

Spring 7-2-2013

Program Notes

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PROGRAM NOTES

by.

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B.F.A, University of Kentucky, 2011

A Research Paper Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Master of Music Degree

Department of Music in the Graduate School

Southern Illinois University Carbondale

August, 2013

RESEARCH APPROVAL

PROGRAM NOTES

By

Christopher Probus

A Research Paper Submitted in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Masters
in the field of Music

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Southern Illinois University Carbondale

June 28, 2013

AN ABSTRACT OF THE RESEARCH PAPER OF

CHRISTOPHER PROBUS, for the Masters degree in MUSIC, presented on MAY 8, 2013 at Southern Illinois University Carbondale

TITLE: SCHOLARLY PROGRAM NOTES

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. David Dillard

This document is a combination of biographical and musical information to help better understand the pieces performed at the graduate recital of Christopher Probus. Included in this document are the first two pieces from Handel's *Messiah*, three songs by Henri Duparc, the first six songs from the song cycle *Die Schone Mullerin* by Franz Schubert, four of the six selections including the Prologue and Epilogue from Benjamin Britten's *Serenade* for tenor, horn, and strings, and *De'miei bollenti spiriti* from *La Traviata* by Giuseppe Verdi.

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CHAPTER 1

George Frideric Handel (1685-1759) was born in Halle, Germany. His father was a barber-surgeon in service of the Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels. It was the duke, not Handel's father that encouraged young Georg to begin studying music. Handel composed in all the vocal and instrumental genres of his time. He traveled Europe during his career, including Hamburg, Rome, and most importantly, London. When Handel was nine he began to study under Friedrich Zacho, who was the organist at Liebfrauenkirche at Halle. It was here that Handel learned to play the organ and the harpsichord in addition to the basic forms of composition.

Handel's situation was grave in 1697 when his father died, for Handel was the only son left in the family and he was now responsible for their welfare. At this time, he decided to pursue interests in law as well as music. He had plans to study law at the University of Halle in 1702, but that all changed when he became the organist at the Cathedral Church as a part time position to help sustain him financially.

In 1703 he moved to Hamburg pursue a successful career in music. He did find employment as a musician, but he could not get his compositions reviewed until the previous composer Reinhard Keiser was forced to step down from the position of resident composer, due to outstanding financial issues in 1704, giving him his chance to premiere *Almira* in 1705.¹

Although Handel was a German-born composer, much of his success occurred in England, where he spent most of his career. In 1710 Handel arrived in London and was given the honor of composing the first Italian opera with an all Italian cast. Handel's *Rinaldo* premiered in

¹ Oxford University Press, "Handel, George Frideric", Oxford Music Online, [http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/40060?q=Handel&search=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit,\(Hamburg section 2, March 21\)](http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/40060?q=Handel&search=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit,(Hamburg%20section%20March%2021))

1711 and became one of his most popular operas. It was his first Italian opera to be composed especially for London.² Handel remained committed to the Italian style of composing opera throughout his entire career. By the end of his career Handel had written almost 1000 combined solos for his operas, oratorios, and other works.³

Handel's *Messiah* is arguably his most known oratorio and one of only two based on sacred texts.⁴ His oratorios were so well received that Handel was able to continue a fruitful career in London after his operas began to fall out of fashion⁵. According to noted Handel scholar Winton Dean,

“The greatness of *Messiah* – Handel’s only sacred oratorio in the true sense and therefore untypical – derives on one level from its unique fusion of the traditions of Italian opera, English anthem and German Passion, and on another from the coincidence of Handel’s personal faith and creative genius to express, more fully than in any other work of art, the deepest aspirations of the Anglican religious spirit.”

Like his *Messiah*, Handel himself incorporated aspects of these nationalities.

Handel, a devout believer in God, selected the text for this oratorio from the Bible.⁶ This particular text is taken from Isaiah 11:1-4. Handel brightens the atmosphere with a very uplifting selection of text. The *grave* qualities of the overture are now replaced with a song of comfort and reassurance. The text "...and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned," urges the listener to cry out to Jerusalem that the struggles of the world will be over. This *accompagnato* recitative (as opposed to *secco*) begins in e-major and ends in a-major, which is the dominant of the following aria, *Ev'ry valley shall be exalted*. One unusual element of this recitative are the final eight bars. Here the orchestra, rather than accompanying the singer

² Dean, Winton. *Handel, The New Grove*. Work-list by Anthony Hicks. London, England: W.W. Norton & Company, 1980, 14

³ Kimball, Carol. *A Guide to Song and Literature: Song*. Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2006, 418

⁴ Dean, 110

⁵ Grout, Donald Jay & Hermine Weigel Williams. Fourth Edition: *A Short History of Opera*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003, PAGE

⁶ Dean, 110

with its regular eighth-note pulse stops and punctuates with only one or two block chords per bar. In these eight bars the tone of the text changes from comforting to commanding: “The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God”.

The aria *Ev'ry valley shall be exalted* follows *Comfort ye my people*. Most baroque era arias were composed in *da capo* form. However, this aria is through-composed. The aria begins with a nine-bar *ritornello*, followed by the first statement which is thirty-two measures long and cadences on b-major, the dominant of the home key. In this first section, Handel word-paints on the words “exalted” and “plain”. The melismas on the word “exalted” are sixteenth-note based ascending passages, which rise over the interval of a tenth. On the other hand, the melismas found on the word “plain” include mostly half-notes and eighth-notes and occur over only a perfect fourth. The second melisma on the word “plain” expands slightly to a minor sixth. This first statement ends with a three measure *ritornello*.

