

Appendix A - Verbatim Transcript of Interview of Kolby Van Camp

Interviewer [Q]: Lorenzo Butler

Interviewee [A]: Kolby Van Camp

Interview Date: May 1, 2021

Q. Kolby? Kolby.

A. Hello.

Q. Hello. Hello.

A. Hey, man. How are you?

Q. I'm doing well. Yourself?

A. I can't complain.

Q. That's awesome.

A. So, what's going on in Lorenzo's world these days?

Q. Oh, man. So right now, I am currently at my brother's house in Edmond, Oklahoma. It's just north of Oklahoma City. I went and spent the weekend with them. Just hanging out.

A. Nice.

Q. Yeah. So other than that, just finishing up these last couple of chapters. I started writing yours a little bit, and I wanted to -- I think I have a good page of just like the things -- that I know generally. And so, from there, it's like, all right, let me get some clarification on this and that; as well as some other things that I haven't written yet.

A. Yeah. Well, cool.

Q. All right.

A. So, do you have some questions for me?

Q. Yes. I do. So, before we start, I wanted to make sure that it was okay for me to record this call?

A. Oh, yeah.

Q. I have my iPad on the side. I wanted to get your approval.

A. Yeah. No. You could totally record this call. Like that's not a problem.

Q. Okay. All right, then, I'm going to do a little clap thing so I can synch up the audio and stuff.

A. Okay. Yeah.

Q. And from there, we'll start.

A. Okay. Sounds good.

Q. All right. So Kolby, the first thing that I'd like to ask you is on -- it's about -- because I know that -- I was looking at FaceBook, and I was like I got things like your parents' name and your birthday.

There's just one thing I'd like to add is just, where were you born?

A. Yeah. I was actually born in Tulsa Regional Hospital in Tulsa, Oklahoma, actually. And that was January 22, 1999, in Tulsa, Oklahoma. So that's when I was born and that's where I was born.

Q. All right. So now we got that stuff, now I want to get to you, like the person. Like you're painting the picture of who you are.

The first thing I want to ask is, how did you get your musical start? How did you start in music?

A. Sure. So, the first thing that I'm going to say before I answer that question, since I'm driving from Manhattan to Topeka, there's two really stupid dead spots on I70. So, if I lose the call, I'll call you right back.

Okay?

Q. All right.

A. I meant to tell you that. I didn't say that before. Yeah.

So, I got started in music in, geese, 2006, 2007. I was in the third grade, and my parents signed me up for piano lessons with a local teacher in Topeka. At that time, we were living in Topeka, Kansas. My parents still live in Topeka, Kansas.

Yeah. And then in that same year, I actually joined the Lawrence Children's Choir. I had no idea that they existed, but my parents saw them on the news. They made the local news because they had just come back from singing at Carnegie Hall, and my parents were like, "That's definitely something that we want Kolby to be a part of." So that's where I started my formal training.

But I mean, I've always been a really musical person. My dad used to, when I was two, my parents got me a little drum set, and my dad plays the piano. And he used to play ragtime, like Scott Joplin. And I played the drums with him, and I'd keep a nice little beat. I apparently had pretty decent coordination, and my parents, there was -- there was like a religious show. There were two shows that I always watched very religiously when I was a kid.

The first one was Meredith Wilson's *The Music Man*. And so, I watched that probably once a day for 10 years. The second one was Disney's *Aristocats*. And I always identified with the singing, and the playing of the piano, and all of that stuff. So that's kind of where I think I got a lot of my musicality from because I was pretty exposed to that kind of stuff at a really early age. My parents played classical music when I went to bed at night.

But I started formally taking lessons, like piano lessons and started singing in choir in the third grade. So that's kind of where I got my start.

Q. Wow. That is pretty cool. So, we got the start like some of your influences in terms of like the ushering of who you are as a musician.

Can you talk about how you got further educated into music? For instance, I'm familiar with -- I think you told me that you and Anna had met at piano competition. Right?

A. Yeah. It was sweet. We actually met in choir.

Q. Oh. Okay.

A. We didn't compete against each other in competition in the piano. Yeah.

Q. Okay. Can you tell me about your education, and especially some of the opportunities that you had before coming to K-State?

A. Yeah. So, I sang with the Lawrence Children's Choir until I was in 10th grade. So, I went from 3rd grade to 10th grade. I had been -- they had a lot of choirs underneath the organization that is known as Lawrence Children's Choir.

And I started in Choristers. That's kind of like their little-person choir. They had younger, but Choristers is kind of the next step before you get into the top ensemble, which is the Touring Choir. And they literally do what their name says. They tour every summer.

So, from third to sixth grade, I sang in Choristers. And that was under the direction of a fantastic lady named Pam Bushouse. And that's spelled B-U-S-H-O-U-S-E. It's like bus-house, but it's pronounced like Bushouse. And she was great. And she actually gave me my first ever opportunity to conduct a piece into a company.

When I first started piano lessons, you know, the first year is kind of like, eh. Because it's all that really, you know, beginner stuff. Like here's where your pitchers are, and just kind of boring. I didn't really enjoy it. But once I started figuring out how to play it, and started figuring out what I could do and how I understood the music, it became a lot more fun for me.

And so, one day, sometime during my time in Choristers, or it was just after. I don't remember exactly when it was, but I -- actually, I do remember when it was. I had graduated out of Choristers, but I had come back to be an assistant. So, I kind of helped, and there were a couple of kids that really needed some supervision because they were really distracting to the ensemble. And so, it was kind of my mission to make sure that these kids stayed on track.

And there was one time where this kid that I was supposed to be watching, he just couldn't get with it, and Ms. Bushouse went over, and all the other assistants were helping other people, and they were in the middle of a song, and she said, "I'm going to take care of him. You go conduct." I was like, "What?" She said, "No. Yeah. The piece is still coming. So go."

So, I hopped up there. I was probably -- that was between seventh and ninth grade. And I hopped up there, and I started conducting. You know, I didn't have any kind of idea about formal time pattern, I just kind of conducted the beats. I tried to show them what I knew from the music. And yeah.

That's kind of like where I got my first opportunity at the podium. And it was -- it was very -- I felt very powerful. So maybe that says something a little bit on the darker side about me. Because I was just kind of like, oh. It wasn't so much like look at the music. It was like wow; I like this power. So that was kind of the first real case that I have of a leadership position like that.

But from 7th grade to 10th grade, I bumped up to the Touring Choir. And I actually -- we went on some really fun tours. My seventh-grade year, we actually stayed in Carnegie Hall. So, I stayed in Carnegie Hall, and that was fun. My eighth-grade year, we actually were invited to the International Choral Festival in Missoula, Montana. So, we spent 10 days at the University of Montana. And that was one of the best tours we ever went on.

My ninth-grade year, we went and toured -- we were invited to a festival -- an honors festival in Louisiana. The capitol of Louisiana is making my mind blank. New Orleans. So, we stayed there.

Then my 10th grade year, we did a tour with a couple of other choirs at the University of Boulder in Colorado; and that's where I finished out my time with the Lawrence Children's Choir.

So that's kind of like my initial choral background.

As a pianist, I kind of took off as a piano player and I loved it. And I loved it so much that I -- I was that kid that I just -- my parents didn't have to tell me to go practice. I would just go practice because I enjoyed it.

And I switched piano teachers and started taking from a lady named Doctor Sarah Higgins, H-I-G-G-I-N-S, Higgins. And she was in Lawrence, and she gave the recommendation of one of the people in Lawrence Children's Choir. And she was great. And she really pushed me, and I learned a lot of really cool stuff with her. It was kind of during that time I think I started taking with her in the seventh grade. It was either the seventh or eighth grade. But I had not yet gotten to high school. And I kind of realized I really love this. I'm practicing for four hours a day. I think I could be a concert pianist.

And so, I kind of -- I've always been a person where if I set my sights on something, and that's my goal, I'm going to go for it. I'm going to give it 100 percent to go get it. And so, I put 100 percent in for -- until I was in 10th grade, to try and be a concert pianist, and I actually learned some rather difficult repertoire. I mean, I learned The Rhapsody in G-Minor by Brahms. I learned a Prelude to G-Minor by Rachmaninoff. I learned the first movement of a Mozart Sonata, Number 5, in G-Major. Perhaps I have an affinity for the Key of G, obviously like the key of G obviously.

But after that, when I hit 10th grade, my dad had always told me, he said, "You're a fabulous pianist, but you're a better singer, and you just don't realize it yet." And I was kind of like, "Yeah. Whatever, dad. I am piano 100 percent." But then I kind of woke up one day, and I said, "You know, I'm not going to be a concert pianist. I don't have the energy any more to put in four hours a day, seven hours a day. Like I just -- I can't do that."

You know, I was involved in sports. In ninth grade, you know, I started dating somebody. So, school being -- like the amount of time that I could dedicate to practicing was

dwindling. There were just other things that I wanted to focus on to -- I wanted to expand my horizons. I wanted to be a well-rounded individual.

So, I kind of gave up that dream of being a concert pianist, and kind of embraced what my dad said about that I was a better singer than I was a pianist. And I'm happy to say that I think he was right. Yeah.

Then I started taking singing very seriously. And when I graduated out of the Lawrence Children's Choir, I then moved on to Allegro Choirs of Kansas City, the artistic director -- the founder of the Lawrence Children's Choir was a lady named Janeal, J-A-N-E-A-L, Janeal Krehbiel; that's spelled K-R-E-H-B-I-E-L, Krehbiel. And her -- a young lady who at the time when she was in the public school system, was her -- a student taught with her, and her name is Christy Elsner; and Christy went on to create the Allegro Choirs of Kansas City. And they have a bunch of -- they're like the Lawrence Children's Choir, but on steroids, and actually had a men's choir called Spirito.

