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FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Miami, Florida

EXTENDED PROGRAM NOTES FOR THESIS VOICE RECITAL

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF MUSIC

by

Katherine Parkin Smith

2012

To: Dean Brian Shriner
College of Architecture and the Arts

This thesis, written by Katherine Parkin Smith, and entitled Extended Program Notes for Thesis Voice Recital, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgement.

We have read this thesis and recommend that it be approved.

Robert Dundas

Dr. John Augenblick

Dr. Kathleen Wilson, Major Professor

Date of Defense: March 30, 2012

The Thesis of Katherine Parkin Smith has been approved.

Dean Brian Shriner
College of Architecture and the Arts

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

EXTENDED PROGRAM NOTES FOR THESIS VOICE RECITAL

by

Katherine Parkin Smith

Florida International University, 2012

Miami, Florida

Professor Kathleen Wilson, Major Professor

This thesis presents extended program notes for a sixty-minute vocal graduate recital consisting of the following repertoire for soprano: the arias “Soffri, o cor” and “Dimmi qual prova mai” from Alessandro Scarlatti’s cantata *Dal Bel Volto d’Irene*; a role study of Zerlina from Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s opera *Don Giovanni*, including her arias “Batti, batti, o bel Masetto” and “Vedrai, carino;” Francis Poulenc’s song cycle *Cocardes*; selections from Arnold Schoenberg’s song cycle *Das Buch der Hängenden Gärten*; “Der Hirt auf dem Felsen” by Franz Schubert, a chamber work written for soprano, piano, and clarinet; and selections from American composer Ricky Ian Gordon’s song cycle *Orpheus and Euridice*, composed as a companion piece to the Schubert “Der Hirt auf dem Felsen.” These works span three centuries and cover four languages and multiple genres and musical styles. The content of this thesis contains detailed information on these works through historical study, musical analysis, and research in performance practice.

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Chapter I

ALESSANDRO SCARLATTI

The Development of the Baroque Cantata

Of the several new vocal genres to emerge in the Italian Baroque period, the *Cantata di Camera*, which combined solo voice with an accompanying chamber group of instruments, proved especially fertile. Copious numbers of cantatas were composed, although few were published after the genre's earliest period of origin in Rome; they circulated mostly in manuscript form. In *A History of Baroque Music*, George J. Buelow describes the cantata as "the least comprehensively studied of the new vocal forms developing in the Seventeenth century" because of the sheer number composed and their relative inaccessibility today (97).

A cantata's basic structure consisted of secco recitatives, which consisted of a large amount of text that moved the plot forward and that was performed in a declamatory, *parlando* style over a realized ground bass; arias, which were lyrical songs setting a short amount of text over full accompaniment; and ariosos, a middle point between recitative and aria setting more text than a recitative bit with a less formal structure than an aria. Common aria forms included ABB, ABA, AABB, Rondo or ABACA (BA), Strophic (verse form), and Strophic variation. The capital letters represent individual musical sections which were ornamented during their repetition. The ABA or the *da capo* aria (so named because *da capo* means "to the head" in Italian and the music would repeat from the beginning, or "head," of the aria) was the most common Baroque aria structure. A Rondo form was essentially an expanded *da capo* form.

Created as a form of social entertainment, the Cantata di Camera was just as important to a singer's career as opera. Their texts often focused on the "trials and tribulations of a lover rejected by a cruel woman" (Buelow, 97) and were usually pastoral in character. Early composers of the cantata genre included Alessandro Grandi, Luigi Rossi—who composed more than three hundred works—and especially Giacomo Carissimi.

At least one hundred and twenty-six cantatas are attributed to Carissimi. His cantatas varied significantly; over half of them were in a composite form, which blurred the line between arioso and aria. Harmonically, Giacomo Carissimi was more adventurous than other composers of the early Baroque. He exploited dissonant melodic leaps and unusual shifts between related major and minor keys as well as between distantly-related tonal centers.

Agostino Steffani, an Italian composer who spent most of his career in various German states, experimented with counterpoint in his duet cantatas, an unusual step since the early Baroque period had eschewed contrapuntal complexity as a reaction to the extremes of Renaissance polyphony. Steffani's vocal style was operatic, with Italianate lyricism and melismatic vocal passages. His incorporation of contrapuntal techniques in dramatic vocal genres was an important step forward from the Venetian operatic and oratorio styles; his works form a bridge to eighteenth-century stylistic developments (Buelow, 101)

Alessandro Scarlatti's Standardization of the Genre

Alessandro Scarlatti (1660–1725) was the most prolific cantata composer of the Baroque period, with over six hundred such works definitely attributed to him, as well as an additional one hundred or more cantatas that are possibly his. While he was not an innovator like Carissimi or Steffani, Scarlatti's contributions served to define and codify the genre. Scarlatti's catalogue lacks a comprehensive scholastic treatment, perhaps because of its size and relative inaccessibility. Buelow states:

Unfortunately, Scarlatti's cantatas, this treasury of music invaluable for the study of the Italian cantata at the end of the seventeenth century, still have not received a comprehensive examination. The reason for this significant lacuna in the history of Italian music lies in musical scholarship's failure to initiate a representative edition of his vast number of works, which now are available in a mere scattering of practical editions. (134)

Scarlatti was associated with the Roman Arcadian Academy, an artistic movement that sought to reform and purify Italian poetry and opera libretti partly through the use of French literary models; therefore his texts were classical conventionally neoclassical and often featured Arcadian figures. Taken from Greek mythology, Arcadia represented pastoral simplicity. Other members of the Academy included librettists Apostolo Zeno and Pietro Metastasio, composer Giovanni Bononcini, and its founder Cardinal Ottoboni, who was a patron and advocate of Scarlatti's (Carter).

Scarlatti's cantata production can be divided into three main periods: those composed in Rome before 1684, those written in Rome between 1703 and 1708, and those stemming from his time in Naples from 1722 until his death. The main difference between his last period and his first two is an increasingly experimental and unusually complex harmonic language. Scarlatti's first period is representative of the mid-seventeenth-century styles of Carissimi, Steffani, and others. This period is typified by

the presence of arioso passages within many of the recitatives, prominent occurrences of strophic arias over a ground bass, and the occasional succession of arias and ariosos without intervening recitatives. Scarlatti's recitatives from this period are pointedly expressive of the texts through the use of melodic motives, harmonic or tonal surprises, and coloratura passages for expressive or pictorial words.

Scarlatti's cantatas from the second period settle into the more stereotypical form of two recitatives and two da capo arias. Coloratura is limited to important words and Scarlatti employ shorter melodic phrases that offer simple yet effective counterpoint to the bass line. Buelow describes another characteristic of Scarlatti's arias, observing, "the opening basso continuo theme [is] taken up at the entrance of the voice as the thematic basis of the A section" (134). All of these characteristics are demonstrated in the selected arias from *Dal Bel Volto d'Irene* (composed in 1705):

The image displays a musical score for an aria. The top system is the piano accompaniment, starting with the tempo marking "Lento" and the dynamic "p espress.". The bottom system is the vocal line, marked "mf espressivo". The lyrics are: "Dimmi qual prova mai bramai della mia fè, dimmelo". The piano part includes the instruction "p a tempo" and "sentito". The vocal line ends with the instruction "un po' allarg.". The score illustrates the relationship between the piano's bass line and the vocal melody.

i: **Figure 1.** Scarlatti "Soffri, o cor." The opening five notes of the bass line are repeated with a slight expansion as the first phrase of the vocal line.



Figure 2. Scarlatti: “Dimmi qual prova mai.” The same opening technique.



Figure 3. Scarlatti: “Dimmi qual prova mai.” Example of contrapuntal interest between the voice and bass line at the end of the B section.