In the second section of the aria is in the same character as the first section and begins on the dominant. (Normally, the b section of a *da capo* area would consist of material that contrasts the first section). The opening statement augments the interval on the word “valley” suggesting an even deeper chasm, and proceeds quickly to more melismas on the words “exalted” which, much like in the first statement, has short ascending and descending sixteenth-note units, and plain. The section ends with a typical I (6-4) – V7 – I cadence. Typically, the singer is expected to add a cadenza on the I (6-4) chord. The aria ends with the same *ritornello* as was heard at the beginning of the piece.

Handel outlines the virtuosic qualities of the lyric tenor in these two pieces. The long, melismatic phrases make it difficult to manage breath control. The [e] vowel on the word “plain”

is also an important factor here because if it is not centered, the melismas are so long and difficult that the entire phrase could suffer. The tempo of the aria is quicker than that of the slower recitative. The *largetto e piano* of the recitative demands the singer perform long, lyrical lines, while *Andante* of the aria requires agility. Likewise, the *piano* dynamic of the recitative asks that the singer show his ability to sing softly and the louder dynamics of the aria show the ability to project a *forte* dynamic and execute an agile vocal line.

Handel sends a victorious message through this short text. Once again he is describing the love of God and uses this uplifting text to heighten the positive mood created by the blend of the music and words.

CHAPTER 2

Henry Duparc was born in Paris on January 21, 1848. Although Duparc became known as one of the greatest French composers of his day, he did not pursue a career in music from the start. Duparc was interested in a more practical job as a lawyer before he decided to try to experiment with musical composition. It was at the Jesuit College of Vaugirard where he came in contact with Cesar Franck, who would later become his composition teacher. During the time he spent with Franck, Duparc composed multiple works while taking lessons. Unfortunately, not many of them survived and only a select number were passed on to the public. He was a great admirer of Bach, Beethoven, and Wagner- at one point even meeting with Wagner once to talk about the ending of *Die Walkure*.

L'invitation au voyage is a piece that describes the poet Charles Baudelaire's love for the countryside in Holland.⁷ The poem has three verses, but Duparc set only two. This setting is decorative and beautiful, supported by strong repeated melodic ascensions that culminate on G4 and resolve in an octave leap downward. Baudelaire describes the majestic colors of the setting sun and the glorious countryside, "Les soleils mouilles, De ces ciels brouilles" (The misty suns of those changeable skies have for me). He goes on to compare the image of his loved one, "Pour mon esprit ont les charme, Si mysterieux, De tes traitres yeux" (the same mysterious charm as your fickle eyes shining through their tears). Baudelaire end each verse with the same refrain, "La tout n'est gourde et beaute, Luxe, calme et volupte" (There, all is harmony and beauty, luxury, calm and delight). This is the place where the protagonist and his lover can be happy.

Duparc returned to the same textual conclusion at the end of each verse. The entire piece focuses on the concept of "delight" and, even though the piece progresses very slowly, the music

⁷ Bernac, 77

creates an uplifting mood. The text always means a great deal in a piece, but the beauty of the French language as it blends with the accompaniment draws further attention to the text. The slow textual and harmonic progressions make the diction slightly more difficult, but the most arduous task is keeping the pulse of the strong beats while staying *legato*. The dynamics change constantly, but Duparc labels the vocal quality as "tender".

The form of this piece is modified-strophic. The vocal line is essentially the same for both verses, but the accompaniment changes. In the first verse the piano plays tremolo-like sixteenth-note chords. In the second verse the harmony stays the same, but it is figured in *arpeggios*. Duparc drew out themes from the vocal line with melodic fragments from the piano.⁸ For example, the melody from "Aimer a loisir" is presented later in the left hand of the piano.

The image shows two musical staves. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef with the lyrics "C'est pour as - sou - vir." The dynamics are marked "più f". The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment in bass clef with the dynamics "più f" and "Expressif". The piano part features a tremolo-like sixteenth-note chord pattern. Below this, a separate staff shows a melodic fragment in treble clef with the lyrics "Ai - mer à loi - sir." This fragment is a melodic line from the piano accompaniment of the second verse.

Extase was inspired by the writings of author Jean Lahor. Duparc shows a darker side of himself, and the text in this particular song gives testament to that with its beautiful yet brooding message. The text describes a man who is longing for the touch of his lover. He describes the feeling of laying his head on her breasts as sweet as the sleep that is brought on by death. It is slow and very sensual as if the man was laying side by side with his lover. The melody is soft

⁸ Kimball, 175

and calming. Even though there are only three short phrases, longing for eternal satisfaction is the clear message. The young man is so happy with his beloved, that when he lays his head on her breast it reminds him of heaven itself.

Duparc's setting includes some Tristanisms passed down by Wagner.⁹ Although the style of the piece is definitely French, Duparc pays homage to Wagner by using chord progressions reminiscent of *Tristan und Isolde*. Duparc, like Wagner, prolongs the conclusion by steadily increasing the intensity of the lyrics. The word "death" is repeated within all three phrases and concludes the piece, but not before it cues the postlude that follows. Bernac calls the piece a "Wagnerian Nocturne".¹⁰ This adds to the dark qualities that embellish the slowly flowing melody.

Sensual, passionate emotions can be derived not only from the text, but by the beauty of the diminished dynamics as the melody comes to a climax at the point "de la bien aimee".¹¹ The phrasing in this particular section proves to be the climax as the vocalist sings *pianissimo* on the G4. Here the vocalist sings an octave leap downward, the largest interval in the piece. Even though this is the highest point of the song, the dynamics are very soft and the beauty of the French language is embellished further with a petite *portamento* to conclude the phrase. The accompaniment plays a stabilizing partner to the sensitive dynamics of the vocal line. Although the motion of the vocal line and the accompaniment are both slow and sombre, as the piece progresses it slips into a darker, almost foreign quality. The accompaniment concludes the piece by slowly dying out until the ear strains to hear the last chord.