And so, I joined Spirito in 2016, and they also toured. I went on a tour of Italy with them in 2016 as a junior. And in my senior year, 2017, we toured St. Louis. And yeah. And then I sang with my old school choir, Deo Gloria.

I was in a co-op, and we had enough people, and it was called Cornerstone Family Schools in Topeka. And we had enough people that we had a choral program. And we competed at competitions, and on choirs for TV, won our regional -- or won our district, won our regional, and then won the national competition. Every year of high school that I was in, we went to the National American Association of Christian Schools, AACCS, competition in South Carolina; and we won every year that I was in high school. We took first place.

And then -- yeah. And then -- I'm trying to think of all the stuff that I did. There was so much stuff that I did in relation to music. I'll stop talking, and I'll let you ask some more questions, and I'll see what more I can answer.

Q. That is great, and I'm just writing stuff down. I'm just writing -- I just want to let you whoop. I was, "Man, this is really cool stuff." So, this seems like you were not only inclined to do music, but you were avidly enjoying performing music as well as being encouraged by your family to do so.

Right?

A. Yeah. That's correct.

Q. So, when did you know that you wanted to pursue a career or a life in music? Was it during this time? Was there a time or a moment after?

A. It was kind of -- it was -- when I started ninth grade, and that was like I had four years until I got to college, I always knew that I wanted to pursue something in music. It was in 10th grade when I kind of realized that I wasn't going to be the concert pianist that I thought I'd might try and be. I was kind of like, you know, I love singing. I love choir. I'd love to be a choir director someday. And that idea always stuck with me, and it's still sticking with me.

And ever since 10th grade, it was kind of my goal. I remember proclaiming to my parents, I had come down and we were at dinner, and I said, "You know, I'm going to be a professional choir director. And I'm going to go get a doctorate, and I'm going to work in colleges." My parents were like, "All right. We definitely think you can do it, so you should go. We think you have the skills; you should go for it." And so that's kind of where it took shape.

And I've never looked back. So, I would say that I really knew that I wanted to be a professional musician when I first started high school in ninth grade, but it was in tenth grade where I kind of zeroed in and said, "I'm going to be a choir director."

For a personal note, I've always wanted to get a doctorate in something for a long time. And that --

Q. He might have hit a dead spot.

A. -- to be an Oasis of the Plains, as they like to call it. She had a doctrine -- say that again.

Q. Until you cut off right after you said that you had always known that you wanted a doctorate in something.

A. Okay. Yeah. See, that's why I let -- I hit the first dead patch. So, I might be spotty here for about the next 30 seconds.

Yeah. So, I was sure that I wanted to doctorate. Something of my -- and that kind of pre-dated my desire to be a professional -- okay. I'm watching bars on my phone.

Q. Right now, it's a dead patch. Right now, it's a little spotty. Yes.

A. Yeah. Okay. Yeah. I'm still at one bar, but I'm just coming out of it. It's right over by Texaco. It's so irritating. It's this one-minute-long spot for two miles. And after that, it goes back to normal until I get close to my parents' house.

But can you hear me okay now?

Q. Yes.

A. Okay. Yeah. I always wanted to get a doctorate. That always pre-dated my desire to be a professional musician. And that's because my grandfather, a guy named Vic Van Camp, V-I-C. He actually went to Kansas State in the 50s, and he got his doctorate in medicine. He was a large and small animal vet in Colby, Kansas. My dad was born and raised in Colby, Kansas, and that's how I got my name. Yeah. So, he was a doctor at an animal care.

And then, my dad went on to medical school, and he's a triple-board certified interventional radiologist. And so, he's Doctor Van Camp. And so, I've always kind of wanted to be like Doctor Van Camp, 3.0. So that's always kind of been a goal of mine.

And it just -- it became obvious to me when I was about in 10th grade that choir was the best way for me to achieve that. And being a singer -- a professional singer, and chorister, and performer in that way rather than a concert pianist. So that's kind of when that desire came in to effect for me.

Q. Okay. That is awesome. Can you speak a little bit more on the importance that your family has had not only in your musical life, but in your life as general in terms of wanting you to pursue the betterment of yourself? Especially to the encouragement of you.

A. Yeah. So, I know that you know this about me. But I'm a Christian, and my parents are Christians, and my dad has always -- my mom and my dad have always been people that were kind of like everybody on this planet are given talents. And I lived my life by the parable of the talents, you know. I don't want to be the servant that buries his talent and didn't do anything with it even though he had said talent.

And I've never been one to if I knew that I was good at something to just kind of not do it because, I don't know, people thought I should. I don't know. And even though I think I'm a pretty decent musician, I've had a number of people throughout the years kind of in a round-about way -- very few of them have been very point-blank, but there have been a couple. But most people are rather supportive of me and what I do, but there have been a couple of people that have just been kind of like, "You know, that's great, but you're never going to achieve anything. You don't have what it takes."

And my parents have always encouraged me to take those doubters and those naysayers, and to always hold onto that, and let that fuel the fire for me going on to achieve what I want to achieve. But they very much been -- everybody under the impression, and I think it's an

accurate impression, that everybody on this earth has a talent, and it's our responsibility to cultivate that talent to the best of our abilities for the glory of God. And so, it was very obvious.

You know, for me, music was my talent. For my brother, athletics is his talents. For my mom, education was her talent. For my dad, medicine was his talent. And it was very obvious that all of us have these talents, and that we shouldn't bury those, and that we should embrace those and go 100 percent to make the most out of those talents, and achieve everything that we possibly can with those talents.

So, they've always been very supportive of me. They've always told me, "You know, Kolby, if you want to do plumbing, apply. And if that's what you want to do, we would have supported you. And, you know, obviously we think that you're destined for more than being a plumber, not that there's anything wrong with plumbers. You know, the world needs plumbers, and plumbers make big money." But they always said that they wanted me to achieve the highest level that I could achieve in the areas that I'm gifted in. And I think I'm pretty gifted in music, and so I -- and my parents have always told me that I was.

So, they've always encouraged me to pursue everything 100 percent that I possibly could in relation to music. And in doing so, they helped to provide me the best opportunities. You know, the Lawrence Children's Choir; Allegro Choirs of Kansas City, studying with Doctor Higgins.

I forgot to mention that I had a very pivotal voice teacher in my life, a guy named Doctor Christopher Smith. And he was my mentor in high school; and he actually was a doctoral student at KU when I met him. And then, after he graduated from KU, he went on to take the choral director job at Mid-America Nazarene University in Olathe, Kansas. And so, in my senior year of high school, 2017, he said, "This is my first year I need basses. I don't have very many bases in my top ensemble, called Heritage Choir. Kolby, will you come and sing in my choir at Mid-America Nazarene. So, I was actually getting the collegiate experience, like collegiate world experience a year before I actually became a full-time college student. So that's -- I forgot to mention that, and that's really important because Doctor Smith -- as Doctor Smith taught me, that's where I really kind of took off as a singer.

And I won some competitions. I won a couple of national competitions. And I actually won an international competition, and that was with the American of Fine Arts Festival. And I actually got to sing in the -- there's a recital clause -- so there's like Carnegie Hall, the big

hall that everybody is familiar with. And then there's like a smaller recital hall that holds 50 people. It's called -- I think it's Weill Recital Hall. It's spelled W-E-I-L-L. The Weill Recital Hall. But I consider it in Carnegie Hall because it's in the Carnegie Hall Complex. And I actually won that. I actually got to give an honors recital there in 2016. So, if it wasn't for Doctor Smith, I don't think that I would have become the -- or achieved as much as I did in high school as a vocalist leading up to college. And I'm sad that I neglected to say something about him until now. But he's a very important person in my life.

So, it's kind been like my parents; my now-fiancé, then girlfriend, Anna; and then Doctor Smith; and Doctor Higgins; and a couple of really key people in my life that have always been like, "You have what it takes. You need to go for it because you can do something special here." And I've always believed it. So that's what I did, and I went for it, and I'm still going for it, and it hasn't failed me yet.

Q. That is awesome. That was one of my follow up questions was about if you had taken any vocal lessons because by the time that I met you, even though you were already a sophomore, you had already a mature, mature voice. And so, that gives me hints that you might have had vocal lessons as well as just natural talent.

But having that level of intellect about your voice at such a young age usually reflects that you have had some type of vocal training before.

A. Yeah. And I took private lessons from seventh to twelfth grade. So yeah. I was - - once a week, I was studying with someone in some capacity. Before my voice changed, while my voice changed, and after my voice changed. Now I like to think that because of that is why I still have a pretty solid command of my falsetto, and many of my peers don't. And yeah. I think that has something also to do with the vocal maturity that I got going into college.

And I'm proud of that. I put a lot of effort in from seventh to twelfth grade, and eleventh and twelfth grade, I really started to reap dividends in it. And I got to K-State, and it's just been a wonderful experience from that point forward.

Then also, I want you to know that I'm a minute away from hitting the second dead patch here right by my parents' house. So, when I hit it, I'm sure you will know. And just flag me down.

Q. Okay.

A. Yeah. I'm keeping an eyeball here on my bars so I can see it on my phone. So just let me know when I cut out because I know it does.

Q. Okay. So, the next set of questions is moving towards like your time at K-State. The time having you -- how you got there? Who you studied with, and what was your influences there?

A. Yeah. So, I always dreamed I was going to go to K-State. I was going to K-State football games while my mother was pregnant with me. So, I am -- if there is anybody that truly bleeds purple, it's me. Like I'm unequivocally -- I will fight anybody that says that they're more of a K-State fan than I am, or that they belong at K-State more than I do, because I -- literally, I think I was bred to go to K-State.

