



NIGHT ANGEL
ONE-WOMAN MUSICAL

MELINDA CAMBER PORTER ARCHIVE
OF
CREATIVE WORKS
Volume 2, Number 4



NIGHT ANGEL
ONE-WOMAN MUSICAL

BY
MELINDA CAMBER PORTER

MUSIC BY
CARMAN MOORE

Blake Press

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Night Angel, A One Woman Musical

Camber Porter, Melinda

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Moore, Carman

Night angel, A One Women Musical

Moore, Carman

Music for Songs for Night Angel

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Cover image:

Melinda Camber Porter (British, 1953—2008)

Night Angel, 1992

Oil on canvas

36 x 36 inches

Collection of Melinda Camber Porter Archive

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www.MelindaCamberPorter.com

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Melinda Camber Porter and Carman Moore met in the early 1980s on Manhattan's Westside of New York City.

Carman often spoke of his creative music projects and Melinda spoke about her creative art and literature projects. Over time Carman and Melinda decided to collaborate and create a theatrical piece.

Night Angel was born with Carman composing the music and Melinda writing the book, the songs, and the backdrop of paintings.

Night Angel, a one woman musical, was performed at Lincoln Center's Clark Theater in October 1995 with Martha Banta as director and Tim Weill as music director, all with nurturing from Michael Parva of the The Directors Company.

INTRODUCTION

I met Melinda on Manhattan's Upper West Side, introduced to her by an oboist whose name now escapes me. Guess his job in both our lives was to make that intro and then disappear. She and I started with laughing. That sense of humor showed and glowed throughout all her work. I had no idea of all the creativity teeming within her Brit-accented mind. She "got" my music right away and began pushing some music theater idea she wanted me to set to music. "Whoa," said I. "Didn't know you went that direction." It turned out that theater was only one of a host of directions calling to her from inside. I was astounded to see her paintings . . . so fearless in subject, coloration, light—you name it. Next thing I know she asked me to read her current novel [*Badlands*], and, "oh, when you've finished that, please check out these interviews [*Through Parisian Eyes*] . . . and then please read these poems and let me know what you think." Melinda created so fast and from the gut that she almost had no time to assess what she had done. I am greatly honored that she so frequently sought my opinion about her works. For someone as terminally curious as I was and am, Melinda Camber Porter was a smörgåsbord.

I am, of course, also honored that Melinda loved my music so. As a result we launched into *Night Angel* with a fury and with great mutual trust and admiration for each other and what we could do. I work fast and so did she. I recall having set some of her lyrics before I'd even read the entire libretto to find out the why and wherefore of the song. But I knew the [one] character so well, because Melinda had created her so indelibly and I responded so viscerally to the poetic power of her lyrics that my music seemed to nail each lyric. Re-writes were seldom required.

From long before I met her, Melinda was a world traveller, and in a way her having worked organically in so many art forms was an extension of that taste for always moving abroad. I now read the texts of *The Road to Katmandu*, *The Boulevard St. Michel*, and *Wait for the Woman In Me* as expressions of a restless and curious woman with travel in its deepest sense on her mind and in her heart. And the fact that Melinda chose to create *Night Angel* as a show for one woman with a crowd listening to song lyrics reaching into so many places and ideas is no shock. That leading one woman was and is Melinda Camber Porter, an angel singing joyously to all of us through the night.

Carman Moore
New York 2015

NIGHT ANGEL

ONE-WOMAN MUSICAL

MUSIC BY

CARMAN MOORE

LYRICS, BOOK, & VISUALS BY

MELINDA CAMBER PORTER

ACT I takes place in the familiar seedy dressing room where Amy prepares for her show, reminiscing and evoking her past, imagining her future, delving into her fears and her stage fright, plucking up her courage. Mainly through her singing, she slowly senses the forces that made her what she is and sings her way towards a sense of courage as she listens, with more respect, to the emotions within her truly expressive heart. Through her “private” performance for herself, she gets herself ready to take the risk of going back on stage.

ACT II takes place on stage at the Newark bar, where Amy gives a glittering and sexy performance but suddenly, and recklessly, abandons herself to her compulsion and attempts to seduce a guy in the audience. When he throws her to the floor, unceremoniously, and storms out of the club, Amy comes face to face, for the first time, with public humiliation. But her deep inner courage and emotional honesty save her. As she progresses, through her songs, from anger and grief to humor and compassion, she arises, purified and stronger, from the ashes of her former self. The angel she often sensed was “hidden” somewhere inside her suddenly seems to pervade her whole being as she sings “Wait for the Woman.” The beauty of her voice that she took for granted and exploited to serve her compulsion, she suddenly hears in a new way and understands that singing isn’t just something she does. It is who she is. It is the voice of the Night Angel she is becoming.

NIGHT ANGEL features the exhilarating music of Carman Moore and presents seventeen songs, ranging from hard rock to mystic ballad to waltz, all strong on melody, rhythm, and unexpected harmonies. Also features Melinda Camber Porter’s emotional narrative, her lyrics and her oil paintings as backdrops.



ACT I

LIST OF SONGS

LOUIS LOUISA

SHAME

CIRCLE OF LOVE/THE DIVORCE

FOOD IN THE NIGHT

CLAY IN YOUR HANDS

ON THE ROAD TO KATMANDU

RICH MAN

GOING OUTSIDE



Triptych of Selves

1994

Oil on canvas

60 x 36 inches

Melinda Camber Porter

ACT I

[Lights off. Video on representing her thoughts. The stage is pitch black apart from a video screen ... images of a wedding from a distance—someone else’s wedding—something out of Bride’s magazine; the couple walk down the aisle; then some footage of Princess Diana’s wedding, the streets of London bare as the fairy coach goes by; all fairy tale images progressing from more conventional scenes to a completely fantastic and baroque vision of a Princess’s wedding. All remains pitch black on stage but at a certain point a woman begins talking; just her face appears; the video continues with ads from the New York Times Color Supplement for Houses—palaces in Greenwich, etc. Very conventional images of the “good life.” The ads are torn out, as if she’s pinning them on her wall. Video off. Lights rise.]

HER VOICE:

So this guy comes up to me in the VIP lounge. Concorde Flight 124 to Paris. He lets you know, he’s on that. Subtly. No song and dance about the fact. That’s how you better yourself, improve, he said. Imagine yourself there. Something like that. He said you put yourself in that picture. For once, life is beautiful, it all seeps out of him. I see it now. The life he’s showin’ me. I walked into it. It don’t matter to me, his money ... It’s what it means in terms of giving, saying yes, you know, to life, stuff you can see. It’s like the arms and legs and face of an emotion. You can see real clear what you’re getting. Nonstop I got things. More and more things ... It was a real marriage ... [She sings LOUIS LOUISA.]

[During song lights slowly reveal minimal elements of an apartment: a kitchen table, chair, bed, sink, fridge. The woman is dressed in black leggings and a jeans jacket.]

HER VOICE:

LOUIS LOUISA

LOUIS LOUISA
THAT'S OUR KID AND ME
MADE OUR
FAMILY LIFE INTO A
BIG CHEAP HOLLYWOOD MOVIE

RICH, THIN, FAMOUS
CLEAN AND TALL
WE DIDN'T DIET
WE HAD IT ALL

THE WORLD'S OUR MIRROR. THE
WORLD'S A-SHIMMER
THE WORLD'S SO SMALL
THE WORLD'S SO TALL
NO IT'S NOT THERE AT ALL

LOUIS LOUISA
THAT'S OUR KID AND ME
THOUGHT WE'D LEARN HOW TO DIE