Le manior de Rosemonde was composed in 1879. This piece has a unique style of its own and is perhaps the darkest of all the songs that survive. The poet, Robert de Bonnières describes

⁹ Kimbal, 177

¹⁰ Bernac, 63

¹¹ Bernac, 63

a man that has taken a long journey in order to find Rosemonde, who resides in a mansion out in the unknown. He describes love as being a ferocious dog that has bitten him so badly that he was mortally wounded. The reason for the mansion being blue could be that he is unsuccessful in finding her and his love remains unrequited. The final line concludes with great harmonic tension as the character finishes the sad love story, while the accompaniment repeats the aggressive, dotted rhythm that is played at the beginning of the piece. Just like the racing hooves of the horse the protagonist rides as he wanders the land, the rhythmic style is agitated as it coincides with the ascending bass figure.¹²

The image shows a musical score for a piece titled "Assez vif, et avec force". It consists of two staves: a vocal line labeled "CHANT" and a piano accompaniment labeled "PIANO". The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 9/8. The piano part features a prominent dotted eighth-sixteenth note rhythm in the right hand, with a dynamic marking of *ff* and the instruction *bien rythmé*. The vocal line is mostly silent, with a few notes visible. The piano part includes a fermata over a chord in the right hand and an ascending bass line in the left hand.

It is with this aggressive rhythm that the song is constantly driven forward. Duparc brings back his darker side with this song both through his selection of text, and with the harmonic progressions he chooses. The syncopated rhythm repeats throughout the entire piece. It is mostly dotted eighth-sixteenth-notes that connect smoothly, but the aggressive accompaniment embellishes the powerful, yet almost sinister text.

Following the climactic moment, "Si la course ne te harrase!", Duparc changes the mood. The dynamic level softens and the melodic line becomes more lyrical. Moreover, the relentless dotted rhythmic figure gives way to block chords. The young man describes how he has travelled the world looking for the house of Rosemonde, leaving a trail of blood for others to follow. His

¹² Ibid

words are terse and spiteful to Rosemonde. Unfortunately, he never finds the house of his love, and remains wounded and alone.

CHAPTER 3

Franz Schubert (1797-1828) was an Austrian born composer. In his short life Schubert wrote over 600 Lieder and used the works of 90 different poets as the text for his music.¹³ His father was a schoolmaster, and allowed him to attend the Imperial Choir of Vienna, where he received his early training. In 1811 Schubert became a student of Antonio Salieri. By the time he was sixteen, he had composed "Gretchen am Spinnrade",. This work became one of his first masterpieces. Between the years of 1815 and 1816, Schubert wrote over 250 songs. He composed in multiple genres including lieder, operas, concertos, and symphonies. By the time that Schubert's brief life came to an end, his fame was ever-growing and he had gained the respect of composers and music lovers throughout Europe.

Strophic, modified-strophic and through-composed (*durchkomponiert*) and *scena* are where most of his 600 songs are grouped.¹⁴ Schubert had a gift of being able to utilize various techniques to blend the voice, piano, and text in a manner of expression that was a rarity in his time. The fortepiano with its leather-covered hammers and four octave range did not have as much dynamic possibility as the modern piano. This instrument became a common tool that Schubert utilized in his compositions.

The works that Schubert left behind would be revered by composers and music lovers alike long after his death. Schubert's dedication to Lieder allowed future composers to take his music and incorporate his elements into their own compositions. The contrast between each song shows the genius Schubert's genius when setting sound to an emotion or inner feeling. Schubert

¹³ Oxford University Press, "Schubert, Franz", Oxford Music Online, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/25109?q=schubert&search=quick&pos=2&_start=1#firsthit (March 21)

¹⁴ Brown, Maurice J.E. The New Grove Schubert. New York: New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, edited by Stanley Sadie, 1980(page87)

also wrote the accompaniment to support the emotions and lyricism of the vocalist rather than cause conflict between the two.

Die Schöne Müllerin is a song cycle which is divided into five small acts: arrival at the mill (songs 1-4), falling in love (5-9), brief happiness (10-12), jealousy and despair (13-17) and finally resignation and death (17-20).¹⁵ A young man who begins to work at a mill is caught off guard by the beauty of the miller's daughter. The cycle progresses through the actions of the young man.

Schubert continues the German tradition of incorporating nature and folklore into his music. The young man in this story actually speaks and sings to the little brooklet as if it could hear, understand, and respond to him. Schubert did not include any dynamic markings in this piece for the vocalist, and only marks a few places as piano in the accompaniment. The style can be found in the crescendos and the diminuendos that Schubert writes in between the first and second lines.

Schubert composed *Die Schöne Müllerin* in 1823 to poems of Wilhelm Müller. However, when the cycle was finished, Schubert did not dedicate his composition to a king or a wealthy patron, but instead dedicated the music to two of his fellow artists Schuppanzigh and the Baron von Schönstein.¹⁶ In the story a young man follows a brooklet, finds work at a mill and falls in love with the miller's daughter. The brooklet always accompanies the young man where ever he goes. Schubert takes that connection and plants it deeply into the relationship between the vocalist and the accompanist. The vocalist sings the beautiful melodies while the accompaniment does nothing else but set a strong foundation for the melody to ride upon. The relationship between the vocalist and the accompanist goes deeper with each passing song. The

¹⁵ Brown, 94

¹⁶ Ibid, 41

accompaniment often represents the flow of rushing water, which is constantly changing. The young man's emotions can be heard in both the accompaniment and the vocal line. The entire story is narrated by the young man until the very last piece of the cycle. Although this song cycle was composed eight years after Beethoven's *An die ferne Geliebte*, noted Schubert scholar Charles Rosen states that it is the first true song cycle because Schubert structured each song to complete itself, yet also remain an essential part of the entire piece as a whole.¹⁷

In his first song "Das Wandern", which happens to be five strophes, the young man finds a small brooklet, which becomes his constant companion throughout the entire song cycle. Just like in the title, the young man sings of the joy he feels when he is wandering. He hates to stand still, thus he doesn't mind the turning of wheels and the heavy stones in the mill. The young man also states that we can learn from the water, ironically setting up the very last song, which is a lullaby sung by the brooklet. The upper bass line in the accompaniment suggests the turning of the mill wheel.