My grandparents. My paternal grandparents, Marge and Vic Bancamp, they studied -- they met at K-State. My dad -- my mom and my dad never went to K-State, but my dad has always gone to K-State football games, basketball games. Honestly, he should have gone to K-State. I think he regrets that he didn't. But then, you know, I've always been purple, through and through, and so it's just a no-brainer for me. It's like I always knew I was going to go to K-State. K-State's 45 minutes from my parents' house. So, it's just far enough that I can kind of cut the apron strings, but at the same time, if ever need be, they are right there.

And I love Kansas State. I love the campus. I love the faculty. You know, it really worked out. So, in 2014, I was actually -- I had a really cool opportunities in ninth grade.

The Lawrence Children's Choir, I sang with the Tour Choir. We got invited to sing at the Kansas Music Educators Association in Wichita. And we gave a concert on one of those pieces. There was a four-hand piano accompaniment, and I got -- I was student-selected. I was selected as the student to play with the staff accompanist, I want to believe named, Marilyn Epp, E-P-P, Marilyn Epp. And she was great. So, I got to play this piece at KMEA.

And after the concert, Doctor Yu, of all people, approached me, and she said, "Hey, we have the Summer Choral Institute. It's our 40th year. It's the Summer Choral Institute in 2014, and we have a student accompanist spot that maybe -- you know we usually -- at the time Choral Institute was only allowed for 10th and 11th graders." But she was impressed enough with me and what I did as the student accompanist that she said, "We want you to come as a ninth grader."

So, I came as a ninth grader to K-State in the Summer Choral Institute. And I learned more about being a choral accompanist, and I got to sit and just kind of experience Summer Choral Institute with Doctor Yu and Doctor Oppenheim, then to Doctor Pinkall. And I actually sat in on one of Doctor Pinkall's master's classes. And as a ninth grader, I said, "I'm going to study with that guy." I was like, "He is the man. I love what he says. I love the way he teaches. He's the man."

So, in 2015, I got invited back, and I was in the Summer Choral Institute again. And I went out of my way to request Doctor Oppenheim -- Doctor Pinkall for a master class. And I got it, and I had a 30-minute master class with him. It was really great. And I just feel from that point forward, K-State is where I'm going to be. I was like, "Summer Choral Institute was great. So, this -- if this is a micro chasm of what they do here at K-State, then this is fantastic," because it was like all of the stars were aligning for K-State to suddenly catch fire in terms of choral music and for me to be right there in the middle of it.

So, I always knew I was going to go to K-State. And senior year came around, I graduated, got some scholarships, went to K-State. When you audition as an undergraduate, if you know any of the faculty, you can put down maybe one of your preference. You have to put down your top three preferences. And it's nothing against any of the other faculty, because I love our voice faculty. But I wanted to study under Doctor Pinkall so badly that I put Doctor Pinkall, Doctor Pinkall, Doctor Pinkall. I didn't want to study with anybody else. I wanted to study with him.

And again, I did the video. I auditioned for concert choir, made concert choir. And it's just been a wonderful experience. Doctor Pinkall has been huge in terms of my vocal maturity. Doctor Oppenheim -- I thought I'd use something about choir going into KC, now I know something about choir. Like, almost at my post-K-State career, Doctor Oppenheim has forgotten more about choral music than most people will ever know. And I truly feel humbled to have invest in that at the feet of his choral genius, and learned from him because it's completely reshaped how I think about choral music and how I am as a musician. So, both of those people have really been influential in my time at K-State.

Q. Okay. The next thing that I want to ask before we move on to other things that you studied at K-State.

Because I think that the major you are graduating with now, if I remember correctly, isn't like an additional major, or a major change than what you had initially coming into K-State?

A. Yeah. So, I had originally entered as a music education in vocal performance. And this will tie into my composing, but I had already been composing rather seriously by that point. And I just -- I didn't love the vocal performance side like I thought that I would.

And again, don't get me wrong, I love it. But it's also extremely taxing for me, physically, emotionally, and psychologically. And I just kind of was like -- I felt like I was burning myself out very quickly. And I said, "You know, I'm just not loving this. I'm never going to see in the path -- like that's not what I want to do. I can take all of the classes that I want to take through vocal performance, and still get a separate degree outside of music education that I really want to get."

It was at that time, I had actually taken a years' worth of one-credit lessons with the composition faculty, Doctor Weston. And I just kind of knew after I took a year's worth of lessons with him, I was like, "I need to get a bachelor's in music education, a bachelor's in music composition. Because I love Doctor Weston."

He's kind of like -- there's three people that have been very influential in my time at K-State: Doctor Oppenheim, Doctor Pinkall, and Doctor Weston. As I was telling you, Doctor Weston, I love his teaching. I love what he has to do. I connect with him really well. And I think what he has to say about my music is very intuitive. And yeah.

So, I want to get a composition major. So, I was like, "I want to do something fun. You know, I want to have those two degrees." I've always been an over-achiever. So, I was like, "I can get a double major." I might as well get as many degrees as possible while I have the time to do so. Yeah. So, I changed up my bachelor's of music in composition in my junior year -- in my sophomore year. I don't remember. I think it was the second semester of my sophomore year. I don't remember exactly when I did, but I did change it halfway through my college -- my undergraduate experience. And that was the best decision I've ever made. It was a fantastic decision.

Q. So as a follow up to that, had you always been composing? Because you said that you kind of ramped up a little bit more as you got into college. So, in terms of composition, and your compositional life, how was that going before and during your time at K-State?

A. Yeah. So, I actually -- so it's really cool how I became a composer. So, my piano teacher, Doctor Sarah Higgins, who is just a really wonderful lady.

And she -- I was talking to her one day about her degrees. Because I was like, "Why do you, as a doctorate, why are you just giving private lessons? Why aren't you teaching at KU or something?" And she said, "Well, that's not the path that I want to go." And she said, "Also, I don't have any conventional degrees." I said, "What do you mean?" She said, "I got my undergraduate -- I got my bachelor's in piano performance, and I got my masters in music theory. And then I got a doctorate in composition." She said, "I'm actually a composer first and a teacher second." And I didn't know that. That completely blew my mind. And I said, "Really?" And at the time, I had recently discovered MuseScore, the free notation software, and I kind of doodled around with some stuff in it because I thought it was kind of interesting. But I didn't do anything really seriously. And I said, "Really? You're a composer?" I said, "You know, I just kind of thumb around -- doing some composing around." And she said, "Well, why don't we do this?" She said, "We have hour-long lessons every week. So why don't we take 30 minutes to work on piano." Because I had already expressed to her that I felt kind of burned out about piano. And she said, "Why don't we take the other 30 minutes and do composition lessons?" I said, "Okay. Yeah. That's cool."

And so, on her first assignment, I'll never forget it. Her first assignment was, "I want you to write a 16-measure piece for the piano, and I want you to write it in musician mode." And so, I did. And she liked it, and I thought it was a lot of fun. And yeah. It kind of -- that's kind of how it started. I said, "You know, I think I'm going to do some more composing." And I enjoyed it. And I loved it. And that was probably 2015 -- 2014/2015.

Then fast-forward to 2016, and at the time, the director of Spirito, when I was singing with the Allegro Choirs of Kansas City, Spirito was conducted by the really prominent choral composer, Jake Narverud, Doctor Jake Narverud. He wasn't Doctor Jake Narverud at the time. He is now. And I had been working on a setting of Sure on this Shining Night. I was very inspired by Morten Lauridsen. And it was -- in looking back, it's a disaster. I think I actually threw the score away in a very brazen kind of way because I was so repulsed by it after coming back six years later and looking at it. But I showed him the score, and I said, "I know you're a formal composer. I've kind of been composing for choir myself. What do you think?" I sent it to him in an email.

He emailed me back really quickly. He said, "I want to talk to you about this at our next rehearsal beforehand. Do you have time?" I said, "Yeah." So, I showed up to rehearsal an hour early, and we went into one of the practice rooms in the Allegro Studio, and we sat down. And he gave me some pointers. He talked to me about it. He said, "Do you think you're going to be composing?" And I said, "Yeah. I love it." And he said, "Well, I'd like to give you lessons that we could work on with choral composing." Okay. Cool. So, I met -- then I started taking two different lessons. I was getting two different opinions about composition.

And then, unfortunately, Dr. Higgins had some really terrible circumstances happen, and her husband got very sick, and he died, and her son was in a terrible motorcycle accident, and she got cancer. It was very Job-esk. And she just stopped giving lessons all together. So, I haven't seen her since 2016, which is really unfortunate. We email every once in a while.

So, then I started taking lessons with Jake, and then -- 2016, 2017. Then I got to K-State, and I was still writing choral music and still doing stuff. So, I think I would say that I officially started composing in 2015, if I could put a date on it. That's what I've been saying I started composing. So, it's almost been -- it's been seven years now -- six years, seven years. So yeah.

Q. Oh, man. That's sick. I didn't know that about you and Jake Narverud. That is -- you got yourself like a mad -- like a pedigree, man. This is awesome.

A. Yeah. I'm a very blessed person. What can I say?

Q. That is awesome. So, before we talk about more things about your compositional life, I'd also like to talk about -- like you said that piano was a large part of your musical development before this major change in focus into both composing in voice/choral.

Did you keep pursuing lessons in piano once you got into K-State?

