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Scholarly Program Notes

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SCHOLARLY RECITAL NOTES

by

Keenan McCarter

B.S., Alabama State University, 2009

A Research Paper
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Master of Music

School of Music
in the Graduate School
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August 2011

RESEARCH PAPER APPROVAL
SCHOLARLY PROGRAM NOTES

By

Keenan McCarter

A Research Paper Submitted in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Music

In the field of Vocal Performance

Approved by:

Dr. David Dillard, Chair

Dr. Paul Transue

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AN ABSTRACT OF THE RESEARCH PAPER OF

KEENAN MCCARTER, for the Master of Music degree in VOCAL PERFORMANCE, presented on April 21,2011, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

TITLE: SCHOLARLY PROGRAM NOTES

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. David Dillard

This document is a compilation of biographical and musical information to aid in understanding the music and composers presented at the graduate recital of Mr. Keenan McCarter; including “Avant de quitter ces lieux” from *Faust* by Charles Gounod, “Questo amor vergogna mia” from *Edgar* by Giacomo Puccini, “Bess you is my woman now” and “Oh Bess” from *Porgy and Bess* by George Gershwin, and “Wheels of a dream” from *Ragtime* by Stephen Flaherty, *Les cloches*, *Mandoline*, and *Romance* by Claude Debussy, *Und willst du deinen Liebsten*, *Fußreise*, and *Verborgenheit* by Hugo Wolf, *Calvary* by Betty Jackson King, *I want to be ready* by Clarence Carter, and *I want Jesus to walk with me* by Lloyd Larson.

DEDICATION

Dr. David Dillard**

Dr. Paul*

Ms. Diane Coloton*

Mr. Tim Fink

Dr. David Lyons

Ming-Wei Neo

Dean Alan Vaux & Wife

Mr. Richard Best

Eranga Goonetilleke

Ashly Thomas

The New Birth Church Family

First United Methodist Church Choir

Dr. Pamela Burns

The Wynn Family

The Wynn Grand Ensemble

The McCarter Family

SIU School of Music

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CHAPTER 1

CHARLES GOUNOD (1818-1893)

Charles Gounod's youth was nurtured in the arts by his father François-Louis Gounod, a painter, and his mother, Victoire Lemachois, a piano teacher. Gounod shadowed his parents by pursuing both of these art forms. In his early years he boarded at several Parisian schools and was encouraged to pursue performance in keyboard and voice. However, after showing more interest in composing, he enrolled at the Paris Conservatory to study fugue and counterpoint. Gounod placed second in the Prix de Rome at age 19. Two years later his cantata *Fernand* earned him first prize. At the French Academy in Rome, Gounod was said to have berated operatic performances of Donizetti, Bellini, and Mercadante while praising the works of Palestrina. His religious inclinations almost brought him to priesthood; however, instead of becoming a priest, he wrote a mass with orchestra and an a cappella *Te Deum* as offerings to fulfill his religious aspiration. Although Hector Berlioz coined the term *mélodie*, Charles Gounod is known as “the Father of the French *mélodie*” because his songs are more characteristic of the genre.¹

Taken from Johann von Goethe's famous play of the same name, *Faust*, in five acts, was Gounod's first successful Grand Opera. It debuted in Paris on March 19, 1859 as an 'opéra comiqué (no relation to comic opera), using spoken dialogue. Gounod later replaced the spoken dialogue with recitative and added a ballet for the Paris Opéra's grand opera version.

¹ Accessed March 28, 2011, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t237/e727>.

Based on the plays *Faust and Maguerite* by Michael Carré and *Faust* by Johann von Goethe, Gounod's *Faust* tells the story of the elderly philosopher, Dr. Faust, who, disappointed with his bitter life, holds a goblet of poison in his hand in a suicide attempt. He hesitates to drink the poison after hearing a youthful chorus outside of his window. Dr. Faust then calls on evil forces to restore his youth. Mephistopheles appears, restores Dr. Faust's youth and promises him a beautiful young girl, Marguerite, and restoration of youth. In exchange, Faust promises his soul to the devil. In act two, Marguerite gives her brother, Valentin, a medallion to guard him from death during the battle. He sings the aria "Avant de quitter ces lieux," a prayer of protection for Marguerite.²

Avant de quitter ces lieux

O sainte médaille,
 Qui me vient de ma soeur,
 Au jour de la bataille,
 Pour écarter la mort,
 Reste sur mon coeur.
 Avant de quitter ces lieux,
 Sol natal de mes aïeux
 A toi, Seigneur et Roi des cieux,
 Ma soeur je confie .
 Daigne de tout danger
 Toujours, toujours la protéger,
 Cette soeur si chérie
 daigne de tout danger la protéger,
 Daigne la protéger de tout danger!
 Délivré d'une triste pensée
 J'irai chercher la gloire,
 La gloire au sein des ennemis,
 Le premier, le plus brave,
 Au fort de la mêlée,
 J'irai combattre pour mon pays,
 Et si, vers lui, Dieu me rappelle,
 Je veillerai sur toi fidèle,
 Ô Marguerite!