Performance Practice for the Cantata Aria

The search for an “authentic” performance of a centuries–old work of music can be problematic. The composer’s autograph may be lost, copyists often introduced errors in the various derived manuscripts that circulated, and replicas of period instruments may lack the same sound quality as the original instruments themselves. Vocalists face the obvious difficulty of having no recordings of Baroque singing. Composers frequently

left details out of their scores because it was assumed their performers would follow the current conventions—conventions that could radically differ from our modern concepts of sound.

A twenty-first century musician does have some valuable clues about historical performance practice. Musicologists have discovered, preserved, and disseminated many different types of relevant sources. These include autographs of compositions, musicians' and composers' letters and journals, surviving original instruments, iconography depicting performances and instruments, and treatises by contemporaneous composers and theorists.

Musical treatises can provide pertinent information regarding historical performance practice, but they must be considered in light of their context. Colin Lawson and Robin Stowell cite a cautionary example in their *The Historical Performance of Music: An Introduction*: “Care should...be taken in the application of Quantz’s instructions in his *Versuch* (1752), published when he was fifty-five and beholden to practices fashionable in his formative years, to, say, performances by the young Mozart” (Lawson and Stowell 1999, 23). Musicologist Frederick Neumann considers the authors of performance practice sources as “very human witnesses who left us an affidavit about certain things they knew... believed in, [and]... wished their readers to believe” (cited in Lawson and Stowell 1999, 23). Scholars can never know precisely how an individual work was performed at the time of its composition, but musicians can still make choices that are more or less informed.

A Necessity for Baroque Ornamentation

Robert Donington wrote in his 1974 text *A Performer's Guide to Baroque Music* that “ornamentation is not a luxury in Baroque music, but rather a necessity” (160).

While the specific ornamentation to be introduced can be a matter of debate, that Baroque performers routinely added ornamentation of their own to composers' scores cannot be questioned. Indeed, Classicism was in part a revolt against “Singer's Excess” in which the soloists took such liberties that compositions became unrecognizable as the composers' own works.

Donington frequently refers to Pier Francesco Tosi's *Opinioni de' cantori antichi e moderni* (1723) in his discussion of Baroque ornamentation. In *Performing Baroque Music*, Mary Cyr (1992) also lists Tosi as an authoritative text for information on the ornamentation of the first quarter of the seventeenth century. Tosi's description of the tasteful ornamentation of a *da capo* aria is particularly germane to the selected Scarlatti literature:

In the first [section of a da capo aria] they require nothing but the simplest ornaments, of a good Taste and few, that the Composition may remain simple, plain and pure; in the second they expect, that to this Purity some artful Graces be added, by which the Judicious may hear, that the Ability of the Singer is greater, and in repeating the 'Air' [i.e. the first section], he that does not vary it for the better, is no great Master” (Donington 1974, 163–164, citing an 1743 English translation by Johann Galliard).

Various methods of Baroque ornamentation include melodic arpeggiation upon the harmonic chord, altered rhythms like the *note inégales* of the French Baroque, passing tones filling in melodic leaps, triplet and sixteenth-note embellishments, appoggiaturas, cadential trills, and cadenzas. The final three types ought to be introduced into every Baroque aria.

The appoggiatura, or “leaning note,” is one of the most important ornaments in Baroque music; it can add tension through dissonance or it can merely decorate a given melody. Tosi described appoggiaturas as “a note added by the Singer, for arriving more gracefully to the following note, either in rising or falling” (Cyr 1992, 130). Cadential trills are “a more or less rapid and unmeasured alternation between a main note and an upper auxiliary a tone or a semitone above” (Donington 1974, 195) and can start on either the main note or the upper auxiliary tone, though Donington indicated the upper auxiliary was the most common tone on which to begin a trill. As for the trill’s harmonic purpose, Donington wrote, “the harmonic function of the cadential trill is to introduce an unwritten modification into the dominant harmony” (195). The trill is best used to embellish a harmonic cadence.

Cadenzas are the final essential ornamentation for a Baroque aria, particularly in the da capo form. This ornament is an improvisatory addition to the final cadence of each section and became the site of much soloistic abuse by the end of the Baroque period. Tosi preferred that cadenzas be no longer than a phrase sung in one breath and felt they should only be employed at the final cadence (Cyr 1992).

The following figures display some of the ornamentation I devised for the da capo section of each Scarlatti aria performed on the accompanying compact disc. The historical recovery of historical performance practice being a difficult hermeneutical enterprise, I will not cloak my choices under the dubious mantle of “authenticity,” but I have made every effort to embellish Scarlatti’s melodies in good taste, keeping in mind current scholarly consensus regarding the likely range of possibilities.

f oon dolore
 Sof - fri, sof - fri, o cor, *mf* sof - fri, o cor, che un
a tempo
p

The image shows a musical score for Scarlatti's "Soffri, o cor." It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in a treble clef with a key signature of two flats and a 3/4 time signature. It features a melodic line with some ornamentation, including a trill on the word "cor". The piano accompaniment is in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and includes a "rit" (ritardando) marking at the beginning. Dynamics include *f* (forte) and *mf* (mezzo-forte). The tempo is marked *a tempo*.

Figure 4. Scarlatti: “Soffri, o cor.” The first phrase of the da capo ornamented with passing tones and arpeggiations.

mf espressivo
 Dimmi qual pro - va ma - i bra - mi del - la mia fè dim - me - lo
p a tempo
p
sentito
 per mer - cè, — dimme - lo per mer - cè — del mio tor - men - to, per mer -

The image shows a musical score for Scarlatti's "Dimmi qual prova mai." It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in a treble clef with a key signature of two flats and a 3/4 time signature. It features a melodic line with extensive ornamentation, including trills, turns, and triplets. The piano accompaniment is in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and includes a "rit" (ritardando) marking at the beginning. Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte), *p* (piano), and *sentito* (sensitive). The tempo is marked *a tempo*.

Figure 5. Scarlatti: “Dimmi qual prova mai.” Ornamentation with trills, turns, and other embellishments.

Chapter II

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Music must never offend the ear, even in most horrendous situations, but must always be pleasing, in other words must always remain Music.

—W. A. Mozart, in a letter to his father Leopold, September 26, 1781
(Spaethling 2006, 285)

Don Giovanni: Inspiration and Realization

When Lorenzo Da Ponte met Mozart in Vienna in May 1783, he was well on his way to becoming a celebrated court poet and had just contracted to write a libretto for Antonio Salieri. Mozart had been struggling to find a suitable libretto for his next opera, and though Da Ponte promised him a text, Wolfgang expressed his doubts in a letter to his father: “As you know, these Italian gentlemen are very polite to one’s face—we know all about them! If he is in league with Salieri, I shall get nothing from him as long as I live” (Dent 1991, 90–91).

Despite Mozart’s worries, the two men partnered in 1786 to adapt Beaumarchais’s play *Le Mariage de Figaro* as an Italian opera. The source was Mozart’s suggestion, and the resulting *Le Nozze di Figaro* enjoyed an immense but short-lived enthusiasm upon its Viennese premier in May 1786. More importantly, when a production of *Le Nozze di Figaro* was mounted in Prague six months later, its success was such that the manager of the national opera house, Pasquale Bondini, commissioned Mozart to write a new opera for the Prague audience. Da Ponte suggested using the Don Juan legend, and *Don Giovanni* enjoyed its premier on October 29th of 1787.

Edward Dent traced the literary origin and evolution of the Don Juan legend in his *Mozart’s Operas: A Critical Study*. Scholars generally agree that the first literary

appearance of Don Juan was in the dramatic play *El Burlador de Sevilla*, attributed to the Spanish playwright Gabriel Tellez (1571–1641), better known as Tirso de Molina. An Italian version of the play was performed in Naples by the mid-seventeenth century. This production utilized stock characters in the style of a *commedia dell'arte*;¹ for example, the Harlequin character served as Don Juan's servant. The play was produced in Lyon in 1658 and Paris in 1659.