A. Yeah. So, I actually took one year of piano lessons with one of the K-State faculty because I was required to because I had a keyboard scholarship. And I hated it. I hated it. I did not like the teacher. I didn't click with the teacher. And I keep -- even though I was voice choir was my primary emphasis, he expected me to be a concert pianist. Because I gave him a pretty decent audition. I played some pretty difficult rap. And so, he was kind of like, "Oh. Well, listen, I can learn about your crazy stuff in no time flat."

And I actually bombed my jury -- my second semester of freshman year to the point where he left me a really scathing remark on my teacher evaluation -- not my teacher evaluation, but my jury notes. And it was very frustrating. And I just hated it. And I think that's when I kind of knew that the era of me being a professional pianist was done.

So, in order to fulfill more of the keyboard scholarship requirements, I actually asked this teacher, I said, "Can I -- I have an interest in taking organ. Can I switch over to organ with Doctor Pickering?" And I think he was happy to not have me in the studio, which I understand. Because I didn't exemplify the piano qualities that a lot of his other students did. And that's fine. Like, I didn't have any kind of delusions about it. And he said, "Yeah. That's fine. Go ahead. And yes, we'll keep your keyboard scholarship."

So, I took three semesters of organ lessons with Doctor Hickery before I had to stop that because he ran out of space in the studio. He was kind of like, "Well, you're just kind of like somebody who wants to take lessons, and I have people who actually need to take lessons, so I'm going to have to kick you out." Like very politely. And I totally understood, and it worked out fine with my schedule. I was becoming very busy at the time anyway with more important things.

So, I -- for the first time in my life since third grade, at the end of 2019 was when I stopped taking formal keyboard lessons. So, I've been doing that since then -- or I did it up to then, and then since that point in time, I have yet to take any more lessons.

Q. Okay. From there, I'd like to talk about you as the composer and choral director outside of your coursework at K-State. Let me rephrase that.

A. Okay. Sure.

Q. So, you say that you had a very influential time at K-State, especially academically in terms of lessons, in mentorship, as well as private lessons.

So, what were some opportunities that you were able to have either as a composer, as a choral director senior, as well as a soloist? Were there any competitions that you participated in for voice, composition, and even keyboard if there was any?

A. Yeah. So, at K-State, you know, I competed in NATS, the National Association of Teachers of Singing. They're the collegiate competition I've competed in since I've been a freshman. And I was a finalist in 2017 and 2019. In 2018, I was not a finalist. I was very frustrated. So, in 2017, I was a finalist; 2018, I did not become a finalist; 2019, I was a finalist;

in 2020, I was a finalist. And 2017, I took first place; 2019, I took fifth place; in 2020, I took third place.

So, it was those three years of being a finalist, meaning that I had become a national quarter semi-finalist because you're qualifying for the national competition to become a finalist. And I was in the West-Central Region of the United States. So, I did that.

And then solo vocal work, I -- with K-State -- I mean I was in the opera workshop every semester; and then I did the -- I did the opera with you. I did Susannah in 2020. And then -- yeah. So, there's that.

Q. Okay.

A. Nothing -- nothing really earth-shattering with K-State. But outside of my time at K-State, I had some successes. I actually got the job to be the choir director -- the chancel choir in First Lutheran Church in 2018. They needed somebody to fill in for their Easter Service, so I -- they said, "We'll give you \$500 for five rehearsals and two performances on Easter." And I was like, "Okay." So, I did. And then, afterwards, they said, "Did you like that?" I said, "Yeah. I loved it." They were like, "We like you too, so how about you just become the full-time guy and paid a salary." Okay. So, I did, and I've held that position since 2018.

Then as a solo vocalist, I actually, through a very long and convoluted series of events, was invited to be a keynote performer with the Susanville Symphony in Susanville, California. It's directed by the former Survivor TV personality, a guy named Benjamin Coach-Wade. He's a great guy. I actually have a close relationship with him now because of it. But I was invited out. They paid me to come out and I sang with their orchestra. I sang some pieces I composed, and I sang *Bella siccome un angelo* from *Don Pasquale*, by Donizetti. Yeah. That was a really cool experience.

Oh. And then, at K-State, in 2019, it's called *Rhapsody Six*, I believe it was. We sang Mozart's *Requiem* finished by Robert Levin. And I had one of the solos. I had the baritone solo for the *Benedictus*, which was really cool. I stand out with the choir and the chamber orchestra. I mean, you know that because you were there. But I guess I need to say it for the "camera." But yeah.

That's what I found -- I haven't done anything in terms of keyboard. Nothing impressive. I didn't even try. I didn't audition for anything. I didn't do that kind of stuff.

Let's see. Is there anything else? I don't know. Ask me another question, and maybe I'll come up with something else.

Q. So, I know that our time as choristers at K-State, we were able to have the opportunity to perform at a national choral conference.

So, I was wondering as your choral -- as a choral singer as well as a composer, have you had any opportunities for success? Because I'm familiar that you had a piece but that had also performed at a national conference as well.

A. Right. So, I actually started going to the ACDA National Conferences in 2015. I auditioned for the National Mixed High School Honor Choir, and I got in as a bass. So, I started singing in honor choirs like that in 2015. Then I got in again, because the national conference is every other year. It's a bi-annual thing with the ACDA. Or it's -- you know, that's not my angle, but you know what I mean.

So, in 2015, that was with Doctor **André Thomas** in Salt Lake City. And then 2017, I got in again; and that was in Minneapolis; and that was really cool one because we got to sing with the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra. They're a Grammy-winning orchestra. And we got to work with Eric Whitacre. So, I got spend a week working with Eric Whitacre and seeing his music. And that was revolutionary. That was life changing.

And then, when I came to K-State -- in 2017, I graduated, and I came to K-State. And then concert choir had been selected to sing at the Southwest ACDA Conference that next semester. So, we sang in 2018, we sang at the ACDA -- Southwest ACDA in Oklahoma City. And then in 2019, you were there, and we went to NCCO together in Maryland. So that's cool.

And then, as a college student, I also started singing in some professional choirs in Kansas City.

So, Jake Narverud, who has really been a mentor to me over the years, started a professional choir called the Tall Grass Chamber Choir. And he invited me to a part of the Tall Grass Chamber Choir as a sophomore. And I obviously said yes. And we've been a professional recording ensemble since 2018 -- December of 2018. And we actually have some music on Spotify I would highly recommend you listen to. But that's been really cool. And we've actually premiered some pieces by Ola Gjielo, by Daniel Elder, by Ivo Antognini, and Jake himself. So that's really cool.

And then for a summer in 2019, I sang with KC Vitas, B-I-T-A-S. They're kind of the "premier" new music ensemble in Kansas City. So, I sang with them for their summer series, which was really interesting. But I didn't re-audition. It was kind of a lot to do, and I didn't enjoy it like I thought I would. So, there was that. But they're still an excellent ensemble. It was more me than it was them. So, I did that.

Yeah. It's unfortunate because everything happened with COVID, but the Tall Grass Chamber Choir was actually selected to sing at the 2021 ACDA convention in Dallas; but you know, that was cancelled. And we actually got picked up to record an album of sacred music by NAPSOS, but that is going to cost like \$50,000. So, we're actively trying to raise money for that by grants and stuff. So, it's still in the works. I don't know if it will end up happening, but just the fact that NAXOS was interested in us in the first place was cool. Yeah. That's kind of what I've been doing outside of K-State as a chorister.

And then as a composer, I mean, my first real commission came from Doctor Apanheim for the Real Men Sing Convention in Manassas, Virginia. And he was giving an honor choir -- it was like a district honor choir thing for this -- I can't remember what it was at this point, but it was Manassas, Virginia, and it was a tenor-based ensemble. And I told him -- I had showed him some of my music, and he was impressed with it. He said, "You know, I have this thing coming up, and I don't know -- I have a new piece that I want to program, but I don't have any music. Would you write something?" I said, "Yeah. Of course." And he said, "I won't pay you because I don't have the money to pay you, but what I will do is I actually have a little publishing company, and I'll publish it for you." Okay. Sounds good to me. So that was a real - - that was the first real commission I got.

And I had originally had doodled out this thing for a folk song, *The Rocky Road to Dublin*. And it was rather long. There was a lot of verses. There was a lot of stuff. And I showed it to him and I said, "I'm just not feeling it." And he said, "Yeah. I'm not feeling it either. What else do you got?" And I said, "You know, I recently became reacquainted with the text *In Flanders' Fields*." And at that time, I was really into genealogy, and I had recently discovered that my maternal grandmother, her uncle -- so my great, great uncle was a guy named Frank Sparient Pierce, and he was actually sent to the Argonne Forest in World War I, and he was a part of the Infantry Division that lead the charge into the Argonne Forest when the Doughboys first came on the scene in World War I. And he was actually injured in combat,

taking a village called Cumieres in France, and he was sent back home and had honorably discharged. He got a Purple Heart. He got a Silver Star, and he got a bunch of other awards. And I was blown away by his story. I didn't know that any of this existed, but I was able to contact the National Archives and get all of this information about him. I found this -- his service record. I found his headstone in Missouri. It's really cool. And I was just kind of like I really feeling this World War I thing.

And *In Flanders' Fields*, I was so moved at the moment, so I told Doctor Oppenheim. I think it was on a Thursday. I said, "I'm going to come -- I want to work on *In Flanders' Fields*." He said okay. And I had a three-hour chunk of time between what I just talked to Oppenheim and when I had my next class. And I went down to one of the practice rooms, and I said, "I want to work on it right now." And I doodled out this idea. Well, I wrote the entire piece in three hours. And I came back, and as he was leaving, I said, "Here's the score. Here you go." And I printed off the score and gave it to him. He was like, "Oh, my gosh." So, I literally finished the commission that day.

