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# Scholarly Program Notes on the Graduate Collaborative Piano Recital of Tim DePriest

Tim DePriest

*Southern Illinois University Carbondale*, [tdpiano@hotmail.com](mailto:tdpiano@hotmail.com)

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SCHOLARLY PROGRAM NOTES ON THE GRADUATE COLLABORATIVE PIANO  
RECITAL OF TIM DEPRIEST

by

Tim DePriest

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A Research Paper

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SCHOLARLY PROGRAM NOTES ON THE GRADUATE COLLABORATIVE PIANO  
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Dr. Diane Coloton, Chair

Dr. Yuko Kato

Dr. Eric Mandat

Graduate School  
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TITLE: SCHOLARLY PROGRAM NOTES ON THE GRADUATE COLLABORATIVE PIANO RECITAL OF TIM DEPRIEST

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. Diane Coloton

This document is the result of the research corresponding to the collaborative piano recital with vocal emphasis presented by Tim DePriest on November 21, 2015, in Carbondale, Illinois. It contains brief biographical information of the composers, appropriate music practice, and analyses of the repertoire. The program comprises the aria “Come scoglio” from *Così fan tutte* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart; a set of six Lieder from four Romantic composers: “Wohin?” and “Der Wanderer an den Mond” by Franz Schubert, “Wanderlied” and “In der Fremde” by Robert Schumann, “Mit vierzig Jahren” by Johannes Brahms, and “Fußreise” by Hugo Wolf; the aria “Mi chiamano Mimi” from *La bohème* by Giacomo Puccini; and the cycle *Songs of Travel* by Ralph Vaughan Williams.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>CHAPTER</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
ABSTRACT.....	i
CHAPTERS	
CHAPTER 1 – Mozart: “Come scoglio” from <i>Così fan tutte</i> .....	1
CHAPTER 2 – German Song and High Romantic Lied.....	4
CHAPTER 3 – Schubert: “Wohin?” and “Der Wanderer an den Mond”.....	6
CHAPTER 4 – Schumann: “Wanderlied” and “In der Fremde”.....	10
CHAPTER 5 – Brahms: “Mit vierzig Jahren”.....	15
CHAPTER 6 – Wolf: “Fußreise”.....	18
CHAPTER 7 – Puccini: “Mi chiamano Mimì” from <i>La Bohème</i> .....	21
CHAPTER 8 – Vaughan Williams: <i>Songs of Travel</i> .....	24
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	35
VITA .....	38

## CHAPTER 1

### MOZART: “COME SCOGLIO” FROM *COSÌ FAN TUTTE*

Among the twenty-eight libretti written by Lorenzo da Ponte (March 10, 1749–August 17, 1838) are his collaborations with Mozart: *Don Giovanni* (Vienna, 1786), *Le nozze di Figaro* (Prague, 1787), and *Così fan tutte* (1790). Of his twenty-two operas, these are among Mozart’s best loved, and all remain in the standard repertoire. Mozart categorized this trio of stage works as *opera buffa* (comic opera) although the vocal technique required of most of their roles is much more demanding than in most earlier works in the genre.

*Così fan tutte* (“Thus Do All [Women]” or “Women Are Like That”) premiered at the Burgtheater in Vienna on January 26, 1790—the eve of the composer’s thirty-fourth birthday. The opera tells a short story of an elaborate ruse against two Neapolitan sisters, Dorabella and Fiordiligi, played on them by their fiancés, Guglielmo and Ferrando. Each man is convinced that his fiancée will always remain faithful to him. But, as James Anderson succinctly explains, “Their cynical bachelor friend, Don Alfonso, takes a wager with them that the fidelity of the fiancées is as shaky as that of all other women. Pretending to be called away on active service, the men disguise themselves as a pair of charming Albanians and each pays court to the other’s lover” (131).