Jean-Baptiste Molière, inspired by Don Juan's arrival in Paris, penned *Le Festin de Pierre* in 1665. Molière's vision was more comic than Tirso's. Molière introduced the character of Donna Elvira, and Da Ponte's Masetto and Zerlina are clearly derived from the peasants of the Molière script. Tirso's peasants were of the Arcadian variety, while Molière's are portrayed in a more realistic manner (though, of course, their language is a stylized version of what French peasants would actually have sounded like at the time).² Don Juan crossed the Channel to London for Thomas Shadwell's *The Libertine*,³ which took its basis from Dorimon's *Le Festin de Pierre*, written six years before Molière's. In 1736, once more in Italy, the Venetian Carlo Goldoni authored *Don Giovanni Tenorio ossia Il Dissoluto*. For a collaboration with the composer Giuseppe Gazzaniga in 1787, Giovanni Bertati drafted a one-act opera libretto, *Don Giovanni Tenorio*, from which Da Ponte drew in creating his own libretto.

¹ For more information on this style of theatre, please see the Grove Music Online entry for *commedia dell'arte* at: Anne MacNeil. "Commedia dell'arte." In Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/06188> (accessed January 28, 2012).

² Please see the previous chapter on Alessandro Scarlatti for a further explanation of the Arcadian movement in art and literature.

³ Henry Purcell composed incidental music for *The Libertine*.

From Dent's analysis, it is clear Da Ponte's main sources were the original Tirso and the three versions by Molière, Goldoni, and Bertati. Da Ponte drew the entire opening of Act I, through the discovery of the Commendatore's body, almost directly from the Bertati libretto, and he derived the seduction of Zerlina from Bertati, who in turn followed Tirso. Elvira's repeated interference, the preparations for the Ball, and Act I's finale were Da Ponte's invention. Giovanni's bribing of Leporello at the beginning of Act II appeared in the Tirso and Molière plays, while the cemetery scene, where the Statue vocally accepts Giovanni's invitation to dinner, originated in the Bertati libretto. (Dent 1991).

Mozart's Elevation of the Buffa Role

The *opera buffa* genre, or comedic opera, developed in Italy from the *commedia dell'arte*. Donald Grout identifies this trend, beginning with Giulio Rospigliosi, in his textbook *A Short History of Opera* (2003, 76). Many of the *commedia*'s stock characters—the wily servant, the acrobatic buffoon, the amorous lovers, the bumbling master, the learned doctor, and the meddling old woman—appear in various incarnations in *opera buffa*. While these archetypes were originally one-dimensional caricatures, they became more psychologically complex and realistic on the operatic stage. Mozart's operas with Da Ponte exhibit this development to its full potential. The saucy maid Serpina in Pergolesi's *La Serva Padrona* became Susanna of *Le Nozze di Figaro*, part lover and part crafty servant.

Mozart also juxtaposed *opera seria*-style characters with his *buffa* roles. These *seria* roles were similarly humanized; noble, serious characters like Donna Elvira in *Don*

Giovanni or the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro* make mistakes and learn to change. Though one might expect the *seria* role to be the most important or the strongest, that is not always the case in Mozart's operas. Susanna is the central character of *Le Nozze di Figaro*, even if she is not the titular one. The conflict over the Count's right to the *prima notte* would not exist without Susanna's impending wedding, and she spends the entire opera successfully averting this fate and helping the Countess regain her husband's attention.

Zerlina is quite arguably the strongest female character in *Don Giovanni*. As Kristi Brown–Montesano explains in *Understanding the Women of Mozart's Operas*, Zerlina is “the only woman in the opera who *incontrovertibly* refuses Don Giovanni's sexual advances even after having once welcomed them” (Brown 2007, 62). Elvira wonders, in her aria “Mi tradi quell'alma ingrata,” how she could still love Giovanni after he has so mistreated her. She finally returns to the convent from which Giovanni had abducted her. Donna Anna obsesses over punishing Giovanni and, after the divine retribution, she puts off marrying her betrothed Ottavio until she has completed a year of mourning for her father. (Or does she, as E. T. A. Hoffman suggested in his short story “Don Juan in Hell,” secretly pine for Giovanni?) Zerlina publicly denounces the Don and then contentedly returned to her commonplace Masetto for a presumably happy life.

Zerlina's ability to rebuke Giovanni was in itself a testament to her strength of character; previous *buffa* servants could have outsmarted or otherwise subverted their lord's plots, but it would have been culturally unthinkable to publicly denounce him as Zerlina does in the Act I finale: “Tutto già si sa! (Everything is known now!)” (Brown 2007, 76). Zerlina is also stronger than her parallels in the previous theatrical

incarnations of the Don Juan story. For example, the “Giovinetta” chorus before the peasant wedding is begun by Zerlina, who clearly has the upper hand in her relationship. When the chorus compliments Aminta in Tirso’s *El Burlador de Sevilla*, she asks them to sing instead “to my husband’s sweet graces” (Brown 2007, 62).

Of all the characters in *Don Giovanni*, it is perhaps Zerlina who is the most modern. T. W. Adorno, in his epigrammatic essay “Huldigung an Zerlina,” paid her homage by situating her within his para-Marxist historical vision:

The rhythms of Rococo and revolution pause in the image of Zerlina; she is no longer a shepardess and not yet a *citoyenne*. She belongs to the historical moment between the two, and in her we glimpse a humanity untouched by feudal oppression and protected from Bourgeois barbarism....As a parable of history, she is eternally static. Whoever falls in love with her is enamored of the ineffable, sounding from the no man’s land between the battling epochs in the guise of her silvery voice.⁴

The *Manine* Seduction

Don Juan uses a similar manner of seduction in many of his literary portrayals. This enticement could be described as the *manine* lure, whereby Juan flatters his peasant conquest by complementing the beauty of her hands. A lady’s hands would have been soft, white, and refined due to inexperience in manual labor, whereas a peasant like Zerlina would have calloused and scarred hands from working for her living. By calling a peasant’s hands perfumed and lily fair, Don Juan gratifies her with the concept that she is naturally noble, worthy of a lord’s attentions.

All of Da Ponte’s major sources contain a version of this exchange. The *manine* seduction appears in Tirso’s *El Burlador de Sevilla* when Don Juan promises to put

⁴ Adorno 2009 [1964], 48–50. Adorno’s homage has given rise to a further, metacritical homage. See Hoeckner 2006.

jewels on the peasant girl's white fingers, which he describes as an "inferno of cold snow." Molière's Don Juan lavishes the maid Charlotte with compliments about her beautiful face and begs to kiss her hands, "the loveliest in the world." The Giovanni of Bertati's libretto exclaims of Maturina, "How charming and graceful you are! What a delicate and soft little hand!" (Brown 2007, 62–65) Goldoni's play features dialogue between Giovanni and Elisa nearly identical to Mozart's recitative and duet "Là ci darem la mano" and even includes Giovanni's command for Elisa to give him her hand (Dent 1991, 125).