And he loved it, he programmed it, published it, and then my mentor, Christopher Smith, who was directing Spirito at the time when Jake Narverud stepped down. And I showed it to him, and said, "I really love Spirito to sing this." He said, "I think it's great. And not only do I think it's great, will you add a cello to it." And only when we added the cello to it, Allegro just got invited to sing at the opening concert for the 2019 ACDA convention in Kansas City. And we were allowed to sing one piece, "And I want to sing your piece." So that was kind of like my mountain-top experience so far as a composer was getting to hear Spirito -- the ensemble that I sang at in my school, directed by my mentor, sing my piece for 1,500 choral directors in the Kauffman Center of Performing Arts in Helzberg Hall at the 2019 ACDA Convention. And that was just unbelievable. And it's an experience I'll never forget. And I actually listen to the recording of that pretty regularly just because I'd like to remember it.

Q. Oh, man. That is awesome. Before we move forward, I want to check with you. How are you doing? How are you feeling? How much time do you have left? How are things going right now?

A. Yeah. So, I actually just got to my parents' house, but I can still stay on the phone. But I need to get out of my car because they got dinner, and I'm starving, so I want to eat. So, I'm going to eat and talk.

Q. Okay.

A. But I'll grab a pair of headphones and we can talk. Let me unplug you here from my hands-free because we were just in my car.

Q. Okay.

A. And then let me grab my backpack and some of the papers that I brought with me. And then, I'm going to grab my food and my headphones, and then we can keep going.

Okay?

Q. Okay. Sounds good.

A. Okay. Cool. How are you doing on time? I would hate to take so much time away from you while you're hanging out with your family.

Q. I have all the time. Right now, I'm in their little office on the corner of the house. So, I'm in here. I'm chilling. I ate. I'm good.

A. Oh, no. My mask is blowing away. I had to print it off on legal paper because I couldn't fit it all on the score. I'm taking all of these massive pieces of paper into the house. Give me just a second, here. [Conversation with parties not in interview.]

Okay. I'm almost to my headphones. Let me grab my food, and then we can keep going.

Q. All right. Let me know when you're ready.

A. Okay. So, in concert choir, we had a one-day retreat today, and I got sunburned. Oh, my gosh, my arms are killing me.

Q. What did this retreat comprise of? What did you all do?

A. Oh. We just played some games, you know, a water balloon fight. That was fun.

Q. Nice.

A. Okay. I am ready when you are, sir.

Q. Okay. All right. So, the next thing that I want to talk about is your compositional influences. I know that you said that Morten Lauridsen was one of your compositional influences. In terms of who you listen to, who you model your style off of, or at least the initial portion of that.

So, I would like to explore more who are your musical influences? Who do you listen to? Who do you study in terms of composers of the past or recording artists now, or things like that? Who are you influenced by in music?

A. Sure. If I had to list my top five composers that I'm influenced by. It would go from top down: It would go -- some of this is going to be really cliché and some of it is not. But it's just what it is. Top down: Eric Whitacre; then Ēriks Ešenvalds; then Sergei Rachmaninoff; Jake Narverud; and Owain Park. So those are my top five influences.

You know, I always study big guys, and someone that I'm really liking these days is Jaakko Mäntyjärvi. Trinity College Choir released an entire album of Mäntyjärvi's music. It's just fire. And I'm really in love with that these days.

So, I'm sure that will shift and Mäntyjärvi will find someone on the list. And then, there's like five staples that have been influential for me in my time as a composer, it's those five guys.

Q. Okay. Nice. Before we talk about the *Waterbox Musings*, I would like to talk about some of your other interests, or business ventures, or things that you have done or would like to do that are either outside or adjacent to the performing and creating side of music.

A. Sure. Are you trying to -- like hobbies? Is that what you're going at?

Q. For instance, you and another composer, Jesse Kaiser, had started and founded your own publishing company. And so, anything like that, or if you want to expand on that a little more as well.

A. Sure. Yeah. Jesse and I started our own company, Novus Music Publishing. It's mostly because I kind of woke up one day and realized that: A, I hated as a composer backing these big companies like Alliance, and Santa Barbara, and Walton. All these guys just grappling to even giving the opportunity for anybody to see my music, let alone to be considered to be published. I mean, I got turned down multiple times. And that's fine.

But I kind of woke up one day and I realized that traditional publishing is kind of a scam because they take your copyright. They keep your copyright, and then if they -- if your song was the best seller for 10 years; but then when it's not and they discontinue it, well, they still own the copyright, and they own your music. So, if somebody comes to you and says, "Hey, I want to sing this piece. I can't find the score anywhere. Can you give me the score?" Well, no. You can't because it's not your copyright anymore. So essentially, they have the power to make your music not exist anymore. And I think that's really disturbing. I don't think anybody should have that power.

And Jesse and I were under the same impression, and we had a lot of conversations about it once. I said, "We should just start our own publishing company." He said, "Yeah. Maybe." And then I looked into it. I went on to LegalZoom, and kind of figured out that it wouldn't cost that much money. I said, "You know what? Let's do it." He said, "Okay." Yeah. We've been publishing our own music.

We have used it personally as now we're self-publishing. But at the same time, we've also sent it to other composers, and we have their music up there as well. And they're cool stuff. It's not like we just ask anybody. We kind of vet people, but they have some neat stuff up there.

Yeah. That's kind of the idea around Novus Music Publishing, is that it's just kind of -- we don't want to take away peoples' copyrights because we think that's wrong. And then we want to pay you what you deserve. You know, we're not going to give you 10 percent royalties; you get 60, 65 percent royalties. I mean, yeah. That's kind of the business model that we have. And we kind of wanted outside of necessarily performing -- I recently got into some of the recording aspects, you know, using Logic and that kind of stuff.

And that came from a hobby that I discovered that I really enjoy, which is sports broadcasting. I actually got the opportunity to be the play-by-play announcer for my high school's football team. They had their first ever football team last year, and my dad coached it, my brother played on it, and I became -- they're the Cornerstone Saints. I became the voice of the Saints, and it was really fun. And I had a soundboard, I had a mic, and I traveled with them to all their games. We set up a hotspot and my computer, and I brought my laptop, and we broadcast every game all the way up until their playoff bid, and they lost in the first round of the playoffs. But it was great. It was so much fun.

And I kind of discovered that I'm really passionate about that kind of stuff. And so, Jesse and I, as a consequence, started a Podcast literally last month called Musically Inclined. And I get to talk about the stuff that I'm really interested by, and then also get to have the fun aspect of mixing and mastering like a garage band.

Yeah. That's kind of -- those are kind of my primary hobbies at the moment that are sort of related to music. There's a bunch of other stuff that I do that's not even remotely related to music, but that's kind of what -- that's the closest I can get to music.

Q. Yeah. Those are kind of my round-about way of trying to get you to talk about those things. Because I know about your publishing company. And I wanted to include that as well as your Podcast because it shows that you are more than just a musician; but you're also a business person that you have your eye towards entrepreneurship in that aspect. So, I wanted to include those things as well.

So, thank you for sharing that.

A. Sure. And by the way, on a side note, in a couple of weeks, I'm going to get you on the show because it's actually been requested to talk about rap. And I don't know anything about rap. And so, I really want to get you on the show to break down some rap. Also, the entire point of the show is that we kind of direct all of our topics back to composing, and that's something that I know something about. And Jesse thought that was a really cool idea. So, I want to get you on to talk about R&B and Rap, and how that can be related to being a classical musician and composer as well. So, I want to get that side note in there because I really want to get you on a show in the next couple of weeks.

Q. Okay. Yeah. I can start thinking about some things to show you guys and to talk about. Yeah. That sounds awesome.

A. Okay. Cool.

Q. Let me write that down right now. So, the first half of the chapter, or maybe I should say the first portion, because I feel like the life and who you are -- a portion of this is going to be like a larger chunk.

But now I want to talk about the composition like that I was able to perform at my graduate recital; that is *Waterbox Musings*.

A. Yeah.

Q. With that, I would like to know, firstly, what led you to compose this collection of songs?

A. So there are a couple of different things. But the first one was purely out of necessity because I actually wrote the second movement first, *Tundra*. Yeah. It was *Tundra*, it was *Tundra* for Theory IV because we had to -- essentially, we just had to write something weird. There were more kind of stringent ideas behind that for parameters. But I kind of understood it as I just had to write something weird. And I had known you for some time, then Theory IV -- actually now -- I -- because you came my sophomore year -- sophomore/junior

year. So yeah. Theory IV was in the end of my sophomore year. So, I had known you for a semester --

Q. Yeah.

A. -- and I also knew that you had a really unique interior constant. I want to work with Lorenzo at some capacity.

And so, I had been kicking around some different ideas for Theory IV, and I was taking a shower one day, and I was using the Old Spice shampoo Tundra. And it said on the label, "With Mint." And I was literally washing my hair, and it always clears my sinuses when I use this because it has a menthol-kind of thing to it. And I inhaled, and I said, "Ah. I can play mint." I said that to myself.

And then all of a sudden, I just had this -- I kind of chuckled because that's kind of funny. And then I thought to myself a scent of mint. I can get the scent of mint. I was kind of like, "Oh. That's kind of interesting." And then, that's it. Later that day, I went to practice room, I started doodling some stuff around. And I'm like, "That's it. I found my idea. It was just a perfect kind of weird for Theory IV Doctor Weston will love it. I'll love putting this kind of music out there. Yeah. Let's go for it." And that's literally as stupid but as simple as it is, that's how *Tundra* came to be.

And then *Denali*, I knew that I wanted to do one more. I wanted to do a body wash in their shampoo. So, I used Denali, my body wash, as the second one.