As was his fashion, Mozart set a libretto to music only after the singers were chosen, then fit the arias to those singers’ abilities (Grout & Williams 325). According to *The Operas of Mozart* by William Mann, da Ponte designed Fiordiligi for his mistress, the prima donna Adriana Ferraresi del Bene (522). As is reported frequently, Mozart did not like the arrogant Ferrarese, and because of her tendency to throw back her head on high notes and drop her head forward on low ones, he filled a great deal of “Come scoglio” (“Like a Rock”) with quickly alternating low and

high notes, attempting to make her head bob like a chicken. Mann, however, asserts that it cannot be known if Mozart composed this aria with Ferraresi in mind (523).

In Act I, Scene 2, the sisters are home, forlorn and lovesick. Their housemaid Despina allows Guglielmo and Ferrando, now posing as strange, exotic Albanians, into the house. When the men profess that they were led by love to their home, the sisters, shocked and outraged, deny the men any cooperation and demand they leave. Fiordiligi begins her defiant recitative: “Tememari, sortite fuori di questo loco!” (“Audacious [ones], quickly leave this place!”) warning the intruders to not “profane their hearts, their ears, their affections”, while professing their uncompromising devotion.

Fiordiligi continues claiming that the sisters have intact faithfulness, pledged only to their lovers. Rising, off-beat G-minor chords melt into a suddenly calm, inverted E-flat chord as she quietly professes again their intact faithfulness; the music begins its transition to B-flat major. Serious, nearly pompous dotted chords underscore Fiordiligi’s stone-faced demeanor. Near the end of the recitative her melodic intervals begin to oddly grow wider. A descent of a tenth followed by a cadence on F dominant anticipate the B-flat aria.

The aria “Come scoglio” (“Like a Rock”) begins in resolute, triumphant octaves in B-flat major, and more dotted rhythms. “Unwavering, rock-like, immobile, we stand against wind and tempest.” Gigantic leaps and a long, defiant high B-flat punctuate her point. Then suddenly the tempo *maestoso* (majestic) turns to a soft *allegro* (brisk): Fiordiligi continues her message, but the aria becomes more frantic. The repeated line “Far che cangi affeto il cor!” (“Love’s devotion cannot move!”) becomes a disjointed melody of ascending octaves and descending tenths. Brown states that although, “Fiordiligi’s words are meant sincerely; . . . damaging to her credibility is what Mozart does . . . [exaggerating] even further her leaps between registers . . .

[The melody becomes] a glaring contradiction of the immobility of which she sings . . .” (Brown 129).

About Ferrarese particularly, Brown states, “Mozart undermines her utterances by expanding her vocal leaps to the point of parody—of Ferrarese herself (who was known for her wide range), and of a recent opera by Salieri in which she had displayed this gift” (Brown 35).

A swirling frenzy in the orchestra illustrates the success of the two maskers, who continue to fluster Fiordiligi; then in a ritornello she restates the aria’s opening phrases across two falling scales spanning a thirteenth.

In the final section, the *più allegro* (very brisk), frantic octaves in the voice rise and fall like waves of emotion. Fiordiligi demands respect from the “wretches”, while devolving into a torrent of remarkable triplets (at about  $\downarrow = 170$ ) spanning another thirteenth—the “coloratura at which [Ferrarese] was so adept, after which she shows off her low register” (Brown 35). In the final moments, Mozart further stresses Fiordiligi’s distress with “initial five-bar phrases, long melismas in triplets, and a sudden outburst on high B $\flat$  (35)”. Two final “insults” meet Fiordiligi (Ferrarese): her penultimate high B-flat is sung over E fully-diminished instead of tonic, and the two men block her from leaving the stage— “a grave affront, after a showpiece aria such as this” (Brown 130).

Of the Mozart and da Ponte collaborations, Brian Trowell opines, “Da Ponte served up the tale with a strong spice of pure farce. Mozart . . . was delighted to further his librettist’s designs with clever musical parody” (7).