Before leaving this place

O, holy medal
 Which comes to me from my sister,
 On the day of the battle,
 To guard against death,
 Stay on my heart.
 Before leaving this place,
 Native soil of my ancestors,
 To you, Lord and King of Heaven
 My sister I entrust.
 Deign from all danger
 Always, always to protect her,
 This sister, so dear,
 Deign from all danger to protect her,
 Deign to protect her from all danger!
 Delivered from a sad thought,
 I will go in search of glory,
 Glory in the midst of enemies,
 The first, the bravest,
 In the heat of the fray,
 I will go to do combat for my country,
 And if, to him, God calls me back,
 I will watch over you loyally,
 Oh, Marguerite!

² Arthur Jacobs and Stanley Sadie, "FAUST," in *Great Operas in Synopsis*, (New York: T. Y. Crowell, 1966).

English translation by Lea Frey³

³ Frey, Lea. "IPA Source - Avant De Quitter Ces Lieux - Valentin." IPA Source - International Phonetic Alphabet Transcriptions and Translations of Opera Arias, German Lieder, French Melodies, and Italian Songs. Accessed June 30, 2011.
http://www.ipasource.com/view/aria/Charles_Gounod/Avant_de_quitter_ces_lieux_-_Valentin.

CHAPTER 2

CLAUDE DEBUSSY (1862 - 1918)

Claude Debussy was born to a peasant family in 1862. His father, a marine, hoped Debussy would become a sailor. The Franco-Prussian War forced their family to move in with Debussy's aunt Clementine, who arranged his first piano lesson with the Italian musician Jean Cerutti. Debussy later entered the Paris Conservatory in 1872, where his teachers quickly realized his musical aptitude. After failing his first attempt for first prize in the *premier prix* for piano, Debussy turned his attention to harmony and composition. He began composing *mélodies* in 1879. After enrolling in the composition class of Ernest Guiraud, he met his first love Marie Blanche Vasnier, who inspired several of his *mélodies* under the mentorship of Charles Gounod at the Concordia Choral Society.⁴ In 1883, Debussy was runner-up for the *Prix de Rome* with his cantata *Le gladiateur*.

Debussy rarely accepted students, preferring to appear publicly as a performer or conductor. He pursued an exceptional career as a composer. Debussy rejected the compositional conventions of his day, and sought to create new sounds and orchestral textures. His stylistic inspiration came from Impressionism, an artistic movement of the 19th century associated with Paris that emphasized color over line and rejected realistic depiction. For example, Impressionist painters, such as Claude Monet, produced an

⁴ Lesure, François, and Roy Howat. Accessed June 28, 2011. Robert Orledge, , s.v. "Debussy, Claude," accessed June 28, 2011, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e1846?q=debussy&search=quick&pos=3&_start=1#firsthit.

impression of an object rather than representation. Likewise, impressionist composers used blurred rhythms, harmonies, modes, pentatonic scales, and avoided clear cadences and rhythmic patterns to give compositions a fluid sense of motion. Debussy was a master at translating the blurriness of impressionist art into his *mélodies*. Like the painters of his time, Debussy chose color over line in order to create more atmospheric music.

Debussy's *Deux Romances*, a setting of two poems written by poet Paul Bourget, was published in 1891. However, the style and aesthetic of these two songs suggest that they were written seven or eight years prior to publication. As in many of Debussy's songs, the piano accompaniment in both *Romance* and *Les cloches* have their own distinctive motives which are introduced in the opening measures and heard throughout the piece. This interplay of two independent melodies results in a remarkable duet between piano and voice.

Romance opens with the brief piano introduction followed by an unaccompanied declamatory vocal introduction. Figure 2.1 illustrates the absence of accompaniment as it draws attention to the text. This may be interpreted as the "evaporating and suffering soul."

Figure 2.1



the minor 2nd in the last statement “Des jours d’autrefois,” shown in Figure 2.5, create a feeling of tension and release to commemorate “the days gone by.”

Figure 2.3

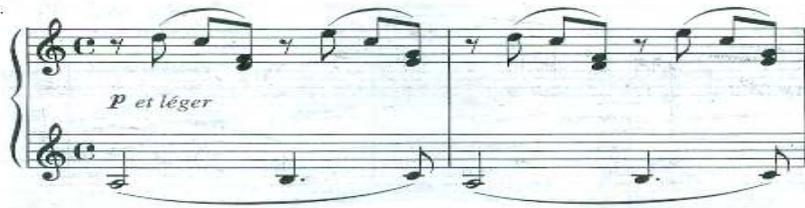


Figure 2.4



Figure 2.5



Les Cloches

Les feuilles s'ouvraient sur le bord des
branches Délicatement.
Les cloches tintaient, légères et franches,
Dans le ciel clément.
Rythmique et fervent comme une antienne,

Ce lointain appel
Me remémorait la blancheur chrétienne
Des fleurs de l'autel.
Ces cloches parlaient d'heureuses années,
Et, dans le grand bois,
Semblaient reverdir les feuilles fanées,
Des jours d'autrefois.

