


# Basic Detail Report

**MISS FLORA BATSON**  
**THE COLORED JENNY LIND.**  
**AT SPURGEON'S OPERA HOUSE, SANTA ANA,**  
**THURSDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 21st, 1889.**



The largest music halls in the country have time and again failed to hold the multitudes that have flocked to hear the colored Jenny Lind. Competent critics and the leading papers from the Atlantic to the Pacific unite in crowning her the greatest singer from the 8,000,000 colored people in America, and worthy to rank among the great singers of the world.

She sings from memory over 200 selections in almost every class of music.

A highly cultivated voice, expansive of exquisite sweetness, power and compass. Her vocal range has a wonderful compass from lowest contralto notes to soprano heights without losing the quality of her tones.—*Los Angeles Evening Express.*

A better pleased audience never filled out of the theatre than this which listened to her last evening.—*Los Angeles Tribune.*

**MISS FLORA BATSON**  
(Queen of Song.)

The Prettiest Mezzo-Soprano.—*New York Sun.* The Colored Jenny Lind.—*New York World* She carried the house by storm, and five times was recalled to the foot-lights.—*N. Y. Herald.* A concert in herself! It is worth going a thousand miles to hear her.—*Philadelphia Tribune.* At 44 years of age she has sung her way into hundreds of thousands of hearts.—*Phila. Item.* Has earned the fame of being the greatest colored singer in the world.—*Vicksburg Post.* All her numbers were sung without effort—as the birds sing.—*Mobile (Ala.) Daily Register.* A voice of great range and of remarkable depth and purity.—*Louisville (Ky.) Courier-Journal.* She will never lack for an audience in the "City of Seven Hills."—*Philadelphia (Pa.) Times.* The sweetest voice that ever charmed a Virginia audience.—*Lynchburg (Va.) Daily Advance.* Has two distinct voices: a mezzo-soprano and a contralto.—*San Jose (Cal.) Times.* Her articulation is so perfect her renditions seem like recitations set to music.—*Kansas City Dispatch.* A highly cultivated Mezzo-Soprano of great sweetness, power and compass and of dramatic quality.—*Charleston (S. C.) News and Courier.* She electrified the vast audience at the (German) Tabernacle service on Sunday, by her marvellous rendition of the 27th Psalm.—*Deseret Evening News, Salt Lake, Utah.* Secured a complete success as a vocalist of high ability, and fully justified the favorable criticisms of the eastern press. A mezzo-soprano of wonderful range.—*San Francisco Examiner.* A rich mezzo-voice of great compass. She has an absolute compass of her voice, the highest to the lowest register.—*San Francisco Call.* Those desiring to hear a charming and gifted singer should not fail to attend her concert.—*San Francisco Chronicle.* A wonderful voice—sounded again and again—A sparkling diamond in the golden realm of song.—*San Jose (Cal.) Mercury.* Miss Batson, by her marvellous voice, has a divine mission to aid in breaking down the stubborn walls of prejudice, which stand so long and so high in our nation's progress toward a higher civilization.—*Lynchburg (Va.) Cox States' Messenger.* Possessing a voice of rare richness and wonderful range; she is undeniably the greatest singer among the 8,000,000 colored people in America, and deserves high rank among the great singers of the world. Her progress through the country has been one continuous triumph.—*Denver (Col.) Rocky Mountain News.* During the great temperance festival in New York, Miss Batson sang "Six Feet of Earth" ninety successive nights at Masonic Temple. Her wonderfully pathetic rendering of this and other selections swayed thousands to tears, moving hearts that arguments failed to reach. The secret of her matchless power of electrifying an audience lies not solely in her stilled art, but in the captivating melody and execution, and in her purely extensive range of her fashion voice, coupled with her simple, unostentatious and childlike utterances.—*Chicago (I. L.) Times.* The star of the evening, Miss Flora Batson, wore a crown, heavily jeweled, and diamonds flashed upon her hands and from her ears. Her singing at once established her claim of being in the front rank of star artists, and there is a greater fortune than that already accumulated, in store for her.—*Providence (R. I.) Daily Dispatch.* Her voice is rich and melodious to a singer. The range is wonderful. It is clear and resonant, exceedingly flexible and pure. Her articulation is perfect, and she sings with a freedom from effort, even rarely, except in the most famous songs. The tones of her voice are powerful and thrilling. It is rather dramatic than emotional. Her renditions last night covered an extraordinary versatility and range.—*Mobile (Ala.) American.* No other singer has ever drawn such audiences in New Orleans so many (seventeen) successive nights. Her exquisite sweetness, power and range of her voice, her perfect articulation, and her ability to express in song every passion of the soul, enables her, without apparent effort, to electrify her hearers with laughter by her irresistible humor, or to move to tears by the irresistible pathos of her voice.—*New Orleans Standard.*

**TICKETS, 50 Cents CHILDREN 25 Cents.**  
No reserved seats, but every ticket will guarantee a seat as no more tickets will be sold than there are seats in the house.

Concert at Music Hall, Anaheim, Wednesday Evening, Nov. 20th.

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## Program for Miss Flora Batson Performing at Spurgeon's Opera House

**Date**  
November 21, 1889

**Medium**  
Ink on paper

**Description**  
This is a program from 1889 when the opera singer Flora Batson performed at the Spurgeon's Opera House in Santa Ana. At the time, it would have been practically unheard of for a woman of color to take the stage, an ugly truth which makes it even more impressive that Flora Batson performed in Santa Ana on the evening of Thursday, November 21, 1889. She was a Black woman; a mezzo-soprano who earned accolades like "the Queen of Song," "probably the greatest ballad singer," and "worth going 1,000 miles to hear." Flora Batson was born in Washington, D.C. in 1864 to a Civil War widow. At the age of three she and her family moved to Providence, Rhode Island and it was there that she discovered and honed her

natural talent for song by performing in her church choir. By the time she turned 21, she had already left her hometown and during a 90-day performance in New York City drew the eye of James G. Bergen, manager of the Bergen Star Company. With his help, she was able to continually book venues which would normally have been exclusively reserved for white audiences and performers. Batson also fell in love with and married Bergen. At the height of her fame in 1889, whoever was then responsible for the bookings at Santa Ana's Spurgeon Opera House managed to book Flora Batson for a one evening performance. The opera house that she performed at that night was demolished in 1913 to make way for what is now the Spurgeon Building in downtown Santa Ana. It just so happens that this theater was also the site of the first film screening in the county. Unfortunately, there is no record of Batson's Santa Ana performance. Bergen passed away in 1896 and left Batson without any money or inroads into the major venues she had once performed in. Practically overnight she went from singing for Pope Leo XIII and Queen Victoria, to working in vaudeville.

**Dimensions**  
6 x 10 1/4 in. (15.2 x 26 cm)