## CHAPTER 2

### GERMAN SONG AND HIGH ROMANTIC LIED

“German Lied has its origin in the simple German folk song” (Seelig 1). This section of the program features six *Lieder*, or German art songs. A German poem set to music has been called a *Lied* since medieval times, when the *Minnesänger* (singers of courtly love songs) composed and performed their music. The songs of the music-dramas known as *Singspiele*, especially those of the eighteenth century, are a later and closer predecessor of the Lied. Carol Kimball, in *Song: A Guide to Art Song Style and Literature*, shares that these songs were often tuneful and strophic, easy to learn, and composed with simple accompaniments (39).

But the term *Lied* took new meaning in the hands of Schubert and his successors. Seelig writes that the word “indicates symbiosis of literature and text” (1). Though Baroque and earlier Classical period composers wrote songs, they made relatively fewer contributions to the genre. Neither Haydn nor Mozart took interest in lyrical quality. It was Beethoven who served as the “transitional figure” (Kimball 39) to the genre’s development. His *An die ferne Geliebte* (*To the Distant Beloved*), Op. 98, arguably serves as the first song cycle, or *Liederkreis*. A song cycle is a grouping of songs typically containing text from one poet and often has a central theme and connective tonal schemes or motives. The poetry of *An die ferne Geliebte* is unremarkable, but Beethoven’s use of the piano to create mood as well as a dialogue between the piano and voice foreshadows the song output of Schubert and Schumann.

New technical enhancements to the piano were a major influence—or cause, perhaps—of the development of the Romantic Lied: the piano was given a richer tone, a wider range, and sustaining ability. The revolution of expression and emotion found in the new German poetry was another influence or cause. Although not presented in this concert, Johann Wolfgang von

Goethe (1749-1832) must be mentioned as the initiator of the literary movement that moved the German composers to compose their songs. Seelig states, “Goethe worked to improve . . . the more ordinary literary genres of his day; these efforts proved of great consequence for the development of the Lied” (Seelig 4). Without these significant developments, the Lied would have never flowered into its Romantic brilliance.

### CHAPTER 3

#### SCHUBERT: “WOHIN?” AND “DER WANDERER AN DEN MOND”

As Beethoven is perhaps the most crucial Classical composer in the transition to the Romantic period, Austrian composer Franz Schubert (1797-1828) is the transition's most crucial Romantic composer. For him to become the “Prince of Song”, as renowned Schubert scholar Susan Youens describes him, two essential conditions (already mentioned) had to be at his disposal: the new outpouring of German poetry from the likes of Heinrich Heine, Johann Goethe, and Friedrich Rückert, and the technological advances of the piano, giving it more expressive qualities while creating unprecedented atmospheres and vocal support in his accompaniments.

Although tragically short-lived, Schubert composed more than six hundred songs, along with seven symphonies, operas, and a large volume of chamber and piano literature. His songs “form the cornerstone of nineteenth century Lieder,” says Kimball (in *Song*), and Schubert influenced all succeeding German composers of the century, as well as the French composers of the “emerging *mélodie*” (52).

Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin* (*The Miller's Beautiful Daughter*) (Op. 25, 1823) and *Winterreise* (*Winter Journey*) (Op. 89, 1827), represent the first great song cycles. Kimball makes an important contrast between *Die schöne Müllerin* and Beethoven's famous set of songs, *An die ferne Geliebte*:

*Die schöne Müllerin*, composed in 1823, must be considered the first great song cycle.

It was composed eight years after Beethoven's *An die ferne Geliebte*, but unlike Beethoven, who had linked songs together to form a continuous work, Schubert

structured his cycle so that each song is complete in itself, but also an essential part of the whole” (63).