The Bells

The leaves opened on the edge of the
branches delicately.
The bells tolled, light and free,
in the clear sky.
Rhythmically and fervently, like an
antiphon,
this far-away call
reminded me of the Christian whiteness
of altar flowers.
These bells spoke of happy years,
and in the large forest
they seemed to revive the withered leaves
of days gone by.

English translation by Grant A. Lewis⁶

Mandoline, Debussy's first setting of Paul Verlaine, was composed in 1882 and was later published in the *Vasnier Songbook*. As illustrated in figure 2.6, he sets a light, airy mood by imitating the sound of a mandolin tuning open fifths and plucked strings. The mandolin is heard immediately after the fermata in the first measure and continues until the end (also shown in figure 2.6). A painting by the French painter Jean-Antoine Watteau provided Paul Verlaine's inspiration for the poem. The painting sets the scene of *Commedia dell'Arte's* stock characters Tircis, Aminta, Clitandre, and Damis, as they entertain women through song and dance. Verlaine mentions each character and Debussy uses slight accompaniment variations and alters the articulation of vocal phrases to portray each of Verlaine's character (figure 2.7).

⁶ Grant Lewis, "The Bells (Bourget, Set by C. Debussy) (The Lied and Art Song Texts Page: Texts and Translations to Lieder, Mélodies, Canzoni, and Other Classical Vocal Music)," accessed June 30, 2011, http://www.recmusic.org/lieder/get_text.html?TextId=2937.

Figure 2.6



Figure 2.7



Mandoline

Les donneurs de serenades
Et les belles écouteuses
Échangent des propos fades
Sous les ramures chanteuses.
C'est Tircis et c'est Aminte,
Et c'est l'éternel Clitandre,
Et c'est Damis qui pour mainte
Cruelle fait maint vers tendre.

Leurs courtes vestes de soie,
Leurs longues robes à queues,
Leur élégance, leur joie
Et leurs molles ombres bleues,
Tourbillonnent dans l'extase
D'une lune rose et grise,
Et la mandoline jase
Parmi les frissons de brise.

Mandoline

The givers of serenades
And the lovely women who listen
Exchange insipid words
Under the singing branches.
There is Tirsis and Aminte
And there's the eternal Clitandre,
And there's Damis who, for many a
Heartless woman wrote many a tender
verse.

Their short silk coats,
Their long dresses with trains,
Their elegance, their joy
And their soft blue shadows,
Whirl around in the ecstasy
Of a pink and grey moon,
And the mandolin plays
Among the shivers from the breeze.

English translation by Emily Ezust⁷

⁷ Emily Ezust, "Mandoline (Verlaine, Set by R. Colaço Osorio-Swaab, C. Debussy, A. Diepenbrock, G. Dupont, G. Fauré, R. Hahn, I. Poldowski, J. Szulc, G. Grovlez, B. Lisle, R. Pick-Mangiagalli, P. Le Flem,

CHAPTER 3

HUGO WOLF (1860-1903)

Austrian composer Hugo Wolf began his musical education with his father, a leather dealer and self-taught musician who taught young Hugo piano, violin, and the rudiments of music. Despite financial deprivation, Wolf's father worked hard to provide his children with remarkable educational opportunities. In 1868, Hugo was inspired after attending Donizetti's opera *Belisario*. He enrolled in the regional secondary school in Graz, from which he soon returned due to homesickness. Wolf chose to board at the Benedictine abbey of St. Paul in Lavanttal, Carinthia where he played organ for student masses. There he became familiar with the operas of Bellini, Rossini, Donizetti, and Gounod. After becoming frustrated with subjects other than music, he transferred to the secondary school at Marburg, where he was introduced to the music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. A lack of success in subjects other than music landed him at the Vienna Conservatory where he studied piano, harmony, and composition. Hugo was enamored with opera, and his favorites included: *Fidelio*, *Der Freischütz*, *Don Giovanni*, *Robert le diable*, and *Le Huguenots*.⁸

Wolf's songs are considered by many the "caviar of *Lieder* literature." His admiration for Wagner's compositional techniques and his ability to incorporate them into his songs gained him the title "Wagner of the *Lied*." His "poems for voice," termed

C. Suffern, F. De Bourguignon) (The Lied and Art Song Texts Page: Texts and Translations to Lieder, Mélodies, Canzoni, and Other Classical Vocal Music)," Recmusic, accessed June 30, 2011, http://www.recmusic.org/lieder/get_text.html?TextId=16294.

