Andrew Blau '90 appears on the 1990 album.

One Love (Bob Marley, 1977), arr. Fiorentino '08, recorded again '14. In 2007 the Nassoons were invited to sing at a gala honoring Peter Lewis's \$101 million gift for the arts at Princeton, and the development office made "exactly the request one would expect for the celebration of 74-year-old billionaire insurance magnate: did we know any reggae songs?" Fiorentino duly arranged "One Love" and recruited the BodyHype dance troupe to accompany the performance. A miscommunication with the dancers about tempo led to a "painfully slow" debut – Fiorentino recalls that "Bob Marley himself would have found it a bit too mellow" – but the arrangement survived and remains active.

Shambala (Daniel Moore, 1973), arr. Hepfinger '10, recorded again '14. Hepfinger heard this Three Dog Night tune – a top-5 hit in 1973 – on a TV show and decided that its soaring tenor chorus made it a great candidate for an a cappella song. "Shambala" is a mythical Himalayan kingdom referred to in Hindu and Tibetan Buddhist scriptures.

Summertime (Heyward/Gershwin/Gershwin, 1934), arr. Gurewitz '09. When Dean Tori Jueds proposed performing a song with the Nassoons, "Summertime," from *Porgy and Bess*, was her first suggestion. She also chose the key: "Bb, of course. A is for wimps." Gurewitz was happy to oblige; his mother had sung the song to him as a child. The group was anxious before the first performance since the solo is high and exposed and they had never actually heard Jueds sing. As the recording indicates, there was no need for concern. Not to be overlooked is Gurewitz's elegant arrangement, which effectively reproduces the languid feel of the Gershwin original.

Time (Ben Folds, 2005), arr. Schwartz '10. In the fall of 2008 – shortly before he became a judge on *The Sing-Off* – Ben Folds invited college a cappella groups from around the country to post versions of his songs to YouTube, with his handpicked favorites to appear on a forthcoming album. Schwartz, a "huge fan" of Folds, had already started an arrangement of "Time"; he quickly polished it off and the group shot the video in a single take when their van got stuck in the mud on the way to a show. Folds called a few weeks later to say that the Nassoons were among the chosen few out of more than 250 submissions received. He visited Princeton shortly afterward and the group recorded "Time" under his supervision for *Ben Folds Presents: University A Cappella!* When Folds performed at McCarter Theater the following year he invited the Nassoons to open the show. Schwartz calls it "a dream come true to work with one my personal idols, and to have the opportunity to get feedback about my arrangement from the singer/songwriter himself."

Christmas with the Princeton Nassoons (2010)

Carol of the Bells (Wilhousky/Leontovich, 1904), arr. Rankin, recorded again '20. Rankin eschews the lyrics of this traditional carol in favor of a purely syllabic setting – the first for the Nassoons since Urquhart's Bach setting on the 1974 album. The arrangement features a daunting bass line and syncopated accompaniment in the upper parts, with a couple of key changes thrown in for good measure.

I Pray on Christmas (Harry Connick, Jr., 1993), arr. Hepfinger '10. Harry Connick's 1993 *When My Heart Finds Christmas* was a perennial holiday favorite in Hepfinger's home. The gospel-tinged "I Pray on Christmas" is one of four originals on that album; Hepfinger's favorite

part of the arrangement is “when everybody drops out and Kevin Zhu ’12 hits some ungodly low note in the clear” (at 1:22 for those listening at home).

Open Thou Mine Eyes (John Rutter), arr. Fiorentino ’08. A transcription of John Rutter’s lovely SATB version, with a few changes of octave to accommodate male voices. Fiorentino reports that it was never performed while he was an undergraduate, but the Nassoons recorded it with Tori Jueds on *Christmas with the Princeton Nassoons* “more beautifully than [he] could have imagined.”

River (Joni Mitchell, 1971), arr. Hepfinger ’10. This melancholy tune from Joni Mitchell’s seminal *Blue* was tapped for the Christmas album because it mentions the holiday in its opening line. Hepfinger reports that Jonathan Schwartz ’10 had been working on an arrangement of the song but gave it up; he finished it off and gave the solo to Schwartz. The arrangement begins and ends, like Mitchell’s version, with a haunting quotation of “Jingle Bells.”