According to Craig Bell in his *Songs of Schubert*, the German poet Wilhelm Müller (1794-1827) wrote *Die schöne Müllerin* after he helped produce an amateur play given at a Viennese house party in 1820 (67). Three years later Schubert discovered the “pastoral drama” (69) and set twenty of them to music, omitting the prologue, the epilogue, and three poems (68). The work tells a sad story of unrequited love: a young miller wanders down a stream to a watermill, begins employment for the master miller, and falls in love with the miller’s daughter. She likes a huntsman instead, causing the apprentice deep anguish. He eventually drowns himself in the stream. The brook is an equally important character to the apprentice, acting as his confidant. (The brook sings a lullaby over him upon his suicide.) Schubert represents the brook “by a variety of musical figures throughout the cycle”, such as the right-hand swirls of “Wohin?” This “reinforces his strong identification with nature and his sense of isolation . . .” (Kimball 64).

“Wohin?” (“To Where?”) is a perfect illustration of the gurgling brook. The song is the second in the cycle and describes the optimistic young man’s first encounter with the stream. Two measures of G major introduce the scene: an oscillating fifth in the left hand: G on the downbeats and D on the upbeats, overlapping each other, suggesting the young man’s pace, under a gurgling, sextuplet figure, beginning on tonic: *mi-sol-mi-do-sol-do*—representing the stream. The piece is strophic, except for its middle, which is marked by a mysterious swirl of minor and augmented sixth chords under the lines “Is this then my road? / O brooklet, speak, to where?”, perhaps foreshadowing the young man’s unforeseen demise at the end of the work. The brook’s perpetual sextuplet motif in the right hand is particularly challenging for the

accompanist. Only twice does the left hand break away from its vacillating open fifths or octaves and have a noticeable voice, as it briefly performs in unison (an octave below) with the singer.

This recital's other song by Schubert, "Der Wanderer an den Mond" ("The Wanderer to the Moon"), is from *Drei Lieder*, (Op. 80, No. 1, 1826); Schubert's friend Johann Seidl (1804-1875), a Viennese lawyer, schoolmaster, librarian, politician, playwright, and poet, supplies the text. Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, the celebrated baritone and interpreter of Schubert, says, "The tired traveller, who holds an intimate conversation with moon, envies his travelling companion's fixed abode" (197). The tempo is marked *Etwas bewegt*, or "some[what] moving". In the four-bar introduction, the left hand lightly strolls along between the low fifth of G and D to D only, and hits octaves for the dominant and subdominant chords; the right hand has some "strummed" (arpeggiated) chords and announces part of the song's theme. This author's collaborating singer prefers to perform the piece a bit heavily and slowly, but the song is usually executed at a jaunty, expectant pace. The melody's contour fluctuates rapidly—G down a fourth to D, high D down to A, a scalar ornament back to tonic—painting a rugged journey.

The first two strophes are identical except for a one small difference: the first ends after the traveler notes that he is stern and dark, but the moon is pure, and emotionally asks, "What could be the difference?" on repeated E natural before turning upward from D to F over the minor dominant; the second turns downward from F to D like a sigh when he laments that, no matter how much he travels, he is never home. Almost imperceptibly does Schubert transition here at the onset of the third strophe to G major. Acclaimed baritone Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau claims,

“Particularly clearly in this example, we find the most basic, most personal characteristic of Schubert’s music, one which is elevated from a mere musical function and given the validity of an utterance—the major–minor polarity. This is the source of all musical tension: the contrast . . . of hardness and softness, of light and shade, of day and night . . . It symbolised heaven and earth for him . . . and he united them. There is . . . a concentrated dramaticism in this transformation . . . [as] the wanderer looks up at the moon. This is certainly much more than a mere transformation” (197-8).