⁸ Sams, Eric, and Susan Youens. "Wolf, Hugo (Filipp Jakob)." *Oxford Music Online*. Accessed March 16, 2011. http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/52073?q=hugo+wolf&search=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit.

by the composer himself, display remarkable syntheses of music and text. He carefully constructed his songs in an amazingly short period of time. In only five years, Wolf had managed to create nearly 250 musical masterpieces.⁹

Und willst du deinen Liebsten . . . is an inspiring example of binding words and music. The opening arpeggiated chords in the piano could suggest a gust of wind that blows the hair of a beautiful woman, introducing the first phrase “And if you want to see your lover die.” The quarter-note, half-note, quarter-note figure in the piano part is the basic building block or motif for the entire piece (shown in figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1



Und willst du deinen Liebsten

Und willst du deinen Liebsten sterben
sehen,
So trage nicht dein Haar gelockt, du Holde.
Laß von den Schultern frei sie
niederwehen;
Wie Fäden sehn sie aus von purem Golde.
Wie Gold'nen Fäden, die der Wind bewegt
Schön sind die Haare, schön ist, die sie
trägt!
Goldfäden, Seidenfäden ungezählt -

And if you want to see your lover die

And if you see your lover die,
Don't wear your hair in curls, darling.
Let it tumble free from your shoulders;
Like golden threads it looks like pure gold.
Like golden threads, stirred by the wind -
Beautiful is the hair; beautiful is she who
bears it!
Golden threads, silken threads innumerable
English translation by Paul Heyse¹⁰

⁹ Carol Kimball, "Hugo Wolf," in *Song: a Guide to Art Song Style and Literature* (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 2006).

The *MörikeLieder* songbook is a set of fifty-three songs set to the poems of Eduard Mörike (1804-1875), a devout Protestant pastor. Mörike's poetry consists of a wide range of subjects: nature scenes, character portraits, humorous texts, and love poems. Wolf set all fifty-three poems between February and October of 1888.¹¹ The songbook contains some of Wolf's best songs.

Fußreise (or "Foot Travel") opens with a four-bar piano introduction (3.2) that sets a happy and peaceful atmosphere.

Figure 3.2



It illustrates the feeling that one would experience while enjoying the beauty of nature. The feeling of being one with nature is captured in the duet between voice and piano. In measure five, the piano melody harmonizes a third above the vocal line on the text "*Frisch geschnittenen Wanderstab*" (or "Freshly cut walking stick"). To me, this suggests that the singer is in harmony with nature *above* (birds, tress, clouds, rain, sun, etc.) as shown in figure 3.3.

¹⁰ Paul Heyse, "Und Willst Du Deinen Liebsten Sterben Sehen (Heyse, Set by H. Wolf) (The Lied and Art Song Texts Page: Texts and Translations to Lieder, Méloides, Canzoni, and Other Classical Vocal Music)," Recmusic, accessed June 30, 2011, http://www.recmusic.org/lieder/get_text.html?TextId=20356.

¹¹ Eric Sams, *The Songs of Hugo Wolf* (London: Eulenburg Books, 1983).

Figure 3.3

Figure 3.3 shows a musical score for a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in the treble clef, and the piano accompaniment is in the bass clef. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are: "frisch ge - schnitt - nen Wan - der - stab, with my now - cut walk - ing staff". The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and rests, with a dynamic marking of *p* (piano).

However in measure seven, the piano harmonizes a third below the vocal melody on the text "*wenn ich in der Frühe,*" suggesting that the singer is in harmony with nature *below* (grass, dirt, flowers, rabbits, etc.) shown in figure 3.4.

Figure 3.4

Figure 3.4 shows a musical score for a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in the treble clef, and the piano accompaniment is in the bass clef. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are: "wenn ich in der Frühe - - he forth I awake - - day - - - ly". The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and rests, with a dynamic marking of *p* (piano).

The interval of a third suggests simulation of the triune of God, suggesting that the singer is in harmony with the creator of it all.

Fußreise

Am frischgeschnittenen Wanderstab,
Wenn ich in der Frühe

Foot travel

With my fresh-cut walking stick
Early in the morning

So durch [die]¹ Wälder ziehe,
 Hügel auf und ab:
 Dann, wie's Vöglein im Laube
 Singet und sich rührt,
 Oder wie die gold'ne Traube
 Wonnegeister spürt
 In der ersten Morgensonne:
 So fühlt auch mein alter, lieber
 Adam Herbst und Frühlingsfieber,
 Gottbeherzte,
 Nie verscherzte
 Erstlings Paradieseswonne.
 Also bist du nicht so schlimm, o alter
 Adam, wie die strengen Lehrer sagen;
 Liebst und lobst du immer doch,
 Singst und preisest immer noch,
 Wie an ewig neuen Schöpfungstagen,
 Deinen lieben Schöpfer und Erhalter.
 Möcht' es dieser geben
 Und mein ganzes Leben
 Wär' im leichten Wanderschweiße
 Eine solche Morgenreise!

