



## **Xyzsa Pagaduan from Rockwall, TX**

**Song:** "Left-over Love"

**Mentor:** Masi Asare

**Musical Director:** Anessa Marie



**Xyzsa (Zy-shah) Love Pagaduan** is a songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, and music producer. Still in high school, she has written over 100 unique songs that deliver a powerful message meant to encourage others, promote unity, and spark positive change in the world.

Xyzsa notes the beginning of her musical journey with the premature birth of her twin sisters. She composed the song "A Miracle of Love" which she sang with her two other sisters and ukulele to each twin in their isolated incubators so they could become familiar with their voices and feel their big sisters' love.

Since then, Xyzsa has performed in small to large venues, ranging from the Levitt Pavilion in Arlington, Texas to the Four Corners Brewery Company in Dallas, to open-park performances in front of thousands. Along with her older sister, she is a regular praise and worship leader at church.

**Song Description:** The singer is a teenage girl stuck in a relationship in which she is in love with a boy who wants only to be friends. In her optimistic way, she believes that she sees a side of him no one else can and that she can bring out that special part of him. The boy visits her for comfort after his every breakup and over and over, her feelings for him grow until he leaves to pursue a new infatuation. Gradually, she lets go of her pride, willing to "settle for less, for him," claiming his "leftover love" for herself.

**Pagaduan's mentor Masi Asare** is a composer, lyricist, playwright, and assistant professor of Theatre at Northwestern University. Her shows include: *THE FAMILY RESEMBLANCE* (book/music/lyrics; Theatre Royal Stratford East commission, Eugene O'Neill Center NMTC); *RISHVOR*, a new musical about racial passing (book/music/lyrics) commissioned by Barbara Whitman/Grove Entertainment; *MONSOON WEDDING* (lyrics), the London bound adaptation of Mira Nair's film; *MIRROR OF MOST VALUE* (Samuel French), a one-act play for Marvel about super hero Kamala Khan; a new musical commissioned by Chicago's Victory Gardens Theatre and the Toulmin Foundation; and the secret agent musical *SYMPATHY JONES* (music/lyrics/concept; NYMF; Playscripts). A past Dramatists Guild Fellow, Masi has received the Billie Burke Ziegfeld Award for a woman composer of musicals, mentored by Jeanine Tesori; both the Holof Lyricist Award and the Haupt Composition Prize from the O'Neill Center; an Emerging Artist Grant from the Theater Hall of Fame, nominated by Daryl Roth; and the Stacey Mindich "Go Write A Musical" Lilly Award. Her songs have been heard at venues across NYC from Playwrights Horizons to Lincoln Center and can be heard on the streaming site Broadway on Demand. A voice instructor and coach with two decades of teaching experience, Masi specializes in popular vocal styles. Her voice students have performed in regional and touring shows, and on Broadway.

Masi's scholarly book project, *Voicing the Possible: Technique, Vocal Sound, and Black Women on the Musical Stage*, examines the impact of blues singers on Broadway belting and makes the case for the need to feel the racial history in contemporary practices of musical theatre performance. At Northwestern, she holds an appointment in the Performance Studies Department, affiliations with the Sound Arts and Industries Program and the Black Arts Initiative, and serves on the executive committee of the interdisciplinary PhD in Theatre and Drama. She teaches courses in musical theatre history, vocal performance studies, and musical theatre writing. Masi has presented her work at conferences including BroadwayCon; Song, Stage, and Screen; the American Society of Theatre Research; the Association for Theatre in Higher Education; the Educational Theatre Association; and EMP PopCon. Her writing appears in *The Dramatist*, *Journal of Popular Music Studies*, *Performance Matters* (forthcoming) and *Studies in Musical Theatre* (forthcoming). She also hosts and produces the pandemic-era podcast "Voicing Across Distance," bringing together scholars and practitioners to listen for voices and vocal sound in our historical moment, across social distance. Masi holds a bachelor's degree from Harvard and a PhD in performance studies from New York University. She is a member of ASCAP and the Dramatists Guild, and serves on the membership committee of ASTR and the advisory board of MAESTRA. She divides her time between Chicago and New York City.

**Durfee's musical director Anessa Marie** is a singer/songwriter, composer/lyricist, music director, pianist, and orchestrator based in Manhattan. In 2019, Anessa was awarded the Artist Fellowship with NYMF and presented her song cycle, *Finding Beautiful*, written with Danny Bristoll. Current theatrical works in development include *Reign*, an original rock opera based on Edward II, *Footprints in the Sand*, and *Transitions*, her one-woman show to debut in early 2021. She is also currently writing *A New York Renaissance* for piano and symphony orchestra to debut in 2022, and composing the score for three upcoming film projects. She has been featured at venues such as Signature Theatre, 54 Below, Joe's Pub, Green Room 42, and Carnegie Hall, and was featured in *The Advocate* magazine in July 2018. She regularly music directs concerts in the NYC cabaret circuit, and serves as resident music director for Trans Voices Trans Cabaret (TVTC), a bi-monthly cabaret featuring an all-TGNC identifying cast. She also works as a gender consultant in theatre, film, and TV. She is also the founder, artistic director, and conductor of the Phoenix Trans Chorus of NYC.

Recent theater credits: COMPOSER/ORCHESTRATOR: *Finding Beautiful* (NYMF), *Queering the Canon* (Joe's Pub), *Beautiful: The Music and Lyrics of Anessa Marie* (various NYC), *A Glimpse of the Rainbow* (Green Room 42); MUSIC DIRECTOR: *Miss Step* (5th Ave- Reading), *Hammer* (NYU), *Interstate* (NAMT), *The Office Musical Parody* (Jerry Orbach Theatre), *Finding Beautiful* (NYMF, Signature Center), *American Girl Live* (Nat'l Tour), *Into the Woods* (OOTB), *City of Light* (SHE NYC), *The Addams Family* (Fordham), *Canceled* (Keen Teenz).