Silent Night (Mohr/Gruber, 1818). A beautiful rendition of the Boyz II Men version, the lone “standard” and closing track from their 1993 *Christmas Interpretations* album.

Still, Still, Still (trad. Austrian), arr. Gurewitz ’09. A last-minute contribution, “Still, Still, Still” was arranged, taught, and recorded over the course of three days. Gurewitz aimed (successfully) for a simple, straightforward setting that would resonate well in the University Chapel, where the recording was made.

2012

Lies (Hansard/Irglová, 2007), arr. Hepfinger ’10, recorded again ’20. “Lies” is taken from the movie *Once*, an independent Irish film (and later Tony Award-winning musical) about a budding relationship between a Dublin-based busker and a Czech immigrant, played by Glen Hansard and Markéta Irglová, who co-wrote the song. The arrangement, which Hepfinger calls “a spiritual sequel to ‘More Than Words,’” stays out of the way of the melody and puts the focus on Hansard’s wrenching lyrics. Two versions are included on the 2012 album, a lovely studio recording featuring Alan Southworth ’14 and Krishna Choudhary ’14, and (as a hidden track) a stunning live performance featuring the arranger and Jonathan Schwartz ’10.

Mr. Grinch (Geisel/Hague, 1966), arr. Zhu ’12. Zhu saw this Dr. Seuss song as a chance to kill two birds with one stone by adding a fun holiday number to the repertoire and increasing the meager stock of bass solos. The main part of the arrangement hews closely to the version from the 1966 animated TV feature, but Zhu adds a warm setting of the “Welcome Christmas” chorus (“Fahoo fores, dahoo dores”) in the middle section.

Please Please Me (Lennon/McCartney, 1963), arr. Worthington ’82. The Nassoons decided to revive this early Beatles hit after hearing the 80s-era group perform it at the 70th Nassoon reunion in 2011. However the version recorded here is noticeably, albeit subtly, different from the Peskin ’78/Dieck ’78 arrangement that appears on the 1980 and 1988 albums. It’s not clear who “Worthington ’82” is or what became of the original arrangement.

Somebody's Baby (Browne/Kortchmar, 1982), Zhu '12. Zhu thought that the repertoire was light on “jammin’ ’80s rock tunes,” and contributed this #7 Jackson Browne hit, the opening track from the *Fast Times at Ridgemont High* soundtrack.

Take It Easy (Browne/Frey, 1971), arr. Olson '11, recorded again '16. Another Jackson Browne composition (co-written with Glenn Frey), this was the Eagles' first single, charting at #12 in 1972. Olson set out to imitate the country-tinged style of the original, but soon adopted a jazzier approach with syncopated rhythms and thickened-up harmonies. The final product included “mandatory snaps, claps and a sort of ethereal interpretive dance during the breakdown section [!].”

2014

Chanukah Medley (traditional Hebrew), arr. McCarty '14. A mash-up of two popular Chanukah songs, “Sevivon” and “Al Hanissim,” both of which McCarty sang in high school choir. The arrangement is full of clever touches; McCarty's favorites come in the bass line, which quotes the “Sevivon” melody under the “Al Hanissim” section, then reverses the trick a few bars later. “Sevivon” is the Hebrew word for “dreidel,” the spinning top traditionally played with during Chanukah; “Al Hanissim” – roughly, “for the miracles” – is taken from the liturgy giving thanks to God for the miracles that the holiday celebrates.

Everybody's Got Somebody But Me (Hayes/Brainard/Zuffinetti, 2013), arr. McCarty '14. This Jason Mraz-flavored Hunter Hayes tune was arranged as an album feature for Quinton Beck '14, McCarty's roommate and a country music aficionado. The arrangement, written over a single weekend, is relatively simple but effectively reproduces the bouncy syncopation of the original, bringing a lighter and more contemporary song into the repertoire.

Fields of Gold (Sting, 1992), arr. McCarty '14. Written as feature for Tori Jueds, this arrangement takes the acoustic cover by Eva Cassidy rather than the Sting original as a model, featuring gentle arpeggios and a showcase for the full ensemble after the bridge. The Nassoons performed the song with Jueds at her 40th birthday party.