Q. Nice. With that, for your initial Theory IV assignment, was there any restrictions that was placed on you in terms of using a certain mode, or a certain cell, or a certain row or something like that?

Was there any restrictions that kind of lead into the actual theory in oral quality to this piece?

A. Yeah. So, there was some parameters that we had to fulfill, but they were rather broad parameters. It was just do something different than tunnel music. But then, we had to present our idea to Doctor Weston, and he had to approve it. And my idea was I'm going to percutaneous voice leading as well as some sort of mode. And that's what I wanted to do. So, I wound up using Parsimonious voice leading.

I believe it was G Lidian at the -- there's a distinctive A-section and B-section of *Tundra*. And the A-section was the Parsimonious voice leading; then the B-section is, I think, G

Lidian, or something like that. I'm not sitting in front of the score, but that's right off the top of my head. You could fact-check me on that if you'd like later. But that's what I think it was.

And then I pitched that to him. And he was like, "Yeah. I mean, that fits the non-total aspect of the requirements for this composition. So sounds good to me."

All right. So, it was very relaxed. But I had just enough guidance to kind of come up with something weird enough for the project but also not so weird that nobody would listen to it, if that makes sense.

Q. Yes. So, before we move a little further, can you give a refresher? I'll research this later, but could you give:

One, how you heard about Parsimonious voice leading as well as define that in terms of what you think -- what you know that it is?

A. Sure. I was introduced to Parsimonious voice leading through Theory IV. We were listening to some compositions by John Adams, I think it was, that used the Parsimonious voice leading. And I thoroughly enjoyed it. I thought that's really cool how you are able to kind of weave in and out of chords just by using very simple ideas.

And the entire concept around percutaneous voice leading is that you're changing chords by using the least amount of movement possible. So, moving -- I don't think you move any individual pitch more than a whole step. So, if you're looking at a triad, you know, percutaneous voice leading, if you went from E-Major, and if you wanted to get to the next closest chord in the least amount of movement possible, it could be E-Minor. You just move the G-Sharp to G. And then it's like, okay. Then what's the next chord that I could do. E-Minor. What's the next chord? Well, E, G, B; you change the B to a C; now you're at C-Major in the first inversion. Right?

So that's kind of the idea of Parsimonious voice leading is that you're shifting chords using the least amount of movement possible.

Q. Okay. And then this next round of questions, or the last ones that I have written down, this would be the thought process on *Denali*. So, we know that *Tundra* was born out of this assignment that had this level of parameters, and the parameters that you put on it was that you wanted to use a technique of this next-level voice leading as well as highlighting the lydian mode in the second section.

So, in *Denali*, was there any type of parameters that you set for yourself especially because this one was more out of desire to have a second piece than it was of an outside force inspiring you to compose? So, what was that process like in composing it?

A. Sure. So, I knew that I wanted to take advantage of more of the virtuosic qualities of your voice. And I wanted to make something challenging. I truly wanted to write a virtuosic piece for the target. It's just this -- like only a handful of people are going to be able to successfully sing this. And I usually don't think about music that way because I usually try to think about it in a conformability kind of -- that's a very big level of -- or a very big lens that I look at my music through. Is this performable? Could the average choir sing this? If not, why? And that's kind of how I think about my music. But I do, up front, knew that the average performer was not going to be able to sing this piece effectively.

And so, that kind of led to play to your strengths. That was the first thing. But then the second thing was that I also -- because of Theory IV, I was very just turned on to the idea of creating the parameters for yourself anyway. And it was kind of like, okay. This song is going to include just one idea. And what can I do with just one idea? And so, the idea that I created for myself -- so I said, "I can use a hexachord. I'm going to use only six pitches. I'm going to generate those pitches at random. I'm going to sit down at a piano, and I'm just going to play until I find six pitches that I like."

That's literally what I did. I sat down at a piano. I played this really funky chord, and I was like, one, two, three, four, five, six. Perfect. Six pitches. And I said, "All right. I'm going to write an entire piece out of just using these six pitches." And that was the parameter that I set to myself. So, I would have to go back and look, but there are only six pitches that are heard through multiple different octaves. You hear multiple different pitch classes, but there are only six distinct pitches that you'll hear all throughout *Denali*.

And then, just to take a second to talk about the words is that I wrote both of the words. And I wanted it to be a double entendre. It's that I wanted it to have this mysterious quality that you wouldn't understand what the words were unless somebody sat down and said, "This is actually just one massive joke for taking a shower." And I found that concept to be extremely amusing because I love putting this kind of music -- I use this kind of music, actually, in lessons that I give where it's like, okay. What is this piece about? What is the composer, i.e. me, trying to convey? What am I trying to tell you here?

And I love hearing coming up with these really complex allegories for life. And they say this crazy stuff. And I'm like, "It's literally about a shower. That I literally took a shower. That's it."

And it's like music is only as serious as we make it. If you would like it to be an allegory for life, then who says it can't be an allegory for life. I wrote it because I thought it would be funny to write music about a shower that makes people think it's an allegory for life. But maybe that says something dumb about me. But that's something that I found also to be very purposeful in how I wrote the words, but also to be highly amusing on a personal level.

So yeah. That's kind of a hymn about the words. And if you -- when you have that information, and you go back and you read the text, it's like, "Duh. Of course, he's talking about a shower," which is why I wanted to come up with really strange title that didn't point towards a shower, but you are really smart, and you sat down, and you thread the words, it's kind of like, "Oh. Maybe he's talking about a shower."

That's why it's called *Waterbox Musings* because I was literally thinking about it while I was in the shower. And at the time, I was in -- I was living in the dorms at K-State, and the shower room literally like red pickles. It was just an upright brick that you stood in, and that was it. There was no space. It was insignificant. I'm a tall guy. My head almost hit the top of the shower whenever I would get in. I had to bend over to wash my hair. And I just thought that this is -- I always thought to myself it's so constricting it's this tiny box. And then it just occurred to me *Waterbox Musings*. That sounds fun. So that's kind of how all of that came to light.

But for *Denali* specifically in terms of the composition and the theory, it's all -- it's a single hexachord, and that's it. And there's multiple different iterations. I think it spans like, I don't know, four or five octaves on the keyboard, and two octaves for voice I believe. I think it goes from C-Sharp 3 to C-Sharp 5, I believe for the tenor. Yeah. That's kind of what -- that's how it came about to be.

Q. So, before we move on, I have some other questions as you were speaking. I was like, that would be interesting to write about. This would be interesting to write about. But now that you said something about the fact that you wrote the actual lyrics or poem to the cycle, this will kind of segway into the next question as well.

In the vocal music that you write, have you ever written your own words before? And if so, in what cases? Also, can you describe not only your process of composing, but any

other genres, or orchestrations, or styles of music that you have composed and are looking to compose for? I think it's like three questions in one.

A. Sure. Yes. I have written one music and set my own text, which I think is kind of interesting because I don't, in any stretch of the imagination, consider myself a poet. I am getting married to a professional poet, and I wouldn't dare -- like, reading her stuff and reading my stuff, I'm like, "I look like a moron." I'm not even going to try to call myself a professional poet. I write words out of necessity or because I feel very moved to. And that's pretty much it.

The only other time off the top of my head, that I've written my own words was actually for a song cycle that I wrote for myself to sing, but it's dedicated to the State of Kansas, and it's dedicated to my late grandfather, Vic Van Camp. And it's called *The Songs of the Prairie*. And it kind of goes through a single day in the life of a Kansas farmer. It has -- so you have the morning, and it's kind of like you're from Kansas, you just know that May and June, when the sun comes up, it just kind of glides over the corn fields. And it's this -- and I know this personally because there's usually a corn field that sits out behind my parents' house in Topeka.

We live on the outside of Topeka. And I would love going outside, even though I'm not a morning person, it's just beautiful in the morning in the summer, when there's not a cloud in the sky and sunny. It just gently comes out of the east, and it shines right over the top of the corn. And it's just beautiful. And it's kind of what that first rhythm is about.

And the second one is about a thunder storm. If there's any more legendary, I would love to know what it is. But Kansas thunder storms are great. And I storm chase in the summers. It's a Kansas joke that the tornado sirens are going off, what do you do? You go outside with a beer, and sit down, and you wait for the tornado. That's kind of the joke. And I've always definitely been one of those people, my mom and I storm chase.

So, the second movement of *Songs of the Prairie* is a thunder storm, and it's all about -- I use these cluster chords on the piano to simulate thunder, and a bunch of twinkly stuff, higher up in the higher register of the keyboard to simulate rain. And then a combination of both towards the end to kind of simulate this gigantic thunder storm. There's a lot of noise. The singer and the baritone sing high in its register. So that's kind of that.

And then, in the final one, again, I wrote this piece first, and then added the other two movements because I knew what I wanted it to be a complete work, and not just a stand-alone work as well.

But the final is *The Lullaby of the Plains*. And that's what dedicated to my late grandfather. And my late grandfather died of Alzheimer's, and he was single-handedly one of the smartest people that I had ever known. And I didn't know my maternal grandfather because he died when I was very young from an aortic aneurysm. But I got to know my late paternal grandfather. And he was a wonderful guy. Very smart. And it was very painful for me to see him progressively lose his mind. And you know, they ask questions. Have him ask me like, "Who are you?" I was like, "Well, I'm Kolby. I'm your grandson." "I have grandchildren?" "Yes, grandpa. You have grandchildren. I'm one of your grandchildren." "Really? I was married?" And those kinds of questions. It was very painful to see him go through that.