Now in G major, strophes three and four are the same, except the end of the fourth includes extended material. The opening statement of both is the same shifting latitudes contained in the first two: *do-do, so-so*, (octave leap upward) *so-so, re*. Also, *la*, or high E, is voiced in every poetic couplet, but this time it always releases downward to *re* or *do*. In these verses, the wanderer praises the advantage of the moon, saying essentially, “You go up and down, east and west, everywhere—yet in the vast sky you are always home!” Schubert repeats the last couplet (“Happy is he who, wherever he is, stands on home ground!”) with new material, still full of delight, and marked *piano*; he uses “auf der Heimath boden steht” (“on home ground”) one final time, at *forte*. By using the sixth scale degree, the high E, again, and stretching it in a dotted eighth note, he places the syllable “Hei-” of “Heimath” on it to emphasize the wanderer’s longing for a place in which to feel home, himself. The piano quietly plays a four-measure epilogue, repeating a merry *fa-mi-re, mi-re-do* motif recently heard in the voice, as the man and the moon continue their journey together.

## CHAPTER 4

### SCHUMANN: “WANDERLIED” AND “IN DER FREMDE”

When Robert Schumann (1810-1856) composed in 1840 over one-half of his total output of Lieder, driving him most likely were the need for financial security (as he and his fiancée Clara Wieck were engaged) and the desire to grow in popularity as a composer. He could not have known that his songs would still be considered the best Lieder of the mid-nineteenth century nearly two hundred later. Jensen reports that pianists were not playing his music. “Songs, however, had grown in demand. They were a standard form of home entertainment . . . In turning to song in 1840, Schumann was attempting to become part of that growing market” (Jensen 181).

Schumann was born in Zwickau in Saxony to a book dealer. That strongly influenced him: he grew to see himself as both a writer and a composer. Unsurprisingly in his mind, word and musical tone were inseparable. While still a student in Zwickau he wrote the essay “On the Intimate Relationship between Poetry and Music”. Schumann created his own paper, *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* (*New Journal for Music*) and wrote extensively for it. Jensen claims that the composer wrote fiction and poetry, also, but most of his efforts remain unpublished. Schumann’s “astonishing . . . knowledge of European literature was comprehensive and included not just poetry, drama, and fiction, but history and biography” (42). Later he adds, “Contemporary German writers held the greatest attraction for Schumann. References to the works” of Johann Goethe, Eduard Mörike, and many others “are found in Schumann’s diary and household books” (143).

Comparing Schumann to Schubert, Carol Kimball explains that, whereas Schubert uses the piano as an “active supporter of the voice” and to “set the scene” (52) or to at least

“[suggest] atmosphere” (77), Schumann “elevates the piano to equal stature with the voice” (53). In *German Lieder in the Nineteenth Century*, Hallmark adds, “With Schumann the . . . piano now sings as well, in alternation or in combination with the voice” (87). All melodic material, in either hand, becomes equal to the voice. Eric Sams, in *Robert Schumann: The Man and His Music*, claims, “Music and words interact in Schumann to make a more varied texture than in any previous songwriting.” Also, “Melodies are essentially stepwise and modest in range . . . The harmony is usually diatonic with contrasting sections . . .” (126). Kimball calls Schumann a “skilled miniaturist” (77). About his highly detailed organizational system, she says that his songs are “organized in carefully ordered key relationships, linked by motives, and loaded with extra-musical meanings” (77).

This program features two Lieder from Schumann, both from 1840: “Wanderlied” from *Zwölf Gedichte*, Op. 35, composed in late autumn; and “In der Fremde” from his famous *Liederkreis*, Op. 39, from early May.

Schumann was very fond of the poetry of Justinus Kerner (Jensen 43); it inspired his first songs and served as the basis for the *Zwölf Gedichte* (44). “Wanderlied”, the third song of the twelve, is both energetic and majestic, sounding like a hybrid of a swan song and a drinking song. The speaker announces his farewell to his dear friends and home as he sets off to “distant lands”, urged on by an unidentified “mighty force”. Kerner speaks vividly of nature while the speaker justifies his journey, explaining that the sun does not remain in one place, nor do ocean waves, nor storms and clouds, nor birds. Kerner also mentions forests, fields, meadows, breezes, and flowers and their scent.

