

## Passage II

**SOCIAL SCIENCE:** This passage is adapted from the biography *Marian Anderson: A Singer's Journey* by Allan Keiler (©2000 by Allan Keiler).

On December 30, 1935, manager Sol Hurok presented singer Marian Anderson in New York's Town Hall. She had been away from the United States for nearly two and a half years and Hurok, uncertain of the audience she would draw, chose the smaller theater for her homecoming rather than the more prestigious Carnegie Hall. One can only wonder whether he foresaw the extraordinary potential of the contralto singer whom he had agreed to manage, or the remarkable relationship they would enjoy.

By 1939, after only five concert seasons, Anderson had more than duplicated in America what she had achieved in Europe. In America, her fees had risen from \$400 to \$2,000 for most performances. With more engagements for Anderson than she could comfortably fulfill, Hurok's job was now "not to seek dates for Marian, but to winnow out the most attractive ones each season." To meet the repertoire needs of constantly expanding seasons, which included yearly appearances in many cities, she had to change programs more rapidly. In developing her repertoire, she had the help of a network of teachers on both sides of the Atlantic. She added an abundance of new material, exploring the more unusual, even esoteric byways of the vocal literature. Her programs had a striking cosmopolitanism, which she liked to emphasize particularly in her Carnegie Hall recitals. For her first recital there in 1939, she chose music by Spanish composers, a group of French chansons, a Tchaikovsky aria, music by American composers, and spirituals.

In only five seasons with Hurok, Anderson had become an indelible part of the American musical scene. Occasionally a critic preferred to maintain some appearance of sobriety in response to an Anderson concert. Olin Downes, for example, never comfortable with extravagant praise, held to his gravity of manner in reviewing Anderson's first New York recital in 1939: "Miss Anderson sings music by classic masters, not as a lesson learned, or a duty carefully performed, but as an interpreter who has fully grasped and deeply felt the import of the song." For the rest, critics threw caution to the winds, outdoing each other in their efforts to capture the excitement generated by Anderson's appearances. From New York to Buffalo to Milwaukee, Anderson was rewarded with a triumphal chorus of brilliant reviews.

Of course, there was much more to Anderson's success than voice and art. In her every appearance, the unique qualities of her character and personality made themselves felt just as strongly as her technique and interpretations. Perhaps, in the end, what touched audiences most deeply was the provocative contradiction between the effortless warmth, sincerity, and dignity Anderson radiated and the quality of aloofness that was always present. The critic Glenn Dillard Gunn, after one of her Washington recitals, provided a moving portrait of Anderson's compelling hold on the imagination of her audiences: "Miss Anderson's power to move her listeners as can no other singer of her generation is not made less by the simple, almost unsmiling dignity which clothes her like a garment. She holds herself aloof and doubtless with intention. Her eyes closed, her face expressionless, she retires into her world of song, inviting us to enter it, but remaining remote, not sharing her personality. Even in her moment of triumph the barrier is there."

Radio helped introduce Anderson's voice across America. With the waning of the economic hardships left behind by the Depression, radio opportunities for classical artists increased significantly. During the late thirties, her voice could be heard on such programs as the General Motors Hour, the Magic Key program and the Ford Hour. Her striking voice, never more opulent than in those years; the range of her programs, which included, in addition to spirituals, more popular numbers than she normally sang on concert programs; and the charm and radiance of her personality, so intimately bound up with her singing, made her an extraordinarily popular radio performer.

In the black community, Anderson's accomplishments as a singer and the sense of pride and purpose she inspired brought her many honors. In January 1939, the NAACP announced that it would award Anderson the Spingarn Medal, given annually by its president, Joel Spingarn, "for the highest or noblest achievement by an American Negro during the preceding year or years." Since the inception of the Spingarn award in 1915, only two other musicians, Roland Hayes and Harry T. Burleigh, had been so honored.

11. The main purpose of the passage is to:
- reconcile several differing interpretations of Anderson's return to the United States.
  - offer a point-by-point comparison between Anderson's European and American careers.
  - portray Anderson's relationship with Hurok and his role in expanding and improving her repertoire.
  - describe one successful period in Anderson's career and the nature of her personality and music.

12. Based on the passage, one difference between an Anderson concert at Carnegie Hall and an Anderson concert on the Magic Key radio program would most likely be that:
- F. one would hear more popular songs on the Magic Key program.
  - G. one would hear spirituals on the Magic Key program.
  - H. the Carnegie Hall concert would be limited to songs by European composers.
  - J. the Carnegie Hall concert would be less cosmopolitan in content.
13. All of the following statements about Anderson's career by the end of 1939 are true according to the passage EXCEPT that she had:
- A. been told she would receive the Spingarn Medal.
  - B. become a highly popular radio performer.
  - C. begun to plan a new tour of Europe.
  - D. given her first Carnegie Hall recital.
14. The first paragraph makes it clear that as a manager, Hurok:
- F. felt the Town Hall concert was an overly conservative choice by Anderson.
  - G. knew Anderson deserved the biggest possible audience for her homecoming.
  - H. could see how famous Anderson would eventually become.
  - J. planned Anderson's reintroduction to American audiences cautiously.
15. As described in the fourth paragraph (lines 47-66), a contradiction in Anderson is that she could:
- A. sing beautiful songs with great warmth yet be cold and insincere as a person.
  - B. interest audiences in her technique and interpretations but not her personality.
  - C. powerfully move her listeners in concerts but not in recordings.
  - D. seem warm and sincere yet at the same time distant during a performance.
16. If the fifth paragraph (lines 67-79) were omitted, readers would not know that:
- F. Anderson's popularity was increased by radio.
  - G. Anderson performed wide-ranging programs.
  - H. Anderson was popular during the late thirties.
  - J. Anderson's voice was more opulent when she sang on radio.
17. As it is used in line 17, the phrase *winnow out* most nearly means:
- A. eliminate.
  - B. select only.
  - C. solicit.
  - D. bargain for.
18. According to the author of the passage, which of the following people tried to show restraint in reviewing an Anderson concert?
- F. Hurok
  - G. Downes
  - H. Gunn
  - J. Spingarn
19. The main point of the quotation in lines 38-41 is that Anderson:
- A. was diligent in performing music by leading composers.
  - B. truly understood and was able to personalize well-regarded songs.
  - C. had learned her lessons early when it came to grasping classical music.
  - D. deeply appreciated classical music and enjoyed hearing it performed.
20. The quotation in lines 58-66 characterizes Anderson's aloofness as:
- F. deliberate.
  - G. accidental.
  - H. regrettable.
  - J. misunderstood.