I go through the woods,
 Over the hills, and away.
 Then, like the birds in the arbor
 That sing and stir,
 Or like the golden grapes
 That trace their blissful spirits
 In the first morning light:
 I feel in my age, too, beloved
 Adam's spring- and autumn-fever --
 God fearing,
 But not discarded:
 The first delights of Paradise.
 You are not so bad, oh old
 Adam, as the strict teachers say;
 You love and rejoice,
 Sing and praise --
 As it is eternally the first day of creation
 Your beloved Creator and Preserver.
 I would like to be given to this
 And my whole life
 Would be in simple wandering wonder
 Of one such morning stroll.
 *English translation by Paul Hindemith¹²

Verborgenheit is perhaps one of Wolf's most popular songs. My favorite phrase in this song is "Immerdar durch Tränen sehe Ich der Sonne liebes Licht (forever through tears shall I see the sun's love-light)." The accompaniment and the lyrics speak to me because life is full of joy and pain. In my opinion Wolf wonderfully captures the feeling of this line through tension, release and dynamics. When singing this phrase I recall strenuous drum major trainings at Alabama State University where we were constantly reminded that pain is temporary and that it is weakness leaving the body. After realizing this, I was able to see past the pain and know that it would make me stronger. I interpret the two *crescendos* for "Immerdar durch" and "Tränen sehe," shown in Figure 3.5, as an increasing physical or emotional pain.

¹² Hindemith

Figure 3.5



I was able to find a very warm vocal texture while preparing for the *Southern Illinois Young Artist Competition*. Ming-Wei Neo, my competition accompanist, coached me to imagine the sun's warmth on my skin while singing the words "Ich der Sonne liebes Licht." It literally gave me chills. *Verborgenheit* is an excellent illustration of Wolf's impeccable ability to unite text and music into an incredible "poem for voice." Its expansive vocal phrases and supportive accompaniment give *Verborgenheit* veracity and sincerity.

Verborgenheit

Laß, o Welt, o laß mich sein!
Locket nicht mit Liebesgaben,
Laßt dies Herz alleine haben
Seine Wonne, seine Pein!
Was ich traure, weiß ich nicht,
Es ist unbekanntes Wehe;
Immerdar durch Tränen sehe
Ich der Sonne liebes Licht.
Oft bin ich mir kaum bewußt,
Und die helle Freude zücket
Durch die Schwere, so mich drücket,
Wonniglich in meiner Brust.
Laß, o Welt, o laß mich sein!

Seclusion

Oh, world, let me be!
Entice me not with gifts of love.
Let this heart in solitude have
Your bliss, your pain!
What I mourn, I know not.
It is an unknown pain;
Forever through tears shall I see
The sun's love-light.
Often, I am scarcely conscious
And the bright joys break
Through the pain, thus pressing
Delightfully into my breast.
Oh, world, let me be!

Locket nicht mit Liebesgaben,
Laßt dies Herz alleine haben
Seine Wonne, seine Pein!

Entice me not with gifts of love.
Let this heart in solitude have
Your bliss, your pain!
English translation by Paul Hindemith¹³

¹³ Hindemith

CHAPTER 4
GIACOMO PUCCINI (1858-1924)

Italian composer Giacomo Puccini was born to a long line of church musicians. His father Michele, a well-respected organist, choirmaster, and composer, died in 1864, leaving his large family in poverty. Puccini's uncle supported young Giacomo in continuing the family's musical tradition by giving him singing and organ lessons. Eventually, he was enrolled in the Istituto Pacini where he composed the *Missa di Gloria* (1880). After graduating in 1880, Puccini enrolled in the Milan Conservatory. He received operatic inspiration in 1876, at a performance of Verdi's *Aida*. In 1883, Puccini composed *Le Villi*, his first opera, for a one-act opera competition. *Le Villi* was unsuccessful, but was heard by Giulio Ricordi (Verdi's publisher), who in turn commissioned *Edgar*, Puccini's second opera, which premiered in 1889. *Edgar* was Puccini's least successful opera. Luckily, for sopranos, tenors, and opera lovers, Puccini continued in his attempt to compose operatic masterpieces. *La Bohème*, *Manon Lescaut*, *Tosca*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Suor Angelica*, *Gianni Schicchi*, and *Turandot* are his most famous operas.¹⁴

Although *Edgar* was one of Puccini's early operas, his distinctive compositional characteristics can be recognized easily. He is well known for depiction of atmosphere, dramatic pauses, expressive melodies, lush accompaniment, thick orchestration, and leitmotifs or character themes. *Edgar* is a story of a terrible love triangle which involves

¹⁴ Julian Budden and Roger Parker, "Puccini, Giacomo," Oxford Music Online, accessed March 17, 2011, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.lib.siu.edu/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e5407?q=puccini&source=omo_t237&source=omo_gmo&source=omo_t114&search=quick&pos=8&_start=1.

Edgar (tenor), Fidelia (soprano), and Tigrana (soprano). It opens as Edgar is awakened by Fidelia, his new lover. She gives Edgar a sprig of almond blossoms and leaves after hearing a group of peasants mocking her from a distance. Edgar follows after her and is stopped by his previous promiscuous lover, Tigrana. Tigrana disdains Edgar's relationship with Fidelia and attempts to lure him back into a scandalous life of debauchery. Edgar scolds Tigrana and leaves as Frank, Tigrana's admirer, angrily enters, inquiring about her recent whereabouts. She laughs at Frank, states that he is a boring lover, and leaves him alone to lament in his aria "Questo amor, vergogna mia."¹⁵

Puccini's simple, scale-like melodies accommodate beautiful soaring voices. He is known for his fluid melodies long legato lines (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1



In the aria "Questo amor, vergogna mia" Puccini notates extensive slurs over every phrase except "eddio, vil, cor cuore in franto (and I, a coward, with a crushed heart)" and "Ah sventura! L'amo (Ah misfortune! I love her)." My reaction to this is not to

¹⁵ Budden, Julian. "Edgar." Electronic Resource Access TEST. Accessed March 17, 2011. http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.lib.siu.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/O901407?q=edgar&source=omo_t237&source=omo_gmo&source=omo_t114&search=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit.

drastically change the articulation of the music, but to enunciate the words to give a more emotional sense. Puccini's arias are not restricted by the tempo of the conductor; instead, tempo is determined by the characters emotions.