The second song, "Wohin?" is in modified strophic form and contrasts with the first song in many ways. In this piece the melody is based on a juxtaposition of tonic and dominant chords, though the most familiar characteristic is passing from minor to major mode, which represents an emotional change.¹⁸ Even though the melody repeats in this song, Schubert uses the concept of a brooklet to give the melody the beauty of a lyrical melodic line. The text is sung at a pace that would seem too slow for the rushing motive in the accompaniment, but the slower, yet connected

¹⁷ Kimball, (page 63)

¹⁸ Brown, 88-89

vocal line provides rhythmic contrast. Here the young man is conversing with the little brooklet, telling it that he can hear the singing of the water-nymphs. The young man becomes intoxicated by the singing and, more importantly, the constant rushing of the brook. This rushing of the water simulates the young man's struggle with persistence and willpower when he falls in love with the daughter of the miller. The word "berauscht", the German equivalent of "intoxicated" is repeated several times, allowing the listener to confirm the excitement of the young man.

The third song, entitled "Halt", is through-composed. Schubert set this song in C major, suggesting happiness from the young man. He believes that the brooklet has led him to the mill and that the sun, heaven, the house are all meant to be for him. The accompaniment again suggests bubbling or watery rapids making him more excited. This song is an example of how the "Viennese Symphonic" period from around 1770 to 1830 really focused on keeping the melody the primary element. The song is solidly grounded in both idiom and procedure.¹⁹

The fourth song is entitled "Danksagung an den Bach" and like "Das Wandern" is strophic, this time with only two verses. It is special because it shows that Schubert is using different time intervals between songs. "Halt" ends with "war es also gemeint" and this song begins with that same text. This shows that there is no time passing between the songs. The last question, "war es also gemeint?" fades it is repeated; letting us know that the piece is coming to a close, but also that the emotions of the young man are about to change, and that he is as persistent as ever. Schubert writes so that the piano tells just as much of the story as the vocalist and the text do. The brooklet responds in the same fashion as it did before, with the rushing of water. The young man now convinces himself that the brooklet is telling him that it has led the young man to the mill maid so that they could fall in love. The young man responds joyously by

¹⁹ Ibid, 86

stating that his hands and his heart have enough work. This meaning that he has filled the hole in his heart, and he has a career that will satisfy him as well.

Schubert sets this song back into the key of G major. The melody is once again very contrasting from the previous song, as well as the accompaniment. The piano line has a more extensive range, but still simulates the rushing of the water. The vocal line seems to ride the supportive harmony so very smoothly, like a boat on the water. Even though the young man is obviously working himself up, the accompaniment goes along with his passion and blends with the vocal line, creating a new and equally genius portion of the cycle.

The young man is still as confident as ever and continues to ask the brooklet if this is his place in life. The young man recalls his love for working the wheels, how comfortable the living is and how clean. The young man is so happy that he describes the light of the sun shining down from heaven upon him, as if it was meant to be.

The fifth song is entitled "Am Feierabend". Here is the first instance where we can see frustration brewing in the young man. He works with many other young men like himself and they all share the work. The young maiden devotes her attention to all at the end of every night. Once, perhaps the first time that the young maiden bid them all good night, that the young man convinces himself that she is speaking to him alone and that she would share his love if only she would notice him.

The text supports this notion, showing the frustration building inside the young man as he searches for a way for the young woman to notice him. It is obvious that Schubert favored the more aggressive approach to the last stanza.²⁰ He comes to the conclusion that if he were the only person working in the mill, that she would have no choice but to take notice of him, and once that happens he is confident that she will love him. The young man describes himself as a

²⁰ Brown, (page 87)

monstrous human. He wishes that he had a thousand arms to replace his own, he would be strong enough to turn all the wheels and all the heavy stones by himself. He curses his own arms for being so weak that he could never work the mill by himself and gain her attention.

Schubert sets this song in the key of A minor. This is the first song in the cycle that Schubert sets in a minor key. The young man is beginning to doubt that he has the means to gain the love of the young maiden. He is conversing more and more with the brooklet as well, indicating that he is finally beginning to slip into madness.

The sixth song is entitled "Der Neugierige". Schubert makes a big contrast here by setting the song back in a major key, B major to be exact. The young man is feeling down on his luck and seeks comfort from the brooklet. The time interval between songs here is not very long, as it is a continuation of the conversation in the previous song but with an entirely different mood. The young man thinks that the brooklet is being very quiet and is not responding to his protests.

The young man states that he does not ask anything else for help. He does not ask the stars because they are too high to hear him. Nor does he ask the flowers because he is not a gardener. He asks the brooklet because he believes that fate has led him to this place and the brooklet was his guide. The brooklet remains silent as the young man constantly protests. The melody and accompaniment seem to be more disjunct as the song begins. As the young man tries to convince the brooklet to respond to him, the melodic line becomes more connected when the young man addresses the brooklet in the second stanza.