Elvira's sudden intervention thwarts Giovanni's initial attempt at seducing Zerlina, who returns to her angry and jealous Masetto, quickly effecting a reconciliation. Seeing that her offer to let Masetto punish her however he sees fit is not working, the clever maid remembers how effective Giovanni's *manine* line was. She appropriates the concept herself, singing, "E le care tue manine lieta poi saprò baciare! (And your dear little hands I will happily kiss!)." Poor Masetto, helpless to her charm and the *manine* ploy, relents, though he grouchy comments after her aria, "Just look how this witch is able to seduce me! We men are really weak in the head!" (Brown 2007, 70–71)

Zerlina's Music: A Study

Appropriately enough, all of Zerlina's music exhibits the same basic two-section structure. A *da capo* aria in the style of an *opera seria* like Elvira's "Mi tradi quell'alma ingrata" would not have been proper for Zerlina's class. Moreover, the simpler binary

song form indicates Zerlina's ability to adapt and change, rather than return to previous, potentially less effective ideas.⁵

“Là ci darem la mano” is the first example of this binary form, and Zerlina's initial musical response to Giovanni manifests her strength of character. For example, rather than merely repeating Giovanni's eight-measure phrase, she embellishes the cadence and then extends it, emphasizing by repetition the phrase “ma può burlarmi ancor,” which expresses her doubts as to Giovanni's sincerity. Her next lines interrupt Giovanni's cajoling phrases, and the chromatic repetitions of “presto non son più forte” sound more impassioned than the translation “soon I will not be able to resist” would lead the audience to believe. Giovanni's insistence wins out, though, and the duet's phrases begin to overlap in a *stretto* with more excitement until Zerlina has indeed lost her strength.⁶ The second section of the duet in a lilting 6/8 meter recalls the pastoral style of the rustic chorus “Giovinette che fate all'amore,” displaying Giovanni's ability to speak Zerlina's language and, more generally, his chameleon-like appeal to any lover of any station (Brown 2007).

Having already noted Zerlina's adaptation of the *manine* strategy, it is important to discuss the A section style of “Batti, batti, o bel Masetto,” an *andante grazioso* gavotte that sounds socially removed from the peasant class. Zerlina has learned from the Don and uses the elegant appeal of this dance to soothe Masetto's hurt feelings. The B section returns to the pastoral topos with its 6/8 meter, indicating that Zerlina has happily

⁵ Wye Allenbrooke (1983) provides a tabular comparison of all three of Zerlina's numbers, showing how they share the same formal organization (268).

⁶ *Stretto*, from the Italian for “close” or “narrow,” is a compositional technique where a musical statement is imitated in close succession so that the phrases overlap or are abbreviated.

returned to her own station, a little wiser, but content with her honest lover. Textually, Zerlina appears to give Masetto power as she pleads with him to punish her indiscretions, so long as there is peace afterwards. She knows full well, however, that he will never raise his hand to her. Mozart highlights her ploy with a trilling giggle in the violin as she suggests Masetto pull her hair or scratch out her eyes (Brown 2007).

The image shows a musical score for the aria "Batti, batti, o bel Masetto." from Mozart's opera *Le Nozze di Figaro*. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a vocal line for Zerlina (Z.), a violin (Viol.), a flute and oboe (Fl., Ob.), and a figured bass (Fg.). The vocal line begins with the lyrics "- tar. hin." and ends with "La - sce - rò stra - ziar - mi il Zaus nur wild mich in den". The violin part includes trills (tr) and a trilling giggle. The flute and oboe parts have trills (tr) and a trilling giggle. The figured bass part has a trilling giggle. The score is numbered 16 at the beginning.

Figure 6. Mozart: “Batti, batti, o bel Masetto.” Trills before “Lascero straziarmi il crine.”

Zerlina’s final binary aria, “Vedrai, carino,” occurs when she finds Masetto, beaten up by Giovanni, and comforts him with the thought of a medicine only she can provide. The first section features a sweet, playful melody so typical of her character, matched to suggestive words and intimate terms of endearment. The B section gains intensity through a steady bass pulse and woodwind interjections that are meant to imitate the heart beat to which Zerlina refers in her amorous phrase “sentilo battere, toccami qua.” Mozart paints these words with increasing suggestiveness at each repetition, reminding the listener that the two peasants are newlyweds who have endured nothing but interruptions since their wedding feast. All is now reconciled between the lovers and they are able to live in peace, even before Giovanni meets his doom.

Chapter III

FRANCIS POULENC

Ever since his earliest works his music bears the stamp of his personality and in growing older he remained true to his own concept of his music.

Pierre Bernac, *Francis Poulenc: The Man and his Songs*. (38)

The Man

Francis Poulenc was born in Paris in 1899. Poulenc's mother Jenny loved to play piano and began to teach her son when he was four or five years old. "When I recall my childhood I see myself always sitting at a piano. One day I discovered *Die Winterreise* of Schubert and suddenly something very profound in my life was changed," Poulenc recounted. Other early musical influences included Debussy's *Danse sacré et danse Profane* and Stravinsky's ballet collaborations with Sergei Diagelev (Bernac 2001, 21–22).

World War I prevented Poulenc's entrance to the Conservatoire for formal compositional training, though he later studied privately with Charles Koechlin in 1921–1924. More importantly, his piano instructor from age 14, Ricardo Viñes, introduced him to Georges Auric and Erik Satie. Through them he also met Darius Milhaud, Arthur Honegger, Louis Durey, and Germaine Tailleferre. These four, with Auric and Poulenc, formed a group baptized "Les Six" by the critic Henri Collet (Bernac 2001). Collet trumpeted this band of Parisian composers as France's answer to the Russian Five, but they were not a cohesive group. As Vera Rašin states in her article "'Les Six' and Jean Cocteau," what did connect these composers and their spokesman, the poet Jean Cocteau, was a "desire to return to firm outlines in art, a desire to strip it of the superfluous

ornament with which they said it had become bedecked” (Rašín 1957, 165). To these young composers, the horrors of World War I had left no more room for Impressionism and Romantic thought. Jean Cocteau summed up this quest for clarity in the movement’s manifesto *Le Coq et l’Arlequin*: “Un pòete a toujours trop de mots dans son vocabulaire, un peintre trop de couleurs sur sa palette, un musicien trop de notes sur son clavier” (A poet always has too many words in his vocabulary, a painter too many colors on his palette, a musician too many notes on the keyboard)” (Rašín 1957, 165).

Casting off the style of Debussy may have seemed unusual for a man who owed so much of his early inspiration to the Impressionist, but Poulenc explained this progression himself:

Debussy has always remained my favourite composer after Mozart. I could not do without his music. It is my oxygen. Moreover the reaction of Les Six was directed against the imitators of Debussy, not against Debussy himself. It is always necessary to repudiate for a time, at the age of twenty, those whom you have idolized, for fear of being overgrown with ivy. (Bernac 2001, 24)

Yet, Poulenc cautioned against following modern trends for the sake of popularity. He wrote to Claude Rostand, “the worst possible thing is to wish to follow the fashion when the fashion does not suit you” (Bernac 2001, 38). For Poulenc, composition seemed a natural extension of himself, and writing anything untrue to his personal aesthetic would be unthinkable.

The Songs

J’aime la voix humaine.

—Francis Poulenc (cited in Kimball 2005, 225)

Poulenc established his individual style from his earliest compositions and maintained his own voice throughout his career. The *Cocardes* cycle, with poems by

Jean Cocteau, was only his second song cycle, yet it has elements of some of his last *mélodies*. In *Francis Poulenc: His Artistic Development and Musical Style*, Keith Daniel separates Poulenc's songs into six different categories: popular songs, child-like songs, prayer songs, tender and lyrical songs, patter songs, and dramatic songs. *Cocardes* falls into the category of child-like songs, along with "La Bestiaire," one of his first songs, and "La Courte paille," composed three years before his death.

Pierre Bernac asserted that Poulenc's vocal works were his best compositions because he loved both poetry and the human voice and had a gift for melody, harmonic modulation, and French declamation of text. Poulenc had enormous respect for the poems he chose to set, saying:

When I have chosen a poem of which the musical setting at times may not come to my mind until months later, I examine it in all its aspects. When it is a question of Apollinaire or Eluard, I attach the greatest importance to the way in which the poem is placed on the page, to the spaces, to the margins. I recite the poem to myself many times. I listen, I search for the traps, at times I underline the text in red at the difficult spots. I note the breathing places, I try to discover the inner rhythm from a line which is not necessarily the first. (Cited in Bernac 2001, 39)

Poulenc also asserted that "the setting to music of a poem must be an act of love, never a marriage of convenience" (Bernac 2001, 39). He had an affinity for the poetry of his contemporaries: only twenty of his one hundred thirty-seven works did not set a modern poem. In his *Journal de mes mélodies*, Poulenc declared, "If I were a singing teacher, I would insist on my pupils *reading the poems attentively* before working at a song. Most of the time these ladies and gentlemen do not understand a word of what they are singing" (Poulenc 1985, 19).