Questo amor, vergogna mia,
Io spezzar, scordar vorrei;
Ma d'un orrida malia
Sono schiavi i sensi miei.
Mille volte al ciel giurai
Di fuggirla!
E a lei tornai!
Ella ride del mio pianto,
Del mio sdegno si fa scherno
ed io, vil, col cuore infranto,
ai suoi piedi mi prosterno
e lei sola io sogno, bramo!
Ah sventura! Io l'amo!

This shameful love of mine,
I wish to forget;
But by a horrible spell
My emotions Are enslaved.
A thousand times to heaven I swore
To flee from her!
And to her I returned!
She laughs at my tears,
Of my indignation she sneers
and I, a coward, with a crushed heart
at her feet I lay prostrate
and of her alone I dream, I desire!
Ah misfortune! I love her

English translation by Bard Suverkrop¹⁶

¹⁶ Bard Suverkrop, "IPA Source - Questo Amor, Vergogna Mia - Frank," IPA Source - International Phonetic Alphabet Transcriptions and Translations of Opera Arias, German Lieder, French Melodies, and Italian Songs, accessed June 30, 2011, http://www.ipasource.com/view/aria/Giacomo_Puccini/Questo_amor,_vergogna_mia_-_Frank.

CHAPTER 5

GEORGE GERSHWIN (1898-1937) / STEPHEN FLAHERTY (b.1960)

American composer George Gershwin was born in 1898 to Russian-Jewish immigrants who settled in New York in the 1890s. Gershwin began his piano studies with Charles Hambitzer, who exposed Gershwin to the compositions of Chopin, Liszt, and Debussy. In 1914, Gershwin dropped out of high school to be a song plugger (a pianist hired by music stores to play and promote sheet music) for a music publishing firm owned by Jerome H. Remick. There Gershwin developed excellent accompanying skills by playing and singing songs to help sell the company's sheet music. He eventually left to become the rehearsal accompanist for *Miss*, a Broadway musical by Jerome Kern and Victor Herbert. In 1919, George Gershwin premiered his first full Broadway show, *La Lucille*. Other large works by Gershwin include: *Rhapsody in Blue*, the *Concerto in F*, *An American in Paris*, and the opera *Porgy and Bess*.¹⁷

Porgy and Bess, Gershwin's largest work, is an opera about African-Americans in Charleston, South Carolina in the early 1920's. Blue notes, southern dialect, and syncopated rhythms reproduce the sounds of popular African-American music. Based on DuBose Heyward's novel and play *Porgy*, *Porgy and Bess* made its New York debut in 1935. The story takes place in the small village called Catfish Row (based on the actual village Cabbage Row). Crippled Porgy shelters Bess, a beautiful but debauched woman, after her lover Crown flees to Kittiwah Island to avoid going to jail for murder. Despite

¹⁷ Richard Crawford, Wayne J. Schneider, and Norbert Carnovale, s.v. "Gershwin, George," accessed June 28, 2011, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/47026?q=george+gershwin&search=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit.

the disapproval of the inhabitants of Catfish row, Porgy and Bess fall in love. Before Bess leaves for the church picnic on Kittiwah Island she sings with Porgy the famous duet “Bess, you is my woman now”, vowing to be together forever. While on the island, Crown sees Bess and forces himself on her. After days of being stranded on the island she finally breaks away from Crown and makes her way back to Porgy. Crown returns to Catfish Row and is murdered by Porgy. Porgy is taken in to identify Crown’s body, but while he is away, Sportin’ Life, the neighborhood drug dealer, entices Bess to relapse on “Happy Dust” (drugs) and board a boat to New York in his aria “There’s a boat dat’s leavin’ soon for New York.” Porgy returns from jail bearing gifts and is greeted by the inhabitants of Catfish Row. In fear of breaking Porgy’s heart, they are reluctant to tell him that Bess has run off with Sportin’ Life. When Porgy realizes that Bess is gone, he sings the beautiful trio with Serena and Maria “Oh Bess, oh where’s my Bess?” It is sometimes performed as an aria, as on my recital.