Love on Top (Knowles/Nash/Taylor, 2011), arr. Wilson '13, recorded again '18. By 2011 “I Want You Back,” the group's go-to pop choreo arrangement at the time, was beginning to show its age, having been a hit in 1996. Wilson heard Beyoncé's “Love on Top” on the radio during a tour and it struck him as a perfect way to fill the gap: “completely contemporary but satisfyingly retro, the chords were cool, it begged for choreography, and it had four key changes. What else could you possibly ask for in a showstopper?” It was debuted in 2012 and saved for “very special occasions thereafter.”

Princeton Squirrel (Whiting, 1918; original lyrics by Brownell '13), arr. McCarty '14. In 2012 the Nassoons were commissioned to perform “Lovely Girl,” set to the melody of the WWI-era “Till We Meet Again” and one of the “official songs” of the Alpha Phi sorority (coincidentally, the president of the sorority was the mother of Quinton Beck '14). Shortly afterward they were asked to sing a squirrel-themed set for the debut of Triumph Brewery's Black Squirrel Brew. And so “Lovely Squirrel,” later re-titled “Princeton Squirrel,” was born. With lyrics by Chris

Brownell '13 and others, the resulting ditty harkens back to the cheeky barbershop numbers that were a mainstay of the group's early repertoire.

Take Five (Paul Desmond, 1959), arr. McCarty '14. McCarty chose this famous jazz chart, popularized by the Dave Brubeck Quartet, for his first full arrangement. He includes some tall chords for the upper parts and a catchy duet harmony in the chorus. Along with Jon MacKinnon '94's "Straight to My Heart," a rare example of a Nassoos song in irregular meter.

2016

Hello! (Parker/Lopez/Stone, 2008; original lyrics by Waldrop '18), arr. Waldrop '18. Waldrop reworked the witty opening number from 2011's Tony Award-winning musical *The Book of Mormon* into a slightly frantic pitch to the incoming class to audition for (and join) the Nassoos. "This group will change your life," indeed.

Love Never Felt So Good (Jackson/Anka, 1983), arr. Suh '17. This *Thriller*-era collaboration between Michael Jackson and Paul Anka was released as a posthumous single in 2014, charting at #9. Suh's arrangement, his first for the Nassoos, covers a lot of musical ground, with a lush and subdued opening, a highly-syncopated middle section, and a climactic samba. The arranger reports (perhaps with some exaggeration) that it "took an hour for every four measures," but the end result is surprisingly seamless and satisfyingly dramatic.

Natural Disaster (Brown/Durette, 2012), arr. Waldrop '18, recorded again '22. With its propulsive bass line, aggressive tempo, and wide-open major chord harmonies, Waldrop's deft setting of this deep track from the Zac Brown Band's *Uncaged* is a breath of fresh country air that wouldn't feel out of place on an early Eagles album.

So. Good., arr. Suh '17. Suh discovered this tasty slice of blue-eyed soul, originally performed by Texan Johnny Stimson, in a YouTube performance by a dance group that he follows. He soon fell in love with the song itself, and it's easy to see why: with its behind-the-beat feel and soaring falsetto solo, it has real seductive power. The recorded performance has a slick, professional sound, with a close-miked bass line and stabbing high harmonies. The arranger admits that the finished product would be hard to pull off live, but it makes for a standout album track.

Take Me to Church (Andrew Hozier-Byrne, 2013), arr. McCarty '14. Shortly after graduating McCarty offered to arrange any contemporary song that the current group requested. That December newly-installed music director John Suh '17 proposed "Take Me to Church" by the Irish singer-songwriter Hozier, which was peaking on the Billboard Hot 100 that very month. McCarty keeps the focus on the soloist throughout, with layered backing harmonies and a prominent beat box. The closing bars quote Mark Blaxill '80's setting of "Moondance."

Thinking Out Loud (Sheeran/Wadge, 2014), arr. Suh '17. A big hit for English singer-songwriter Ed Sheeran in 2014, this romantic ballad struck Suh as "the perfect song for us – bright, fun, and catchy." His straightforward arrangement captures the laid-back feel of the original, and the arranger reports that the debut in 1879 arch "was received with the biggest applause I think I had heard at an arch."