Poulenc's vocal melodic style tended toward the extended arioso with dry declamation of text. The melodies could be convoluted or disjunct, but Poulenc always

focused on diatonic notes. His melodies go through many harmonic modulations because, as Poulenc wrote, “I never transpose the tonality in which I have conceived a phrase” (Bernac 2001, 39). He also used regular phrasing, frequently of two measures length. Daniel assessed Poulenc’s harmonic language as “fundamentally diatonic and functional. The functions are often intricate or circuitous, but they can usually be discerned” (Daniel 1982, 74). Poulenc’s harmonies include mostly tertian and seventh chords. The quartal and quintal chord structures of his Impressionistic predecessors appear rather infrequently. His chordal vocabulary mainly consist of added seventh chords (notably on the tonic triad), ninth and thirteenth structures, diminished triads, and augmented chords in the form of altered dominants and augmented sixths. Poulenc said of himself, “I certainly know that I am not among the musicians who will have been harmonic innovators, like Igor, Ravel, or Debussy, but I think there is a place for *new* music which is happy to use the chords of others. Wasn’t this the case with Mozart and Schubert?” (Daniel 1982, 75)

Poulenc’s use of dissonance falls into several categories. His most frequent and least conspicuous use of dissonance involves seventh, ninth, and thirteenth chords. Another technique is wrong-note dissonance, where Poulenc adds or substitutes notes other than those that the local harmonic context would conventionally suggest. Wrong-note dissonance creates a playful, impertinent, or irreverent effect within Poulenc’s songs. Both seventh chords and wrong note dissonance occur in this passage from *Cocardes* No. 2, “Bonne d’enfant”:

Figure 7. Poulenc: *Cocardes*, No. 2, mm. 13–16. An addition of F-sharp and B-flat to the prevailing C-major harmony creates a seventh chord with an augmented fifth interval.

Poulenc was rhythmically conservative and most often used flowing eighth notes and ostinato figures. He was more original in his frequent and fluid meter changes and his use of radically different tempo markings rather than in his use of rhythmic durations. The first page of *Cocardes* No. 1 exhibits five meter changes within nine measures, as well as five tempo alterations. Poulenc also favored pedal tones in his piano accompaniments. In *Cocardes* No. 1, all of the phrases marked “très lent” occur over a sustained bass pedal tone or chord.

Figure 8. Poulenc: *Cocardes* No. 1 (“Miel de Narbonne”).

The majority of Poulenc's choral and solo works are through-composed in form. Occasionally he would end with a musical return, usually within a short piano coda. *Cocardes* No. 2 exhibits this modified ternary form, and even if Poulenc did not repeat melodic sections, he frequently created an ABA tonal structure. None of his *mélodies* were written in strophic or verse form. Poulenc's music lacked large-scale structures because he favored a cellular style of writing that was more additive than developmental; indeed, "many of Poulenc's melodies are too dependent on their specific harmonic setting to encourage development" (Daniel 1982, 60). This short, cellular writing style lent itself well to Jean Cocteau's Dadaist text for the *Cocardes* cycle.

Daniel declared of the *Cocardes* trio of songs that it "was, and is, hailed as one of Poulenc's most personal works" (254). Poulenc, in his *Journal de mes mélodies*, wrote that the songs contained "all that I loved at that age [ages 16 to 21] and that I still love" (23). All of Poulenc's songs were very personal to him; the experience of hearing a woman on the radio "caterwauling for a quarter of an hour some songs which may well have been [his]" (19) was what prompted him to write the journal with explicit instructions as to how each of his works should be performed. Bernac observed in *The Interpretation of French Song* that all of Poulenc's rhythms, dynamic markings, and tempo indications should be strictly followed.

Perhaps the best summation of Poulenc's personal approach to music comes to us through his amanuensis, Pierre Bernac, who recalls that when asked by a music critic to define his process, Poulenc explained:

My "rules" are instinctive, I am not concerned with principles and I am proud of that; I have no system of writing (for me "system" means "tricks"); and as for inspiration, it is so mysterious that it is wiser not to try to explain it."
(Bernac 2001, 37)

Chapter IV

ARNOLD SCHOENBERG

With the *George-Lieder*, I have succeeded for the first time in approaching an expressive and formal ideal which has haunted me for years. Up until now, I lacked the strength and the self-assurance to realize it. But now that I have started definitely upon this road, I am aware that I have burst the bonds of a bygone aesthetic; and, although I am striving towards a goal which seems certain to me, I foresee the opposition which I shall have to overcome; I feel the heat of the animosity which even the least temperaments will generate, and I fear that some who have believed in me up till now will not admit the necessity of this evolution.

—Arnold Schoenberg in the program notes for the premier of Opus 15 in Vienna, January 14, 1910 (cited in Lessem 1979, 38)

A Powerful Tonal Language for a Powerful Text

Stefan George's poetry frequently attracted the attentions of the Second Viennese School of composers. This group of composers consisted of Arnold Schoenberg and his pupils and focused on creating a new harmonic language. Stylistically, their works span late Romanticism, Expressionism, and twelve-tone serialism. Schoenberg's settings of George's *The Book of the Hanging Gardens* is the best known of the works based upon George's poems (Branscombe). In his 1912 essay "The Relationship to the Text," Schoenberg stated, "I had completely... understood the poems of Stefan George from their sound alone" (cited in Lessem 1979, 33) and went on to describe his approach to setting any poem, "I have never done greater justice to the poet than when, guided by my first contact with the sound of the beginning, I divined everything that obviously had to follow this first sound with inevitability" (32–33).

The Book of the Hanging Gardens evokes the largely unassuaged desire that a pair of lovers experiences in a mysterious, decadent setting. Of the fifteen songs, I have selected Nos. 6, 8, 9, and 14 for analysis and performance.

An Examination of Schoenberg's Tonal Language

At the time the listener was struck, above all, by the new sound. It was as if a new spatial dimension had been opened up. One could make out contours, which hardly seemed any longer to belong to the realm of music. In a strange light, the most delicate gradations of psychic excitement became clear.

—Schoenberg's pupil, Erwin Stein about *Das Buch der Hängenden Gärten*

(cited in Lessem 1979, 38–39)

Schoenberg's musical structure for *The Book of the Hanging Gardens* was primarily motivic. For him, the motive transcends a specific melodic ordering to become an unordered pitch-class set; the motive can be still used both as a specific melodic shape but it also appears in the vertical dimension as a source for harmonies. Many of the George songs do follow some traditional formal strategies, however. For example, in Song IV, an initial motive undergoes a gradual process of what Schoenberg called "developing variation," to the point where, absent the process, the relationship of the final motivic variant to its distant source would be impossible to discern. Around the song's midpoint, development ceases and Schoenberg brings back prior patterns. In order to bring some sense of closure to each piece, clearly recognizable phrases are repeated. Thus, elements of traditional binary form are used in conjunction with a radically new mode of pitch organization.

Song VI

*Jedem Werke bin ich fürder tot.
Dich mir nahzurufen mit den Sinnen,
Neue Reden mit dir auszuspinnen,
Dienst und Lohn, Gewährung und
Verbot,*

*Von allen Dingen ist nur dieses not
Und Weinen, daß die Bilder immer
fliehen,*

*Die in schöner Finsternis gediehen –
Wann der kalte klare Morgen droht.*

I am henceforth dead to all efforts.
To call you near me with my senses
to spin out new conversations with you,
service and payment, permission and
prohibition

of all things only this is necessary,
 and to weep as the images that flourished
 in the beautiful darkness vanish
 when the cold, clear morning threatens.