The tempo shifts greatly here as Schubert slows everything down. There is a change in emotion as the young man tries to convince the brooklet to tell him if he was led to the young maiden deliberately after the first stanza. The emotions change again when the young man thinks of the only two answers that could be true- yes or no. When he thinks of the word "yes" he

sounds bold and confident, but immediately after when he thinks of "no" as a possibility, his emotions shift again. After this phrase Schubert concludes the piece by slowing the tempo down drastically and ending with the young man repeating his question to the brooklet, desperately trying to get an answer.

CHAPTER 4

Benjamin Britten was born in Lowestoft in November of 1913. He is known as the most distinguished and significant composer, especially for opera, in the 20th century, composing in the English tradition passed down by Purcell.²¹ The son of a dentist, Britten's inspiration came from his mother, who was a singer and a pianist herself. Before he was ten years-old, he had already written a great number of pieces, including plays as well. By the time Britten was fourteen he had nearly one hundred opus numbers to his credit.²² He was truly turning out to be a prodigy as he progressed rapidly.

Britten was recommended to his future mentor Frank Bridge by his viola teacher Audrey Alston. While Benjamin was still studying performance as well as composition, Bridge pushed Britten to fix his gaze solely on composition in order to find his true potential.

Britten would eventually attend the Royal College of Music in London. It is here that he would come in contact with Schoenberg, and get a taste of what "popular" music was becoming. Britten graduated in 1932 and in a few years found great success that highlighted his musical talents.

In 1939 Britten travelled to North America. In Canada he came in contact with tenor Peter Pears. Pears would not only become a lifelong musical companion for Britten, but also his life partner. Britten and Pears began to travel together and made stops in New York and Woodstock, where they visited Aaron Copland.

Britten and Pears toured together throughout Asia and Europe, gaining inspiration wherever they went as Britten thoroughly analyzed the music of each culture they came upon.

²¹ Kimball, (page 391)

²² Oxford University Press, "Britten, Benjamin", Oxford Music Online, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/46435?q=Britten&search=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit (March 21)

With Peter Pears at his side, Britten would go down in history as one of the most influential composers of the twentieth century. He excelled in all genres and failed to conform to any ideologies but his own. His relationship with Peter Pears was so strong that he remained true to himself as a person and as a musician even though he struggled with homosexuality in a time period that was not nearly as accepting of it as we are today.

On October 15th, 1943 Britten premiered his *Serenade for Tenor solo, Horn and Strings*. Britten marked a new stylistic poise with this piece.²³ Britten stepped away from traditional characteristics of English folk tales and decided to add a darker mythic quality to this piece. Britten presented a world where the worm devours the bud of the flower and the beauty of the darkness is revealed through his eerie tones. This song cycle is unified by a collection of altering nocturnal moods rather than common motifs.²⁴

Of the eight songs in the cycle, I performed five which are discussed below. The *Serenade* begins with the "Prologue", the horn entering alone with a melodic line that sets a calming tone. The tempo is slow and the dynamics are very soft and contrast greatly towards the conclusion. The horn acts as a herald to the first song, "Pastorale". The text is taken from Charles Cotton (1630-1687), and depicts the beauty of the setting sun and the coming of night. Britten sets many different dream-like scenes in a very short period of time. These scenes range from giant ants and little shepherd boys to monstrous polyphemes (cyclops). Keeping the eighth-note steady is very important due to the constant change in meter.

This leads us to "Nocturne", which Britten took from a work by Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892). The text depicts a beautiful scene deep in the forest at the foot of great castle. The staccato rhythm at the triplets on the words "cataract leaps" sets the imagery to the rushing

²³ McVeagh, Diana, Payne Anthony, Ottaway Hugh, Holst Imogen, Kemp, Ian, Evans, Peter. *Twentieth Century English Masters*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1980 (page 241)

²⁴ McVeagh, (page 255)

rapids. The melody and the accompaniment share a call and response that suggests the image of the bugle sounding over the landscape. The horn becomes a valiant companion in this song as the vocal line and the call of the horn resembles a hunting call. The tonal sections are very fluid as the keys C minor and D-flat major change simultaneously and hover on the border between being awake and dreaming.²⁵ Britten describes the characteristics of the echo, first how it rushes over the hills and rivers and then how it dies with each passing moment.

The next song is entitled "Dirge". The text is taken from an anonymous fifteenth-century poet. The tessitura for this piece is extremely high and requires a great deal of technical proficiency. The 4/4 meter flows steadily from a smooth repeat of quarter and half-notes and progresses to a triplet in the following measure that pushes the melody along until it repeats again. The strophic melody constantly brings the vocal line from the middle register up into the top of the *passaggio*. Although the text is strophic, the *ostinato* in the vocal line the words "Christe recieve thy saule" combined with the agitated accompaniment provide a unique sound.

The final song in the Serenade is entitled "Sonnet", taken from a poem by John Keats (1795-1821). Britten continues his theme of beautiful darkness with the lyrical melody. He describes forgetfulness as a wonderful feeling and the most soothing of sleeps. The song progresses slower than any of the previous pieces. At the beginning of the climax in mm.24 the dynamics change and overshadow the previous pianissimo. The dynamics continue to contrast from forte to pianissimo as the liberating melody begins to come to a close. The song concludes on an eerie note with the sustained D in the vocal line that clashes with the accidentals in the piano line until it finally resolves on a D-major chord.

Britten closes with the "Epilogue", a horn solo which was meant to be performed offstage. The "Prologue" and "Epilogue" act as instrumental bookends to the poetry of the

²⁵ McVeagh, (page 259)

interior movements. Due to time constraints, the songs “Hymn” and “Elegy” were not performed.