Stephen Flaherty is an American Musical Theatre composer who also captured the esthetic of African-American singing by using blue notes and syncopation in *Ragtime*, a musical that follows a Jewish, African-American, and Caucasian family as they experience conflicts while chasing the American Dream. The singer is free to embellish the music with slides, scoops, and grace notes that are not written in the music. These embellishments enhance the African-American estheticism. *Sarah’s* responses to *Coalhouse*, in the second verse, are good examples of African-American singing style because the elements are written in the music (Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1

The image shows a musical score for two characters, Sarah and Coalhouse. The score is written on two staves. The top staff is for Sarah, starting at measure 24 (labeled 'n24') and ending at measure 31 (labeled 'm31'). The tempo is marked 'c. tempo'. Sarah's lyrics are: "Go down south. Mmm." The bottom staff is for Coalhouse, starting at measure 24 (labeled 'rall. COALHOUSE:') and ending at measure 31. Coalhouse's lyrics are: "We'll go down south and see your cream! Then we'll travel". The music is in a key with two flats and a 4/4 time signature.

In close collaboration with his wife Lynn Ahrens (lyricist/book writer), their best known works include: *Once in This Island*; *Seussical*; *Ragtime*; *The Glorious Ones*; *Dessa Rose*; *A Man of No Importance*; *My Favorite Year*; *Lucky Stiff*; and *Love Repeating: A Musical of Gertrude Stein*. Other musical contributions include: *Chita Rivera: The Dancer's Life*; Neil Simon's *Proposal*; *Anastasia*; *Bartok the Magnificent*; and *After the Storm*¹⁸.

Coalhouse, a Harlem musician, and his wife Sarah sing the touching duet "*Wheels of a Dream*" after having their first child and purchasing their first car. Coalhouse becomes overjoyed when he realizes the new opportunities and freedoms given to African-Americans. Later, Coalhouse is captured by racist Whites in the Deep South. They demolish his car and take his life.

¹⁸ Stephen Flaherty, "STEPHEN FLAHERTY MUSIC BIOGRAPHY," Welcome To Ahrens & Flaherty - The Official Website, January 14, 2010, accessed April 28, 2011, <http://www.ahrensandflaherty.com/>.

CHAPTER 7
AFRICAN-AMERICAN SPIRITUALS

African-American spirituals were derived from Africans who had been stolen from their homeland to be enslaved in The Americas. They are a melding of African traditions and Southern American Christianity. The first Africans were brought to Virginia in early August 1619. Benjamin Mays, longtime president of Morehouse College states, "The creation of the spirituals was no accident. It was a creation born of necessity, so that the slave might more adequately adjust himself to the conditions of the new world."¹⁹

Early spirituals were usually call and response. The leader was free to alter or create verses. Many churches in the Deep South, including my own, still sing spirituals in this fashion. Phillis Wheatly was the first slave to publish a book of African-American poetry in 1773.²⁰ Czech composer Antonín Leopold Dvořák incorporated African-American themes in his *New World Symphony* 1893. "The so-called plantation songs are among the most striking and appealing melodies that have been found this side of the water"²¹ (Newman 25).

My earliest memories of African American Spirituals were with most of my family at Wilson Chapel Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama. I remember feeling the reverberations of congregational hymns lead by the deacons of the church, as during

¹⁹ Richard Newman, "Introduction," in *Go down Moses: a Celebration of the African-American Spiritual* (New York: Clarkson Potter, 1998), p18.

²⁰ Richard Newman

²¹ Richard Newman, "Introduction," in *Go down Moses: a Celebration of the African-American Spiritual* (New York: Clarkson Potter, 1998), p25.

slavery. After church, my cousins and I would all gather at my grandparents' house to eat and "play" church. I would always take the role of the soloist. Imitating my mom, I would sing my heart out as I created the atmosphere for my older cousin to preach. At the time, those songs served as Sunday afternoon entertainment. They now serve as strength to carry on in life.

The three most influential spirituals to me are *Calvary*, *I Want to be ready*, and *I Want Jesus to Walk with Me*. They were introduced to me through family members. Betty Jackson King, Clarence Cameron, and Lloyd Larson have written very effective arrangements of these pieces.

My first memory of *Calvary* dates back to age five. My church put on a production of the Crucifixion in the local high school auditorium. The role of Jesus was played by my father. During the play my mom sang *Calvary* as the hammers nailed my father (as Jesus) to the cross. For some, this was just an emotional play. For me it was an epiphany. I realized the power of theater through the use of lights, costumes, set designs, characters, and music. These elements created such a realistic atmosphere that I could not bear to see my father for the following week without crying. It was amazing how such simple melodies, as in African-American spirituals, could contain such powerful emotions.