“Jedem Werke” opens with disruptive chords built from a succession of fourths

that travel downward by tritones, matching the poem’s theme of despair and lost rapture.

At numerous points in mm. 8–12, the same harmonic intervals occur at various transpositional levels. The original chords reappear at the end of the song in an arpeggiated form (Schoenberg marks them *flüchtig*, or “fleeting”) that mirrors the night’s vanishing into cold morning. Several other motives undergo gradual transformation: the opening vocal melody reiterates at m. 11, and the first melodic motive in the piano’s right hand is fragmented in mm. 3–7 and 13–15. Table 1 summarizes the overall motivic organization.

	mm. 1–2	mm. 3–7	mm. 8–12	mm. 13–15	mm. 16–18
Voice	A		m. 11: A ¹		
Piano	chord B	theme C develop	chord B ¹ transpose	theme C ¹	B arpeggio

Table 1. Motivic structure of *The Book of the Hanging Gardens* VI.

Song VIII

*Wenn ich heut nicht deinen Leib
 berühre,
 Wird der Faden meiner Seele reißen
 Wie zu sehr gespannte Sehne.
 Liebe Zeichen seien Trauerflöre
 Mir, der leidest, seit ich dir gehöre.
 Richte, ob mir solche Qual gebühre,
 Kühlung spreng mir, dem
 Fieberheissen,
 Der ich wankend draussen lehne.*

If I do not touch your body today,
 the thread of my soul will tear
 like a sinew that has been stretched too
 far.
 Let mourning clothes be beloved signs
 for me, who suffered since I heard you.
 Judge whether I deserve such torment;
 Sprinkle cool water on me, feverishly
 hot
 I stand outside, leaning unsteadily.

The harmonies in “Wenn ich heut deinen Leib” derive mostly from the augmented trichord appearing alone or with added semitones, yielding the tetrachords 4-19 and 4-24.⁷ This chord only has four distinct transpositions; three of these four appear within the first two measures. In m. 6, the fourth transposition appears and serves to highlight a contrast of tempo and texture when the poet mentions wearing mourning clothing (Haimo 2006).

Schoenberg associates melodic pitch levels and rhythmic values with specific words. For example, the stressed syllables of *berühre* (to touch), *reißen* (to tear), and *Sehne* (tendon) all receive at least twice the metric value of all the remaining syllables in the first sentence, which places into relief the physical pain that the poet endures from being deprived of his lover’s body. The latter two words land on F-sharp, the highest pitch in the first phrase, while the climactic pitch of the entire song falls on *Leidet* (suffered), after which the remainder of the vocal rhythm is augmented as the poet stumbles wearily at his lover’s door.

⁷ I identify set classes using the standard ordering in Forte 1974.

Song XI

*Als wir hinter dem beblühten Tore
Endlich nur das eigne Hauchen spürten,
Warden uns erdachte Seligkeiten?*

*Ich erinnere, daß wie schwache Rohre
Beide stumm zu beben wir begannen
Wenn wir leis nur an uns rührten
Und daß unsre Augen rannen –
So verbliebest du mir lang zu Seiten.*

When behind the flowered gate,
finally we felt only our own breathing
did we obtain the blisses we had
imagined?

I remember, how like weak reeds,
silently, we began to quake
if we touched each other only lightly
and that our eyes teared—
you remained by my side a long time
that way.

Anne Marie de Zeeuw explored Schoenberg's use of the 3:4 ratio within Song XI in her article "A Numerical Metaphor in a Schoenberg Song, Op. 15, No. XI" (de Zeeuw 1993). This relationship can be observed in the rhythms, text, and intervallic choices. Rhythmically, the ratio is immediately represented in the first measure, as the treble has four pitches each receiving a metric value of three tied eighth notes and the bass has three beamed sets of four sixteenth notes.



Figure 9. Schoenberg: *Book of the Hanging Gardens*, Op. 15/11. The rhythmic 3:4 ratio in the piano introduction.

Schoenberg's text setting also exhibits this proportion; note the alternations between sixteenth notes and triplet figures:

(sehr gebunden)

end- lich nur das eig- - ne Hau- chen spür- ten.

“4” “3”

(sehr ruhig)

war- den uns er- dach- te Se- lig- kei- ten?

Figure 10. Schoenberg: *Book of the Hanging Gardens*, Op. 15/11. Examples of metric text setting.

Schoenberg’s structural approach to the poem also corresponds to the 3:4 ratio. He breaks the poem into three segments: the first three lines, the next four, and the final line, which connects to the first line via the melodic motive and an augmented metrical setting.

From an intervallic standpoint, de Zeeuw points out that “the perfect fourth plays an extremely prominent role in the composition” (de Zeeuw 1993, 403). Measures 13–16 employ a slow melodic line comprised of major and minor thirds and a sweeping, trembling line containing mostly fourths that perfectly matches the underlying text, “ich erinnere daß wie schwache Rohre beide stumm zu beben wir begannen.”

The image displays a musical score for Arnold Schoenberg's 'Book of the Hanging Gardens, Op. 15/11, mm. 12-15'. It is divided into two systems. The first system features a vocal line in the upper staff with the lyrics '- te Se - lig - kei - ten? Ich er - in - ne - re,' and a piano accompaniment in the lower staff. The piano part includes dynamics 'pp' and 'ppp'. The second system continues the vocal line with lyrics 'daß wie schwa - che Roh - re bei - ße stumm zu' and 'ce trou - blant', and the piano accompaniment with dynamics 'pp' and 'ppp', and the instruction 'espress.'.

Figure 11. Schoenberg: *Book of the Hanging Gardens*, Op. 15/11, mm. 12–15.

Schoenberg's 3:4 ratio is meaningful one in light of the text's reflection upon the one moment of intimacy between the poet and his lover. According to Jungian psychology, the numbers three and four represent masculinity and femininity respectively, and the number four also connotes completeness (de Zeeuw 1993).

Schoenberg's choice of an open fourth to conclude the text "so verbliebest du mir lang zu Seiten" (You remained by my side a long time that way) is a final instance of this motivic use of the number four.

Song XIV

*Sprich nicht immer
 Von dem Laub,
 Windes raub;
 Vom Zerschellen
 Reifer Quitten,
 Von den Tritten
 Der Vernichter
 Spät im Jahr.
 Von dem Zittern
 Der Libellen
 In Gewittern,
 Und der Lichter,
 Deren Flimmer
 Wandelbar.*

Speak not always
 of the leaves,
 consumed by the wind,
 about the shattering
 of ripe quinces,
 of the steps
 of the annihilators
 late in the year.
 About the trembling
 of the dragonflies
 in thunderstorms
 and of lights
 whose flames
 change.

“Sprich nicht immer” displays bitter and autumnal nature imagery as the poet copes with his relationship’s end. George’s rhyme scheme breaks down and becomes more and more disjunct over the course of the poem. Similarly, Schoenberg’s motivic structure grows jagged and fragmented, as Alan Phillip Lessem has demonstrated:

mm. 1-3: xy . (x) y.
mm. 4-5: (x) . (x). y y
mm. 5-6: y . (x) y.
mm. 7-8: (x) (x) (x) . (x). y
mm. 9-11: x. xy.

Figure 12. Alan Lessem’s motivic analysis of No. XIV. Motive x in parenthesis represents a motive fragment. (Lessem 1979, 54)

Key words such as *spricht nicht*, *Zerschellen*, *Quitten*, *Tritten*, and *Vernichter* are endowed with a melodic emphasis of a half step and often a trochaic rhythmic stress in order to spotlight the poem’s terse phrases.