F in three octaves, followed by added F-dominant in the right hand, comprise the quick, two-measure introduction. As the voice arpeggiates the B-flat major chord downward, the

tonic key, the brass-like accompaniment moves parallel to the singer, revoicing the B-flat repeatedly downward, then upward with the voice to *sol*, or high F. Up a third, the theme is repeated on the tonic again, but this time landing on *la*, or high G. Afterward the melody moves mostly stepwise, and then a high *sol* (F) leaps down an octave and then to tonic. Schubert holds down the inter-strophic interludes to short, thick-voiced, two-measure phrases, melodically repeating the singer's last two measures.

The second two strophes are identical to the first, continuing the speaker's boastful address of the merits of his upcoming departure. At the conclusion of the third strophe, the singer holds tonic alone; suddenly the chromatic submediant, G-flat, interrupts, as does the key and the slower tempo. Sung almost as a lullaby, the speaker claims that when he arrives wherever it is, birds and breezes from his homeland will be there, and the scent of native flowers will surround him. Even the love that accompanies him throughout his entire journey will be there for him, too.

Sams explains, "Remote key signatures convey complex emotions. A true modulation is always significant; a change of key signature represents a complete change of mood . . ." (126). Schumann returns to the original tempo, restates the introduction, and reuses the poem's first four lines. The strophe is the same except for the extended ending. As the singer repeats, "It powerfully drives me out to distant (*ferne*) lands," he sings *ti*, or high A, on "fer-" for the first and only time in the song. A nine-measure postlude begins with repeating the singer's final two virtuosic measures, then spritely, earlier material, followed by two large punctuating tonic chords in multiple ranges. Hallmark explains, "Such codalike episodes manifest melodic, harmonic, rhythmic, and contrapuntal interest of their own. Many seem to discharge the energy that remains after the singing stops" (77).

Often associated with Schumann is the poetry of Josef von Eichendorff (1788–1857) (Jensen 44). “In der Fremde” (In the Foreign Land”) is from *Liederkreis* [Cycle of Songs], Op. 39 (1840), which only features Eichendorff’s work. As mentioned previously, song cycles typically feature at least one connection, such as an emotion or a theme. For *Liederkreis* it is Eichendorff—all the poems are his. Jensen describes the cycle as “one of remarkable sensitivity” (44). He adds that Schumann claimed that it was his “most Romantic music ever” in a letter to his pianist-composer wife: “It contains much of you in it, dear Clara.” Jensen explains that “Romantic” here referred to “the emotional and dramatic intensity of many of the texts” (45).

Schumann’s *Liederkreis* and *Dichterliebe* (*A Poet’s Love*), Op. 48 (1840), are two of the most frequently performed song cycles. The twelve songs on poems by Eichendorff in *Liederkreis* are related only by references to nature and seasons. Jensen says that they combine “imagery of nature and ideas of lovesong and self-revelation (136).” He adds that in Schumann’s music,

“ . . . the external world, hardly glimpsed in the earlier piano music . . . is now suddenly in full flower. Schumann turns instinctively to Eichendorff, the poet of the German rural scene and its seasons. He chooses lyrics that sing of place and times, of slow or swift change, of sky or forest, quick or serene with the flight or song of birds; in spring or summer, at dusk or nightfall, with stars or moon. ‘Such music I have in me that I could sing the whole day through’ (136).”