CHAPTER 5

Giuseppe Verdi was born in the village of Roncole, Italy in October of 1813. He was the son of an innkeeper and would soon move to Busseto, where he began his study of music. When Verdi was a young child he was already showing signs that he was a musical prodigy and by age nine his name was already known throughout the music world in Roncole.²⁶ Verdi eventually made his way to Milan where he studied under Vincenzo Lavigna, who was a major authority as the Maestro Concertatore. It was in Milan where he found his initial success. Under Lavigna's watchful eye, Verdi was eventually able to grow as a composer.²⁷

Although his first opera was a success, Verdi did not have the same luck with his second opera, *Un giorno di regno*. His wife, Margherita, died just two months before the premiere in September of 1840. Verdi had much to recover from after this tragic event, but he showed his persistent nature when he rebounded with *Nabucco* in 1842. The opera was extremely successful, thus beginning a long decade of composing for Verdi. It was around every nine months or so that Verdi completed another opera.²⁸ Verdi was adored by the Italian people and his patriotic nature along with his music inspired the Italian people. Verdi's early biographer Jacopo Caponi describes Verdi's work after the completion of *Nabucco*.

“Verdi began-I would say at first instinctively-to investigate political action with his music. Foreigners will never be able to understand the influence exerted, for a certain period, by the ardent, blazing melodies that Verdi conceived when the situations, or even isolated lines of verse, recalled the unhappy state of Italy, or her memories, or her hopes. The public saw allusions everywhere, but Verdi found them first and shaped them to his inspired music, which often ended by causing a revolution in the theatre.”

²⁶ Gossett, Philip, Ashbrook, William, Budden, Julian, Lippmann, Friedrich, Porter, Andrew, and Carner, Mosco. *Masters of Italian Opera*, The New Grove. Edited by Stanley Sadie. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1980(page 194)

²⁷ Oxford University Press, "Verdi, Giuseppe", Oxford Music Online, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/29191?q=Verdi&search=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit (March 21)

²⁸ Gossett, ,(page 201)

Verdi's musical timeline can be broken down into four distinct periods.²⁹ *La Traviata* was composed in 1853 and marks the end of Verdi's first period. The compositional operatic form for composing opera at this time was recitative-aria. The scene would get set up by the recitative and the aria would follow to keep the storyline moving. In the early 1840's, Verdi met the librettist Francesco Piave, who would collaborate with Verdi on some of his most beloved operas.

In the story, Alfredo is the leading tenor role and after falling in love in the first Act, Alfredo and Violetta (the leading lady and Alfredo's lover) leave the city to live together. The time interval between Act 1 and Act 2 is around three months or so. Even though Alfredo is very poor and Violetta has left a life of luxury, they are both madly in love with one another. In this particular scene, Alfredo steps out to sing of the happiness he has found in his simple life with Violetta.

De miei bollenti spiriti is a double aria, meaning it has a cavatina and a cabaletta. This popular 19th century form was utilized to compose at a rapid pace, while keeping the music interesting and move the drama along. This style of composing was also used by such composers as Rossini and Bellini. The form includes two contrasting sections along with different tempi. This allows a character to change emotion, and come to a conclusive emotion. The *scena* is the first part of the double form. The function of the *scena* is to introduce the material and set the stage for the upcoming *cavatina*. The orchestrally accompanied recitative in the *scena* is normally an un-pulsed section that allows the listener to focus on what is being said rather than played. The orchestra's job at this juncture is to punctuate the ends of sentences to keep the music flowing until the introduction of the adagio.

²⁹ Gossett, page 205

During the *cavatina* section, the character sings of the feelings that were brought on by the discoveries in the *scena*. It has a clear and consistent tempo, as can clearly be heard in the accompaniment. Another indication that the *cavatina* has arrived is a very smooth melodic line. The thought process of the character is shifting at this point. The melody is much more fluid and connected, indicating a new thought or action in the scene.

Here Verdi implements a waltz-like rhythm that coincides with a very smooth vocal line. Verdi writes that the phrasing should be *legato* here, indicating that the phrasing should indeed be connected. The *cavatina* concludes with a cadenza to set up an interruption in the scene.

My graduate recital will contain the *scena* and the *cavatina* sections, but they are only half of the entire composition. The *tempo di mezzo* comes after the *cavatina* and is an interruption as another character, Aninna enters. Once again the mood changes briefly, but sets up the most virtuosic portion of the entire aria- the *caballetta*. This final segment of the aria provides focus on the virtuosity of the vocal line with a flurry of notes that sit high in the tenor passaggio. The aria ends on a very dramatic note with the option of a "high C" at multiple points.