Chapter V

FRANZ SCHUBERT

Volkslied auf dem Berge

Wolfgang Suppen reviewed two centuries of scholarship on the Austrian folksong in his 1976 article, “Research on Folk Music in Austria since 1800.” Johann Gottfried Herder, a German philosopher, coined the term *Volkslied* around 1775 to describe the traditional music of his people. When he noticed a decline in the oral tradition by which these songs were perpetuated, Herder published a four volume collection of *Volkslieder* from 1778 to 1779. Herder’s friend Johann Wolfgang von Goethe subsequently learned of these treasures and thus a revival of German poetry connected to nature had its genesis. The first edition of Austrian folksongs was published in Vienna in 1818.

Several factors contributed to Schubert’s use of a *Volkslied* idiom in much of his music. First, he was an ardent admirer of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and frequently set the great poet’s texts to music. Second, Schubert might well have read the 1818 Viennese collection of *Volkslieder* and quite possibly some of Herder’s works as well. Third, as A. Hyatt King observed in the article, “Mountains, Music, and Musicians,” Schubert was the first Viennese composer to take an interest in the Alps. In a letter to his brother Ferdinand in 1825, Franz described traveling through the mountains and hills surrounding Salzburg:

The mountains rise up ever higher, in particular the Untersberg, which stands out, fantastic and wonderful, above the rest. The sun grows dim, and heavy clouds like spirits of mist float over the black mountains. Yet they do not touch the summit of the Untersberg but creep past it as though fearful of its ghostly secret... At last we pass the Kapuzinerberg whose vast wall of rock rises sheer up from the roadway, and frowns menacingly on the traveler below. The Untersberg

and its attendant mountains assume gigantic proportions, as though they would crush us with their magnitude. (King 1945, 404–405)



Figure 13. The Untersberg as seen from Hellbrunnerallee in Salzburg, Austria. Photo: Katherine Smith, May 27, 2008.

If the mountains could inspire such awe in Schubert, it is no wonder he was drawn to poetry that evoked this sublime landscape, including *Der Alpenjäger* by Schiller, *Schweizerlied* by Goethe, *He is Gone on the Mountain* by Scott, and *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen* by Wilhelm Müller. Schubert also set many poems centering on nature, including *Heidenröslein*, *Frühlingsglaube*, and *Ganymede*. The first strophe of *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen* must have resonated with Schubert's memories of his alpine expedition just three years earlier:

Wenn auf dem höchsten Fels ich steh *ins tiefe Tal herniederseh*

*und singe.
Fern aus dem tiefen dunkeln Tal
schwingt sich empor der Wiederhall
der Klüfte
Je weiter meine Stimme dringt
Je heller sie mir wieder klingt
Von unten.*

*Mein Liebchen wohnt so weit von mir,
Drum sehn ich mich so heiß nach ihr
Hinüber.*

When on the highest rock I stand
and see into the deep valley below
and sing.

Far from the deep, dark valley
soars up the echo
from the crevasse.
The further my voice penetrates
the brighter it sounds to me
from below.

My lover lives so far from me,
I long to be with her
over there.

A. Hyatt King said of the Romantic fixation on nature:

Of all the aspects of the Romantic movement, not the least remarkable is the profound change that it made in the attitude of the creative artist towards Nature... Nature had become a vital and omnipresent being, in whose infinite variety he [the creative artist] could be sure of finding sympathetic response to his own moods and a rich source of inspiration. Especially was this so in the new beauty that artists, and ordinary men too, were coming to see in the hills, viewed for centuries with a strong aversion which was rooted in fear and fostered by ignorance.

(King 1945, 395)

An interest in the mountains would have also engendered an interest in the culture of their inhabitants. In order to evoke the pastoral and majestic beauty of the hills, a composer would need to employ alpine folksongs as well. A specific example of such a *Volkslied* is the *Ranz des Vaches*, or Call to the Cows. King describes this song as “a melody which for centuries has been sung, or played, on an Alphorn, to summon the cows from the lofty pastures above the tree line in the Alps” (397). Many Romantic composers created melodies reminiscent of this: Berlioz described the lover hearing “two shepherd lads play the Ranz des Vaches” in the program for his *Symphonie Fantastique* (Scène aux Champs). Beethoven opened the last movement of his *Pastoral Symphony* with a version of the *Ranz* as the shepherd pipes after the storm. Other notable

occurrences include Rossini's third movement of the *William Tell* overture and Richard Wagner's English horn solo at the beginning of Act III of *Tristan und Isolde*.

But for Schubert, the model closest at hand was surely the Viennese composer Joseph Weigl's introduction of the *Ranz des Vaches* motif in his opera *Die Schweizer Familie*, which capitalized on the recent craze for the Swiss landscape. This work, first performed in 1809, was the most successful German-language opera of its day. Schubert knew it well. It can be no coincidence that when three months before Schubert's death in December 1828, the famous dramatic soprano Anna Milder-Hauptman commissioned him to write her a *scena* for soprano, clarinet, and piano, he furnished a song that would have reminded a Viennese audience of Weigl's work. Milder-Hauptmann, who is remembered today as Beethoven's first Leonora, also created the leading role of Emmeline in *Die Schweizer Familie*. Schubert was not only paying homage to a landscape that he loved but also to his singer.

Violet Alford (1941) includes a transcription of the famous Gruyère *Ranz des Vaches* in her article "Music and Dance of the Swiss Folk" from which we can draw parallels to Schubert's setting of *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen*.

2 *Le Ranz des Vaches*

The image shows two musical excerpts. The top excerpt is for 'Le Ranz des Vaches' in 3/4 time, featuring a melody with a peak and valley contour. It includes a refrain: 'Liau-ba, Li-au-ba, Pressez le pas, Liau-ba, Li-au-ba, Pressez le pas.' The bottom excerpt is for 'Der Hirt auf dem Felsen' in 3/4 time, with a similar melodic contour. The lyrics are: 'Wenn auf dem höch-sten Fels ich steh, in's tie-fe Thal her-nie-der-seh,'.

Figure 14. Comparison of the *Ranz des Vaches* in Alford’s transcription and Schubert’s melodic setting of the opening line of *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen*.

In both excerpts we hear similar peak and valley-shaped melodic contours, arpeggiated tonic triads, and compound meter. Schubert also refers to the Alpine tradition of yodeling in his text painting. Violet Alford again provides a traditional yodel example we can compare to Schubert’s setting:

1 "Von Luzern nach Weggishöh" Yodel Yodel Yodel

Yodel

und sin - ge, und sin - ge:

Thal schwingt sich empor der Wie - der - hall,

der Wiederhall der Klüf - te.

Figure 15. Comparison of a traditional Alpine yodel and Schubert’s version in *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen*.

Particularly obvious is the yodeling on “and sing,” the upward sweep for “the echo,” and the downward drop of a major tenth on “the crevasse.” (This yodeling type of melody also appears in Schubert’s *Schweizerlied*.) Schubert repeats this sort of treatment in the final section of the piece as the shepherd joyfully welcomes the spring.

Frank Liebich observed in “Poetry, Song, and Schubert” that the composer “drew largely from the nature music of Austrian folkdance and song in his instrumental music, into which he absorbed much of its underlying sadness” (Liebich 1928, 689). How fitting that Schubert would use the clarinet with this text, particularly given the moody B section addressing the shepherd’s separation from his love. King describes the piece “with its lovely clarinet obligato [as] one of the ripest of all his [Schubert’s] songs” (King 1945, 405). The clarinet’s warm, vibrant tone and its wide range are perfectly suited to the text

and to the mood Schubert desired to create. Viennese audiences could have a taste of the Alhorn's clarion calls and aching timbre.

The image shows a musical score for voice and clarinet. The top system features a vocal line with lyrics "sieh empor der Wie_der.hall," and a clarinet line with dynamic markings *cresc.*, *f*, *f*, *p*, and *decresc.*. The bottom system features a vocal line with lyrics "der Wiederhall der Klüf . te." and a clarinet line with dynamic markings *pp* and *pp*. The music is in a minor key and 3/4 time.