“In der Fremde” (“In the Foreign Land”) begins mid-scene: the left hand’s thick and arpeggiated, sixteenth-note F-sharp minor chords are topped with pings in the right hand—bolts of distant lightning “heard” in the flashes of color. Barely one measure passes as the

singer begins to express the stormy inner turmoil of the emotions: At this point in his life, he views life remotely; he now longs for the time when he can pass from this world. The melody has only risen from *do* to *fa* twice until the speaker asks, “How soon (*bald*), how soon comes the silent time?” as the melody stresses *bald* twice, approached by widening intervals. Here the right hand begins an imitation, answering him from a higher register, *fa-do-fa, fa-do-fa*, while complex chords in the left hand rise chromatically, perhaps alluding to angels and heaven. When Eichendorff mentions “over me the beautiful forest’s solitude,” Schumann turns the right hand’s pings into sweet, little arpeggi. Jensen calls it a metaphor: “the way in which the arching leaf-music of the lonely woods . . . is topped with fronds of rustling sound at the word *rauscht* (136).”

Special attention can be given to the song’s final moments. With pedal F-sharp, the last line, “no one here knows me anymore, too,” sings over eerie chords: the first sounds like Neapolitan G major, but the G in the chord changes to an E-sharp in the next chord to create the German augmented chord for the measure. The note G and then the note E-sharp happen to also be the new pings at the top of the perpetual arpeggiation of the entire song. The ambiguity around tonic is arresting. Schumann changes minor to major here and in the piano epilogue to suggest the contentment for which the speaker longs.

## CHAPTER 5

### BRAHMS: “MIT VIERZIG JAHREN”

One of the most celebrated German composers of the second half of the nineteenth century, Johannes Brahms (1833-1897), born in Hamburg, lived in the Viennese limelight during much of his career. Brahms wrote for symphonic orchestra, chamber ensembles, chorus, voice, piano, and organ. He appreciated the music from the Baroque and Classical periods, and especially loved the music of Mozart and Haydn. The Schumanns also had a large impact on him; he remained close to them from the time they met.

Kimball explains that Brahms’ “music aesthetic was his fundamental interest in folk music” (103). Brahms composed 380 songs, and nearly two hundred are solo art songs. According to Lucien Clark, the greatest influences on his “song compositions were folk songs” and the “songs of Schubert” (2). His folksong arrangements and folk-like songs are strophic; relatively few of his songs are through-composed, and over half are what Hancock calls “varied strophic” (122) or what Clark calls “modified strophic” (278), including his song in this recital. Clark also calls this compositional style “varied strophic form” (1) and explains that its “opening material is developed to provide contrast before it reappears more recognizably to round out the design” (2).

Brahms was an insatiable reader and loved poetry. He was accused, however, of frequently using poems of poor quality, but according to Kimball, the composer “was not interested in the synthesis of poem and text” (103). In contrast, Hugo Wolf (1860-1903) is known for considering every word of a poem as he composed songs. Central to Brahms’ style, Kimball adds, “is the music’s development.” Therefore, he purposely used many lesser-known

poets, only striving to “portray the general mood of a poem rather than individual details” (Clark 4).

The song set *Fünf Lieder*, Op. 94 (1884). comprises five art songs in varied strophic form; the work is often compared to Schubert’s *Winterreise* (1827) for its barren, monological quality. The text of the first song, “Mit vierzig Jahren” (“At Forty”), is a poem not by an unknown, but by one of the most beloved and prolific German poets, Friedrich Rückert (1788-1866). Rückert taught Asian languages, wrote many epic poems, and is especially remembered for his lyric verse (Britannica.) The Schumanns, Wolf, and Strauss, among others, used Rückert to a much greater degree than did Brahms, who used him rarely. (The most recognizable musical setting of Rückert’s work is the set of poems he wrote after the death of his two children in 1834, *Kindertotenlieder*, which Mahler set as a song-cycle and published in 1902.)

“Mit vierzig Jahren” begins like a sad tale of lost youth, but contains a brilliant, joyful climax that defeats the protagonist’s potential mid-life crisis. As Hancock explains, “a man at forty looks back at his youth, then presses toward his final destination—represented, as so often in Brahms, by a turn to the parallel major . . .” (143).