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APPENDICIES

APPENDIX A

German Translations

<p>Das Wandern ist des Müllers Lust, Das Wandern! Das muß ein schlechter Müller sein. Dem niemals fiel das Wandern ein, Das Wandern. Vom Wasser haben wir's gelernt, Vom Wasser! Das hat nicht Rast bei Tag und Nacht, Ist stets auf Wanderschaft bedacht, Das Wasser. Das sehn wir auch den Rädern ab, Den Rädern! Die gar nicht gerne stille stehn, Die sich mein Tag nicht müde drehn, Die Räder. Die Steine selbst, so schwer sie sind, Die Steine! Sie tanzen mit den muntern Reihn Und wollen gar noch schneller sein, Die Steine. O Wandern, Wandern, meine Lust, O Wandern! Herr Meister und Frau Meisterin, Laßt mich in Frieden weiterziehn Und wandern.</p> <p>Ich hört' ein Bächlein rauschen Wohl aus dem . Felsenquell, Hinab zum Tale rauschen So frisch und wunderhell</p> <p>Ich weiß nicht, wie mir wurde, Nicht, wer den Rat mir gab,</p> <p>Ich mußte aus hinunter Mit meinem Wanderstab. Hinunter und immer weiter Und immer dem Bache nach,</p> <p>Und immer frischer rauschte Und immer heller der Bach. Ist das denn meine Straße? O Bächlein, sprich, wohin? Du hast mit deinem Rauschen Mir ganz berauscht den Sinn.</p> <p>Was sag ich denn von Rauschen? Das kann kein Rauschen sein: Es singen wohl die Nixen Dort unten ihren Reihn.</p> <p>Laß singen, Gesell, laß rauschen Und wandre fröhlich nach!</p> <p>Es gehn ja Mühlenräder In jedem klaren Bach.</p> <p>Eine Mühle seh ich blicken Aus den Erlen heraus, Durch Rauschen und Singen Bricht Rädergebraus. Through Ei willkommen, ei willkommen, Süßer Mühlengesang! Und das Haus, wie so traulich! Und die Fenster, wie blank! Und die Sonne, wie helle Von Himmel sie scheint! Ei, Bächlein, liebes Bächlein, War es also gemeint?</p> <p>War es also gemeint, Mein rauschender Freund? Dein Singen, dein Klingen, War es also gemeint? Zur Müllerin hin! So lautet der Sinn.</p>	<p>Wandering is the miller's joy, Wandering! He must be a miserable miller, Who never likes to wander. Wandering! We've learned this from the water, From the water! It does not rest by day or night, It's always thinking of its journey, The water. We see this also with the wheels, With the wheels! They don't like to stand still, And turn all day without tiring. With the wheels. The stones themselves, heavy though they are, The stones! They join in the cheerful dance, And want to go yet faster. The stones! Oh, wandering, wandering, my joy, Oh, wandering! Oh, Master and Mistress, Let me continue in peace, And wander!</p> <p>I hear a brooklet rushing Right out of the rock's spring, Down there to the valley it rushes, So fresh and wondrously bright.</p> <p>I know not, how I felt this, Nor did I know who gave me advice; I must go down With my wanderer's staff. Down and always farther, And always the brook follows after; And always rushing crisply, And always bright is the brook. Is this then my road? O, brooklet, speak! where to? You have with your rushing Entirely intoxicated my senses. But why do I speak of rushing? That can't really be rushing: Perhaps the water-nymphs are singing rounds down there in the deep.</p> <p>Let it sing, my friend, let it rush, And wander joyously after! Mill-wheels turn In each clear brook.</p> <p>I see a mill looking Out from the alders; Through the roaring and singing Bursts the clatter of wheels. Hey, welcome, welcome! Sweet mill-song! And the house, so comfortable! And the windows, how clean! And the sun, how brightly it shines from Heaven! Hey, brooklet, dear brook, Was this, then, what you meant? Was this, then, what you meant, My rushing friend? Your singing and your ringing? Was this what you meant? To the Millermaid! it seems to say... Have I</p>
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Gelt, hab' ich's verstanden? Zur Müllerin hin!
 Hat sie dich geschickt? Oder hast mich berückt?
 Möcht ich noch wissen, Ob sie dich geschickt.
 Nun wie's auch mag sein, Ich gebe mich drein:
 Was ich such', hab ich funden, Wie's immer mag sein.
 Nach Arbeit ich frug, Nun hab ich genug
 Für die Hände, fürs Herze Vollauf genug!

understood?
 To the Millermaid! Has she sent you? Or am I Das
 deluding myself?
 I would like to know, Whether she has sent you.
 Now, however it may be, I commit myself!
 What I sought, I have found. However it may be.
 After work I ask, Now have I enough for my hands
 and my heart? Completely enough!

Hätt ich tausend Arme zu rühren!
 Könnt ich brausend Die Räder führen!
 Könnt ich wehen Durch alle Haine!
 Könnt ich drehen Alle Steine!
 Daß die schöne Müllerin
 Merkte meinen treuen Sinn!
 Ach, wie ist mein Arm so schwach!
 Was ich hebe, was ich trage,
 Was ich schneide, was ich schlage,
 Jeder Knappe tut es nach.
 Und da sitz ich in der großen Runde,
 der stillen kühlen Feierstunde,
 Und der Meister spricht zu allen:
 Euer Werk hat mir gefallen;
 Und das liebe Mädchen sagt
 Allen eine gute Nacht.

If only I had a thousand arms to move!
 I could loudly drive the wheels!
 I could blow Through all the groves!
 I could turn All the stones!
 If only the beautiful Millermaid
 Would notice my faithful thoughts!
 Ah, why is my arm so weak?
 What I lift, what I carry,
 What I cut, what I beat,
 Every lad does it just as well as I do.
 And there I sit in the great gathering,
 In the quiet, cool hour of rest,
 And the master speaks to us all:
 Your work has pleased me;
 And the lovely maiden says
 Good night" to everyone.

Ich frage keine Blume, Ich frage keinen Stern,
 Sie können mir nicht sagen, Was ich erfähr so gern.
 know.

I ask no flower, I ask no star;
 None of them can tell me, What I so eagerly want to

Ich bin ja auch kein Gärtner,
 Die Sterne stehn zu hoch; Mein Bächlein will ich fragen,
 Ob mich mein Herz belog.
 O Bächlein meiner Liebe, Wie bist du heut so stumm?
 Will ja nur eines wissen, Ein Wörtchen um und um.
 again.

I am surely not a gardener,
 The stars stand too high; My brooklet will I ask,
 Whether my heart has lied to me.
 O brooklet of my love, Why are you so quiet today?