And when he died, I think it gave me closure because he died in a very, I don't want to say unceremonious way, but he was so debilitated that he didn't know where he was. He didn't know who he was. He didn't know who was there. And so, it was kind of my -- a way that I try to provide myself closure as a farewell to my grandfather was that I wrote this piece. And it took me a number of years to actually bring it to fruition. I think I wrote it when I was a freshman at K-State. But yeah. That's kind of where that came from.

And I wrote all of the text for that as well. Yeah. It really varies. It varies on the project. I usually don't like to write my own words. I try to set other peoples' words. If there is a very specific topic that I want to talk about that's personal to me, in my music, then I'll probably be writing my own words. Or it's just so weird like *Waterbox Musings* that it only makes sense for me to write it. So yeah. That kind of thing.

Q. So still in the same vein of what this process of composing. I know that you had said several times that you would -- at least on the pieces that you shared in terms of *In Flander's Fields* and *Waterbox Musings*, about going to a practice room and doodling.

Can you describe a little bit in terms of what are some of your habits in terms of your compositional process, if there is any type of consistency there?

A. Yeah. I've actually -- because I know I'll forget stuff. I'm actually going to also direct you to go listen to I think it's the first episode of *Musically Inclined*, our Podcast that Jesse and I do because we actually talk about each other's compositional process. I break it down pretty in depth of what I do. So, if I forget something, I strongly recommend that you listen to that episode because I'm sure I'll provide something there that I don't here.

But I do do a lot of doodling. That's very -- I call it doodling. And that's very integral to my process. I've never been one of those guys -- I've had it happen once, with one single piece where I kind of sat up. In fact, I had woken up in the middle of the night and was like, "I know exactly what I need to write," and I wrote it all. That's the only time I've ever done that. That was like five years ago, and it has never happened again.

So, for me to discover new ideas for me to expound upon already forming ideas takes significant amount of me sitting down at a piano and just messing around, trying to find stuff. Speaking the words, I don't really write for anything outside of choral and vocal music. So, it's very important for me to have the words, to spend time with the words -- excuse me -- and to speak the words out loud to try to understand the text stress.

Something that's a very big pet-peeve for me as a composer is when somebody writes a vocal or choral piece, and the text is set wrong -- excuse me. I had avocado that started to make my voice choke up. -- where the composer will set the wrong syllable on the wrong beat. So, you know, emphasize an unemphasized syllable. Right? And the colloquial joke is that you put the wrong em-phases on the wrong syl-la-ble. Right? And so, it's a major pet-peeve of mine. So, I try to avoid that at all costs as a composer. I try to put the correct text stress on correct beats. And so, that's part of my doodling process, especially if I'm setting text.

But I actually -- it's unfortunate that I don't have it in front of me at this very moment, but I actually have a flow-chart that I had to create for a class once about my composition process. And essentially, I have a couple of key points I'm always thinking about. It's like, does the music make sense with itself? Do I have a cohesive body of music? What are the things that I need to change?

I always am thinking about engraving as I go along, as I write. It's very important for me to have a clean score and kind of -- Jesse Kaiser has turned me into an engraving guru because he's the engraving guru. So, I spend a lot of time during the composition process making sure that my scores are cleaned up. And that's one way because I'm kind of the type-A personality when it comes to that, and I find it incredibly irritating to have cluttered scores.

But then, B, for instance, I'm currently working on a requiem. It's going to have 17 movements. It's going to be over an hour's worth of music. You would absolutely suck to try to engrave all of that music at once. Like no. So, I try to engrave it as I go along. That's something really big that I do.

But yeah. It usually -- I formulate an idea, I doodle with that idea, I come back to that idea, I cut out what I don't need, then I come back, and I keep refining it, and I keep messing around with that. I have -- it's sort of like absolute pitch, but I don't know. I absolutely remember middle-C, and then I relatively can discover what the pitches are that I need in relation to that. And that's a very time-consuming process. I'm not an absolute pitch person; like, give me a B-flat, and I know where B-flat is. You know, give me a G-sharp, and I can give you G-sharp. Like I can't do that. So, it's very important for me.

I don't write in my head. I write with a piano. A piano or a keyboard is a very integral tool to my process. I have to be able to have that kind of stuff, or I'm just not going to be able to write it. It doesn't work. I've tried. Because I want to be like that. I'd like to be catching an airplane somewhere and to be able to sit on the airplane and compose. I just can't do that. So that's usually when I spend time engraving.

Yeah. That's kind of a very broad thing about my composition process. I guarantee if you listen to the Podcast episode, I'll break down more information that I think you'll find useful. I just can't remember off the top of my head because I actually had notes in front of me, and I was reading off of those notes; and I don't have that at the moment.

Q. That is totally fine. But I love that idea of having a flow chart.

Would you feel comfortable in terms of giving me a copy of that flow chart?

A. Yeah. For sure. I can do that.

Q. Okay.

A. I need to update it because some things have changed since when I last wrote it. But yeah. I'd be happy to send that to you.

Q. Cool. Not only would I like to include it in this document, but also for me, in the minor composing that I do, I feel like that would be really helpful for me as well as whoever the future composers are that happen to be reading my thesis for one thing or another, for them to kind of know a little bit of the process of how one composer is. And maybe they can do that as well.

A. Yeah. For sure. I can do that.

Q. Okay. And then, the last question that I have, I think, is because you said in terms of the process of trying to inspire the freedom of composing. Like whether it's this highly, noble

ambition for the piece or whether it's just, "Hey, I wanted to write this piece about me in my shower." You said that you have students that you teach.

Can you expand upon what kind of lessons do you give in terms of that opportunity there in terms of you giving lessons? Is it only composition? Or is it in voice? Or keyboard? Or what do you teach?

A. Yeah. So, I've given some informal composition lessons to a couple colleagues and students at K-State who are kind of like, "You compose. I wrote some music. I'd like for you to take a look at it and give me your two cents." So, I've done that.

I have one truly formal student who I meet with on a weekly basis. And she essentially -- her dad is actually mathematics faculty at K-State, and she takes piano lessons with Doctor Pickering. And the mathematics faculty approached Doctor Weston, and said, "My daughter has an interest in composing, and she's written some music, and I'd like to get her enrolled in composition lessons. Will you give her lessons?" He said, "I won't because I don't have the time, but I know just the guy who probably could." So, he referred them to me.

And she's great. She's a very bright individual who writes some really interesting music. And we spend a lot of time talking about kind of the elements of music. I have given her multiple theory lessons. I always try to challenge her to think outside the box while also setting parameters for herself.

A key I think to being a composer, and what I think a lot of beginning composers get really stuck, is that -- and it's more frequently beginning composers, but even the most advanced composers can get stuck in this rut. But I think that it's such a vast ocean of possibilities, it's kind of like you don't even know where to begin. Or if you try to cram as many ideas from that vast ocean of possibilities into your piece, then it just sounds like you could make 10 different pieces of music out of 5 minutes of music.

And that's kind of where I refer to my flow chart. It's kind of like does what I have make sense with itself? Am I trying to implement too many ideas, I guess, is a more broken-down way that I can question myself? And I often question my students -- or my student in that way as well. I say, "You know, I think this is a really cool idea. I don't think it makes any kind of sense with what you've written so far. I like what you've written so far. And I like this separate idea. Maybe copy and paste it to a different pile, and just have that for the future. But I don't think that makes sense for what you're writing right now."

And one of the reasons that I think that *Waterbox Musings* was so successful for me to write is that I had set some really specific parameters for myself. I mean, Parsimonious voice leading and G Lidian. I'm going to use literally only six pitches. And those kinds of parameters are, I think, really important.

So, I knew that in my more nuanced way in my music that I'm writing these days. I know I've referenced a requiem. Like in the Kyrie, I'm like, it's going to be -- any part that says Kyrie eleison is going to be completely aleatoric. The Christe eleison is going to be completely fine. Two separate ideas, two very simple ideas, but very complex in execution. And I think that's something that I also try to influence in my students.

It's kind of like take simple ideas and actually give them complexity. You can take simple ideas and execute them simply. You can simple ideas, you can execute them complexly. If you take complex music and try to execute it complexly, nobody is going to be able to do it, or very few people are going to be able to do it. If you're going to take complex music and execute it simply, you can do that as well. But I try to cultivate an idea from simple to complex rather than from complex to simple. I think that's really important. That's how I doodle. I try to doodle in simplicity, and then add layers of complexity as I go along rather than try to create a fully-formed idea off the top of my head because I want to be like Mozart. I can't do that. I know what my limits are as a composer, and anybody who does that and tells you that they are successful at it are lying or they're just unbelievably gifted.

Yeah. And that's kind of -- there are a lot of different things. And honestly, I think it is -- it depends on the lesson. It really does. I'm very much informed when I tell by -- I am very much informed by what my students give me as to what I tell them. So, if they -- if my student says, "Hey, check this out." And it has a really cool melody in the right hand, but only block chords in the left hand, well then, we need to work on some of the chords in the left hand. How can we accentuate it? Is there something that's rhythmically interesting that we can do?

As far as my composition -- my primary composition student goes, she wrote a really interesting piece that was -- she took one idea, and I was really trying to get her to take one idea and then -- take a simple idea and make it complex. And she did it really successfully in the way that she made a simple idea complex was that she had a simple melody, and then the way that she made the melody complex was that she put it through a bunch of very strange time

signatures. So, there was parts that were in 5/8; there were parts that were 3/8; and then there's a 5/16 bar; because that's just how the music naturally flows. So that's a layer of complexity.

And there's another thing that she wrote that's -- or another layer of complexity is that she modulates the idea all over the place. So, she says, "Okay. I like it in C-major. Well, what do I do if I put it to G-major? Well, it's an inversion by fifth." So, she puts it up a fifth. Now I'm going to move into F. That's an inversion down or it's inversion by fourth from where it came from. So, it's all of that kind of stuff, taking a simple idea and making it complex that I think make any composer extremely successful. And that's kind of the primary thing that I try to impart on all of my students is to take simple ideas and make them complex.

