On September 25, 2015, baritone Joshua Hopkins’ life changed forever when he received a call informing him that his older sister had been murdered, along with two other women at their respective homes in Renfrew County, Ontario, Canada by a crazed former romantic partner. To help process and cope with this traumatic event, Hopkins turned to the commission process to memorialize his sister in the song cycle that would become Songs for Murdered Sisters (2020), composed by Jake Heggie (b. 1961) on poems by Margaret Atwood (b. 1939). This cycle of eight songs was chosen as a focus for research due to the subject matter of the historical and cultural context of gender-based violence in Canada (and by extension society at large), the collaboration of a living composer, poet, and performer, and the technical challenges for the performers.

Songs for Murdered Sisters  (2020) ............................... Jake Heggie  (b. 1961)
  I. Empty Chair
  II. Enchantment
  III. Anger
  IV. Dream
  V. Bird Soul
  VI. Lost
  VII. Rage
  VIII. Coda: Song