Ja heißt das eine Wörtchen,
 Das andre heißet Nein,
 Die beiden Wörtchen Schließen die ganze Welt mir ein.
 O Bächlein meiner Liebe, Was bist du wunderlich!
 Will's ja nicht weitersagen, Sag, Bächlein, liebt sie mich?

I want to know just one thing - One little word again and
 The one little word is "Yes";
 The other is "No",
 Both these little words Make up the entire world to me.
 O brooklet of my love, Why are you so strange?
 I'll surely not repeat it; Tell me, o brooklet, does she love
 me?

APPENDIX B

French Translations

Sur un lys pâle mon coeur dort
 D'un sommeil doux comme la mort
 Mort exquise, mort parfumée
 Du souffle de la bien aimée ...
 Sur ton sein pâle mon coeur dort
 D'un sommeil doux comme la mort

On your pale breast my heart is sleeping
 A sleep as sweet as death Exquisite death,
 death perfumed
 By the breath of the beloved
 On your pale breast my heart is sleeping
 A sleep as sweet as death

Mon enfant, ma sœur, Songe à la douceur
 D'aller là-bas vivre ensemble,
 together!
 Aimer à loisir, Aimer et mourir
 Au pays qui te ressemble.
 Les soleils mouillés De ces ciels brouillés
 Pour mon esprit ont les charmes
 Si mystérieux De tes traîtres yeux,
 Brillant à travers leurs larmes.
 Là, tout n'est qu'ordre et beauté,
 Luxe, calme et volupté.
 Vois sur ces canaux
 Dormir ces vaisseaux
 Dont l'humeur est vagabonde;
 C'est pour assouvir Ton moindre désir
 Qu'ils viennent du bout du monde.
 Les soleils couchants Revêtent les champs,
 Les canaux, la ville entière, D'hyacinthe et d'or;
 Le monde s'endort Dans une chaude lumière!
 Là, tout n'est qu'ordre et beauté, Luxe, calme et volupté.

My child, my sister,
 think of the sweetness of going there to live
 To love at leisure, to love and to die
 in a country that is the image of you!
 The misty suns of those changeable skies have for me
 the same mysterious charm
 as your fickle eyes shining through their tears.
 There, all is harmony and beauty,
 luxury, calm and delight.
 See how those ships, nomads by nature,
 are slumbering in the canals.

To gratify your every desire
 they have come from the ends of the earth.
 The westerling suns clothe the fields, the canals,
 and the town with reddish-orange and gold.
 The world falls asleep bathed in warmth and light.
 There, all is harmony and beauty, luxury, calm and
 delight.

De sa dent soudaine et vorace,
 Comme un chien l'amour m'a mordu...
 En suivant mon sang répandu,
 Va, tu pourras suivre ma trace...
 Prends un cheval de bonne race,
 Pars, et suis mon chemin ardu,
 Fondrière ou sentier perdu,
 Si la course ne te harasse!
 En passant par où j'ai passé,
 Tu verras que seul et blessé
 J'ai parcouru ce triste monde.
 Et qu'ainsi je m'en fus mourir
 Bien loin, bien loin, sans découvrir
 Le bleu manoir de Rosamonde.

Love, like a dog, has bitten me
 with its sudden, voracious teeth...
 Come, the trail of spilt blood will
 enable you to follow my tracks.
 Take a horse of good pedigree
 and set off on the arduous route I took,
 through swamps and overgrown paths,
 if that's not too exhausting a ride for you!
 As you pass where I passed,
 you will see that I travelled alone
 and wounded through this sad world,
 and thus went off to my death far,
 far away,
 without ever finding Rosemonde's blue manor-house.

APPENDIX C

Italian Translations

Lunge da lei per me non v'ha diletto!
 Volaron già tre lune
 dacché la mia Violetta
 agi per me lasciò, dovizie, amori
 e le pompose feste,
 ov'agli omaggi avvezza,
 vedea schiavo ciascun di sua bellezza.
 Ed or contenta in questi ameni luoghi
 tutto scorda per me.
 Qui presso a lei io rinascere mi sento,
 e dal soffio d'amor rigenerato
 scordo ne' gaudi suoi tutto il passato.

De' miei bollenti spiriti
 il giovanile ardore
 ella temprò col placido
 sorriso dell'amor, dell'amor!
 Dal dì che disse:
 vivere io voglio io voglio a te fedel,
 dell'universo immemore
 io vivo, io vivo quasi,
 io vivo quasi in ciel.

Dal dì che disse:
 vivere io voglio a te fedel,
 Ah sì, dell'universo immemore
 io vivo, io vivo quasi,
 io vivo quasi in ciel.
 Io vivo in ciel.
 Dell'universo immemore.
 Io vivo quasi in ciel.
 Ah sì, io vivo quasi in cielo.
 Io vivo quasi in ciel.

There's no pleasure in life when she's away!
 It's three months now
 since Violetta gave up for me
 her easy, luxurious life of love-affairs
 and expensive parties ...
 There she was used to the homage of all
 who were enslaved by her beauty
 but she seems happy here in this charming
 place, where she forgets everything for me.
 With her beside me, I feel myself reborn
 revived by the breath of love,
 forgetting the past in present delights.

My passionate spirit
 and the fire of youth
 she tempers with the
 gentle smile of love.
 Since the day when she told me
 "I want to live, faithful to you alone!"
 I have forgotten the world
 I live, I live like,
 I live like one in heaven.

Since the day when she told me
 "I want to live, faithful to you alone!"
 Ah yes I have forgotten the world
 I live, I live like,
 I live like one in heaven.
 I live in heaven.
 I have forgotten the world
 I live like one in heaven.
 Ah yes, I live like one in heaven.
 I live like one in heaven.

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Research Paper Title:
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