Q. I really like that. And as a composer myself, I'm like I like this nugget. I like this nugget. So, thank you so much for sharing that.

And so, do you teach other disciplines as well? Or is right now composition the main thing that you teach privately?

A. Yeah. So, a couple of years ago, I gave private voice lessons. But when COVID happened, I was like I'm not about to try to teach people voice lessons through Zoom. That's really obnoxious and probably extremely ineffective for the average age of students that I was teaching. So, I said, "Yeah. I'm just going to close my studio for now."

I'm trying to re-open it this summer. I actually got a professional job. You know, I talked about Spirito and the Allegro Choirs of Kansas City. Well, I'm actually the director of Spirito now. I got -- was offered that job. Doctor Smith, my mentor, had to step down for a personal reason. And Christy Elsner approached me, and said, "You're about to graduate. I know that, but you seem like the right fit. I think you're the kind of guy that we need to have right now and I'd love for you to be the director." And I said, "I mean, it's a dream come true. I always thought about directing Spirito. So that would be wonderful. I'd love to."

So, I actually directed Spirito and I'm trying to open up a private voice studio through -- have an actual building that's in Bonner Springs, Kansas, that's directly related to them. So, I'm trying to re-open my private voice studio and use the actual Allegro Studio, the location, as kind of my home base for that, and tap into some of the guys that might be interested from Spirito, and taking private instruction over the summer or into the future.

But yeah. At the moment, all I teach right now is composition, but I am trying to gather more composition students and more voice students.

Q. Wow. Congratulations on the Spirito job.

A. Thank you.

Q. I saw that. Now having talked to you about how this ensemble has essentially has been with you for a good portion of your life. Now that you're the director of it is a huge opportunity not only for experience, but also for a spiritual, emotional win. Like this is something that is, "I was a part of this and now I'm directing it," which is really cool.

A. Yeah. It's very full-circle. And Allegro has been really good to me as a good gig and they've started commissioning a lot of music from me. I've actually had two commissions last year that I finished for Allegro.

One of them was world premiered at the beginning of April. That was cool. It was from one of the students in Spirito. His parents commissioned me to write him a piece, and I got to conduct it. And that was really cool.

And the next one will be out in the fall for -- and it's for the combined SATB choir that they do. But it's very cool. And they've been very gracious to me. Yeah.

It's definitely -- like I said, it's very full-circle, and it's very humbling, and cerebral. And it's also a blast. I come into my music education classes now feeling like I know something because I spent the last year working in this professional setting, and making a lot of mistakes, but necessary ones that I've learned a lot from.

So yeah. It's been a dream come true and also a professional God-send for me leading up to going to graduate school. Yeah. That's been really cool. It's a really cool beat.

Q. And now my very final, final question.

A. Sure.

Q. And you have already given me the perfect segue into it.

What is next for you? What are some things in the immediate future as well as things that you're looking forward to, and the next steps that you are doing in life, in composition, in teaching, in performing? Like the whole thing. What is next for you?

A. Yeah. So that's kind of a huge question. Immediately, I have one more year at K-State. I have one more in-person semester in the fall, and then I student teach in the spring.

And then that May and June is going to be crazy because Concert Choir is actually taking a tour of London and Cambridge. We're actually going to spend some time studying with Trinity College at Cambridge.

Stephen Layton-Mull, it's going to be insane. I'm doing a master class with him, and giving a concert. I think we're actually going to sing at one of the Trinity College even songs, which is going to be insane.

So, I graduate May 14. May 15, we go to London. Come back May 27. June 3, I get married. June 5, I turn around and go on my honeymoon, which may or may not be in Europe. I don't know yet.

And that kind of ties into graduate school because I'm trying to actually go to graduate school abroad. My top two schools right now that I'm trying to study at is:

Number one, the Norwegian Academy of Music in Oslo, Norway.

And then there's also the Academy of Arts in Reykjavik, Iceland.

So those are the two schools I'm trying to really get into in terms of composition. I want to get my masters in composition first. And that's what I want to do, and I want to try and get that abroad so it looks really good on a CV in a very competitive field right now to do something abroad. So, if I go abroad for graduate school, and then I decide that we are going to honeymoon somewhere in North America, probably Hawaii. That would be nice.

But if I end up not getting into anywhere abroad, I have some schools I'm trying to get into. I'm really interested in the University of Washington in Seattle. University of South Carolina in Columbia. And a couple of different schools around the country. So, there are some options in the United States as well.

So, if I get into a school in the United States but not abroad, then Nina and I are going to go a honeymoon in Iceland. So that's -- it's kind of all up in the air right now because all of the access to me, and when.

But I'm going for my composition masters in the fall of '22. Whether that be abroad or in the United States, I'm going for it in composition.

And then I'm going to turn around, after I finish that, I'm going to do another masters in choral conducting. And then I'm going to try, and after that, go find somewhere that will take me for a doctorate in choral conducting. And then, you know, because I'm such a glutton for pain, I might add a doctorate in composition. I don't know.

I've always been that guy that secretly would love to flex on literally anybody that walked in my office and I have like six diplomas on my wall. And I'm track for five. But if I

could get that nice even six, maybe I'll do that. But I don't know. It depends on time. It depends on life.

But a doctorate in choral conducting is my end goal. So that's kind of my 10-year plan. It'll take me just about 10 years to complete it. You know, I'll be 23 in 2022, so by the time I'm 32, it'll look pretty good to have two masters -- two undergrads, two masters, and a doctorate. I think that's going to be pretty competitive in an already oversaturated and competitive collegiate field. Yeah.

Q. That's awesome. Is there anything that we, as the readers, to look forward to in terms of at this moment in time is kind of a time capsule of who Kolby Van Camp is in this moment. So, is there anything else that you would like to include before these next couple of chapters in your life that is yet to be written?

A. Yeah. I think that I would just say that I'm an incredibly blessed person. I think God has blessed me very richly with the people that I've had around me and the opportunities that I've had so far. And because of that, I've worked very hard.

And frankly, I'm very proud of myself. I'm proud of what I do. I've had a lot of success so far; and it's been directly related to the amount of work that I put into it. And I'm always looking for the next gig. I'm always looking for the next commission. I'm always hitting people up. I'm always doing what I need to do for the future. And I've always been that way. And I'll always continue to be that way. But so far, it's been something that's made me very successful as an undergraduate student.

Yeah. I don't at all, but is because of God. God has blessed me, and it's very important to that. And I've put in a lot of hard work; and I'm really excited. I'm really excited for the future. I'm excited to try and go abroad. I'm excited to get married [inaudible 1:58:43].

So, I have a couple of stressful semesters left. But after that, I'm really in the clear, and I'm looking forward to what I have coming up in the near future. But other than that, I think I've been about extended as I could be on the top of my head. So, I think that's about all I've got.

Q. Yeah. And with that, Kolby, I thank you tremendously.

A. Absolutely.

Q. I thank you for giving over two hours. Right now, the recording is at two hours and two minutes of your time, and your intellectual thought, to help me out with this project.

And I hope that I am able to come away with something that we both can be proud of in terms of this.

I thank you immensely not only your friendship, but your encouragement and inspiration. I don't know how to say it in the right words, but it's the drive, the relationship you have with God, the ambition that you have, and your hard work in this, as well as your appreciation for others. Because that is something that I admire and aspire to be.

So, I thank you for sharing your time with me in this. Especially since I should have this done sooner.

A. It's really okay.

Q. But you still just allow that -- as well as just the initial thing of just being my friend and wanting to mentor me. So yeah.

A. You know, Lorenzo, I really appreciate that. And it's really easy to be friends with a guy like you. You make me sound really great, and I appreciate that. But it has a lot to do with you as well. That has a lot to do with the people around me as well. It's easy to be friendly and having a lot of people that surround me at the moment. But I thank you. I appreciate that.

And also, just note that there wouldn't be this particular project and endeavor that you're doing that includes me if you hadn't agreed to sing those pieces. And they're kind of nutty pieces, but yeah. I don't know if anybody else except you is going to be able to successfully sing that. I need to get a really solid professional recording of that sometime in the near future, in the next year. I'm trying to put some money together to actually record some stuff. So, I'd love to fly you up into Kansas and record with you, and get a solid couple of takes so I can have those professional sense and professionally recorded as well.

But you know, you're a great guy as well, Lorenzo, and you do a lot of hard work yourself. I think everything that you were so kind to say about me is also about you. Yeah. I don't know what else to say.

I'm flattered, and I receive that. And I appreciate that, you know, you were willing to sing my music. Because you're only a handful of people so far that are willing to actually go out on that limb and perform my music. So, I appreciate that just about more than anything.

Well, I'm glad that we've been able to put this together and get some stuff on paper for you. Good luck synthesizing two hours and five minutes of material. Cool.

Q. Yeah.

A. Do you need anything else from me?

Q. I feel like I have a lot of material to work with. And if I do have anything, it's definitely not going to come in the next five minutes, or even this evening.

A. Sure. Yeah.

Q. Thank you again. Yeah.

A. Feel free to text me, or call me, or whatever if you have any questions. I'll be happy to work this out for you.

Q. All right.

A. Cool.

Q. Cool.

A. Thank you, sir. I'm going to finish up some work for Doctor Urkle.

Q. All right. Have fun.

A. Yep. Absolutely. I'll talk to you sometime soon. Okay.

Q. All right. Talk to you soon. Peace.

A. All right. Bye.