Figure 16. Clarinet and voice in dialogue during the opening section of *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen*.

Chapter VI

RICKY IAN GORDON

Gordon's Retelling of the Orpheus Myth through his Text

The myth of Orpheus has inspired composers for centuries. Whether it was Jacopo Peri, Giulio Caccini, and Claudio Monteverdi striving to recreate Greek Drama; Alessandro Scarlatti and Pergolesi writing cantatas; Gluck composing a reform opera; Offenbach using the legend to satirize the court of Napoleon III; or Stravinsky creating another ballet—composers using many different genres and affective stances have set this beautiful myth to music. Donald M. Poduska lists more than seventy Orpheus-inspired works in his survey, “Classical Myth in Music: a Selective List.” (Poduska 1999).

Orpheus is a perfect example of the archetypal Greek hero who struggles and fails but ultimately redeems himself, even if he must destroy himself in the process. That he is a musician himself serves as a lure for many composers still. Its dual nature, both epic and episodic, has inspired a wide variety of musical settings.

In 1995, the American clarinetist Todd Palmer commissioned Ricky Ian Gordon to write a companion to Schubert's *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen*. Gordon had a difficult time finding inspiration, being understandably distracted by his lover's slow decline from AIDS. One night Gordon awoke at four o'clock in the morning and penned the libretto; within one hour he had a new interpretation of the Orpheus myth. As Gordon describes the incident in the score's program notes:

I suddenly had a deep identification with Orpheus; only my Euridice was not bitten by a snake, but robbed slowly by an incurable virus. Somehow, in my mind's eye and ear, I saw Todd as “Orpheus” playing his “pipe” instead of a lute or lyre. Euridice was both herself and the storyteller; the notes were his and the pianist's, and the words were hers.

—Ricky Ian Gordon (Gordon 2002, 3)

Gordon's text is imbued with an incredible quality of an almost frantic desire couched in stark, clean language. Unlike the original myth—where Eurydice dies of a snake bite after the wedding feast—Gordon's lovers experience a full measure of bliss, build a home, and share a dance before Euridice grows weak and ill. Orpheus's heroic and doomed journey to bring his love back from the Underworld unfolds, and his compounded loss is expressed in just three dense, devastating lines of text. Unable to continue a life not worth living, Orpheus expires, but the music he created assures his immortality.

Orpheus and Euridice serves as a beautiful counterpart to *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen*. Both adhere to a basic narrative of love—loss—redemption. While Schubert and the German poetry paint a Romantic, idealized image of this archetypal journey, Gordon masterfully juxtaposes a realistic and modern concept with the ancient myth.

The full libretto is printed below. I have selected movements 4, 6, 10, 11, and 13 for performance

Part 1: Orpheus

Orpheus played his pipe.
 Music, like a cool blue stripe
 circling the heavens.
 Creatures came
 in sixes and sevens,
 to hear him play.
 Say,
 did you ever hear him?
 Hey,
 get anywhere near him?
 I did once,
 in a dream.

In books, it was a lute.
 But in my dream
 it was a reed
 not a flute,
 something richer, darker,
 starker.
 Low, high,
 all over the map
 he could cry
 through that strange instrument.
 Huntsmen put their guns away.
 Lions ceased to roar,
 instead they'd sway and sing.
 Antelope would swing
 when Orpheus played that thing.

Part 2: Euridice

One day
 when his mood was mellow
 ambling along,
 (happy fellow)
 he saw among the daisies
 in a dress of yellow
 a loveliness
 a sight to see.
 He moved upon the form
 carefully,
 asked her name,
 "Euridice."
 She looked him in the eyes...

and music took a turn—
 for it grew wise
 and deeper
 steeper, like mountains.

And for a time
 they were so happy
 roaming through the meadow.
 Endless hours
 in the daffodils, and cornflowers.

Part 3: Bliss

Asphodels grew whiter.
 All the colors on the hill
 though vivid now
 grew bold, and brighter
 and nowhere could he make a sound
 that he would not confound
 the animals with joy, and laughter.
 Where they moved
 the breezes whispered
 thereafter.

Part 4: Home

They found a house.
 She loved to garden,
 and decorate.
 Upon the entrance gate filigree,
 patiently,
 she wove ivy
 strewn with roses
 and morning glories
 which seemed to sing, "hello!"
 even in the winter snow.
 O, all who came were welcome
 to tell their troubles,
 their triumphs, and their woes
 over madeleines and tea,
 in this house of love,
 so lovely—
 with Orpheus,
 and Euridice.

Part 5: They Dance

Part 6: Song

He wrote a song for her:

I am part of something now.
I was tall among the grasses
where the rushing water passes
through the land that I have known,
but I always felt alone.

I could scale the highest stone
which erupts in giant masses.
Where the largest deep sea bass is
you will find the lines I've thrown.
There were stars that just for me
shone,
here, where I have grown,
but I always felt alone.

With you,
my heart begins to know
the way in which
the world I see
is me,
and I am it, somehow...
I am part of something now.
I am part of something now.

Part 7: Illness

She grew ill.
Who knows why.
It seems,
every time the sun
glows in the sky
there's a threat of clouds
or nightfall.
She was always tired.
Orpheus tried to wake her
playing dizzyingly high
like bird-call
but it only made her cry.

As she slept
he wept bitterly
and dearly.
Growing more and more bereft
when,
in increments,
she left.
He could not accept
that clearly

life was soon to be
life without Euridice.

Part 8: Death

When it came
her death,
he struggled hard, and long.
All throughout her suffering
she'd act so strong.
Ashamed,
he somehow felt
his own survival
wrong.⁸

He stormed
the passageway to Hell,
and coaxed with song
the keeper of the gates.

Not that she was there.
But this was where
you had to pass through.
Like life,
you had to traverse
through the night
to circumnavigate the light.

He found her
as she wandered
aimless
with the dazed and the confused
those who only recently had died
but were not used to it, as yet.
Strange,
like a waiting room,
where disembodied souls met.

Part 9: The Underworld

No matter what he did
she couldn't hear or see.
This was a blind and deaf Euridice.

⁸ Gordon added the line of text "All throughout her suffering... his own survival wrong" after the death of his lover. (Zuckerman 2005)

Orpheus was desperate
to get his darling back
and he found the powers that be.
They made him play and play and play
everything he knew
till his fingers ached
his lips turned blue.
But he was unafraid
He played to persuade them—
Bade them.
Made them do
exactly as he wanted.

Bellowing out, on bended knees,
“Let her live again,
Please!
She is my only happiness!”
They absorbed his moving pleas,
assembled as they were,
a Grecian frieze.
A jury
which was slow to assess
though finally,
they reached their verdict—
“Yes.”

Part 10: The Journey Back

There were terms—
he had to make the passage
through the mud and worms,
Euridice behind.
A scheme
designed
so that he would never know
that she was there
until he reached the open air, outside.
“Fair enough,” he cried.
But as they headed north
a panic struck his mind.
“What if she is not behind
and this is all a hoax?”
But they don’t play jokes
down there.
All that he had feared

this fateful whim
destroyed him
for he turned around.
She made a weird sound
and disappeared.

Part 11: Song 2

I am not
part of anything
now.

Part 12: Conclusion:

Orpheus tormented
settled back on earth
no longer knowing
the worth of life.
His was music
born of pain and strife.
Now the world grew rife with violence.
Creatures craved the old way,
or silence...

He was torn apart
and scattered out in pieces
on the land.
Here, his shattered heart would lay
there, his liver,
while his blood ran into creases
in the sand.

Down the river floats his head
from which, it is said,
music never ceases.

Part 13: Epilogue

Where spirit
sets the soul to rise,
the barrenness of winter skies,
the vibrancy of summers—
there music lies, there music lies.
O sound unearthly,
Orpheus has birthed thee.

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