I was introduced to Betty Jackson King's arrangement of *Calvary* through a powerful YouTube performance of Randy Jones.²² King captured the melancholy of the day of Christ's crucifixion from the very beginning by using a strong, heavy, and powerful piano attack of doubled C's in the bass. The second measure seems to resolve

²² Betty J. King and Randy Jones, "Calvary (Negro Spiritual)," YouTube, April 18, 2008, section goes here, accessed June 21, 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x8vdSWzDhtY>.

slightly before yet another powerful attack of octave C's strikes yet again. After three strikes in the bass, the accompaniment settles as the first "Calvary" is sung. The difficulty in performing this piece is finding twenty-six different ways of approaching the word "Calvary." There are twenty-six generations between David and Christ. Jesus was said to have been twenty-six when his adopted father, Joseph, died.²³

Betty Jackson King (1928-1994) was born to Reverend Frederick D. Jackson and Gertrude Jackson Adams. Her mother was a music teacher at the Southern Christian Institute in Edwards, Mississippi. There, King was exposed to Negro spirituals that profoundly influenced her religiously and musically. After relocating to Chicago, she enrolled at the Chicago Musical Institute of Roosevelt University, where she earned her B.A. in piano and a Master's Degree in composition. King composed three religious operas for which her father wrote the libretti. She held teaching positions in the Chicago Public School System, the Laboratory School, University of Chicago, The Pre-Professional Choral Ensemble, and Dillard University, New Orleans, Louisiana. Her spiritual arrangements have been performed by opera singer Kathleen Battle at Carnegie Hall and in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. Ms. King's honors and awards include: *Who's Who in American Black Women in the Arts and Social Sciences, International Who's Who in Music, African Art Song Alliance, Feminist Theory and Music 4: Abstracts, and Choral Music by Afro-American Composers.*²⁴

²³ "Number 26 Symbolism, 26 Meaning and Numerology," End Times Prophecy, Current Events, Christian Symbols, Numerology - RidingTheBeast.com, accessed April 28, 2011, <http://www.ridingthebeast.com/numbers/nu26.php>.

²⁴ Betty J. King, "Betty Jackson King," Jacksonian Press, Inc. Celebrating The Life And Music Of Ministry Of Betty Jackson King., section goes here, accessed April 28, 2011, <http://www.bettyjacksonking.com/BettyJackson.html>.

I Want to be Ready, by Clarence Cameron White, is dedicated to my wonderful family, particularly my mother's sisters and brothers: Beverly Payne, Gloria Wynn, Constance Stallworth, Wanda Gail Carson, Lawrence Howard, Reverend Cleophus Wynn, Harold Wynn, Reverend Anthony Wynn Sr., and Reverend Curtis B. Wynn Sr. It is also dedicated to my parents, Pastor Louis McCarter Sr. and Barbara Wynn McCarter, for preparing me for life by teaching good morals and beliefs.

Clarence Cameron White (1880-1960) was born in Clarksville, Tennessee, and lived in Ohio and Washington, D.C. He began studying violin at the age of eight and attended Oberlin Conservatory from 1896-1901. During his musical career, White met Paul Laurence Dunbar, Harry T. Burleigh, and Booker T. Washington and he studied with African-British composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor. White held conducting positions at the Victorian Chamber Orchestra in Boston and the Hampton Institute Choir. He was also the Director of Music at West Virginia State College. His musical output includes: "Forty Negro Spirituals," "Kutamba Rhapsody," "Symphony in D Minor," the ballet score "A Night in Sans Souci," a violin concerto, the opera "Ouanga," and the cantata "Heritage."²⁵

I remember hearing my grandmother hum and sing *I want Jesus to walk with me*. The passion in her voice led me to tears as I tried to understand why she cried every time she sang. She noticed my tears and would say, "Just keep on living." I took her advice, and I "kept on living." As each day passes, I understand more and more. I dedicate *I want Jesus to walk with me* to Margie Mae Johnson Wynn for raising a wonderful, loving, supportive, religious, and musical family.

²⁵ "Clarence Cameron White, 1880-1960 [biography]," The Library of Congress, January 18, 2007, section goes here, accessed June 29, 2011.

My original plan was to sing *I Want Jesus to Walk with Me* a capella, the way my grandmother would have. Then I discovered an interesting arrangement by Charles Lloyd. However, it strayed too far from the original melody, I thought, abdicating the simplicity of the African-American Spirituals. Finally, I decided to sing the Lloyd Larson piano and choral arrangement as accompaniment. Its simple melody, full harmony, and slow building climax ended my search for the “perfect arrangement.”

Lloyd Larson (b. 1954) is a native of Illinois. His educational background includes Anderson University in Anderson, Indiana (B.A.) and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky (Master in Church Music). Larson has held Music Ministry positions in churches in Indiana and Ohio. He now works as a freelance composer/arranger and director of the youth and adult choir at his church in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Larson has published nearly 300 choral octavos, Christmas and Easter cantatas, keyboard collections, vocal solo and duet collections, instrumental solo and ensemble publications, orchestrations, and hand bell settings.²⁶

²⁶ "Hope Publishing Company - Hymnals, Choral & Handbell Music," Hope Publishing Company - Church Hymnals, Christian Sheet Music for Piano, Handbell, Choir, Organ, Joel Raney, Lloyd Larson, Hal Hobson, Hymns, Choral Music, Christmas, Easter, Hymn Music, Instrumental, Church, Gospel, Amazing Grace, Praise, Baptist, Presbyterian, Hymnal, Worship Rejoice, Singing., section goes here, accessed April 29, 2011, <http://www.hopepublishing.com/html/main.isx?sub=307>.

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