The song’s form is what Clark (278) describes as “the sort that Brahms began to favor in the late 1870s,” which is the hybrid of strophic and through-composed elements. The brief, two-measure introduction seems to center on the dominant chord, F-sharp major, but without the seventh, and with heavy, pedal octaves plodding under slow, syncopated and chromatically shifting chords, the mood, both ambiguous and solemn, is set for the majority of the piece. The first and third lines of each stanza begin with F# falling to B, but is harmonized differently every time. The voice enters, climbing “stepwise in vigorous dotted rhythms” (Stark 278) and

peaks at “Berg” (“mountain”) as the piano accentuates the off-beats with inverted minor chords. At “wir stehen still und schau zurück” (“we stand still and look back”), the introduction is repeated down a fifth and the singer sings from C-sharp 3 down the scale to F-sharp 2. “Longer chords [tie across] strong beats, depicting the quiet happiness of childhood,” says Stark, then “quicker rhythms . . . evoke the noisier joys of youth[.]”

The second strophe begins like the first but shifts through a G-major seventh chord and an A dominant to arrive at the relative major, so that “heft your walking staff” is pitched considerably higher than “stand still and look back.” Left- and right-hand chromatic, narrowing lines underscore “a mountain ridge stretches”. As the ridge descends, so too do “Brahms’ symbolic bare octaves descend,” claims Clark, outlining B-flat major seventh, “to reveal that it is death that waits at the end of the path downward” (278).

Next is a “most striking harmonization”, says Hancock (143). To return to B minor for the third strophe, the previously mentioned B-flat is enharmonically changed to A-sharp, as the entire F-sharp dominant sounds. Although Brahms uses similar material for this strophe, Rückert encourages the traveler by explaining that the part of the journey requiring the hardest steps with the heaviest breathing is past. The path becomes easier as the road imperceptibly slopes downward.

“The song’s glorious conclusion,” explains Stark, “affectingly depicts the serenity of the traveler’s final haven by shifting . . . to the tonic major . . .” Brahms repeats the text “before you realize it, you are in port” in a Neapolitan shift, which is his motif for passion or poignancy symbol (Clark 4). All the while the voice rises broadly over an arpeggiated accompaniment, “[which is] Brahms’ customary symbol for contentment” (Clark 279) or dreaming (4).

## CHAPTER 6

### WOLF: “FUSSREIBE”

Austrian composer Hugo Wolf (1860–1903) provided to the late Romantic period a unique, intense expression; although Wolf’s music is inspired by Wagner’s harmony, it is the antithesis of Wagner’s scale. A child prodigy, he began studying piano and violin at age four. He was dismissed from all the music schools he attended for his rebellious attitude and indifference to convention. 1888 to 1889 marks his first great compositional output, which includes this program’s song, “Fußreise”, from his *Mörike-Lieder*. Although he composed some chamber works, choral and piano music, and three operas, Wolf is known for his songs. Intermingled throughout his periods of creativity, Wolf experienced crippling bouts of depression; he composed nothing after 1897.

Wolf was a master of utilizing tonality to convey meaning, as well as compressing large musical concepts into miniature contexts, hence the composer is often labelled a “miniaturist”. His earlier Lieder were modelled understandably after those of Schubert and Schumann—still the two most recognized composers of the genre. Already mentioned is Wolf’s turning point beginning in 1888: the Mörike, Eichendorff and Goethe sets led him away from Schubert and toward Wagner. Kramer claims, “Wolf treats the singing voice as equivalent to the voice of the text and treats it on the model of Wagnerian music-drama” (Kramer 187). Comparing Wolf to Schubert, Kramer suggests, “Whereas Schubert . . . regard[s] the text as a source of expressive potential . . . Wolf regards the text as a bid for expressive . . . authority.” Kramer continues, “Using the voice to assert the claims of the text, [Wolf] employs the piano accompaniment to grant or deny them a validating recognition” (194).

The style of Germany's Romantic poet Eduard Mörike (1804-1875) appealed to Wolf's gift of shaping music to text; they shared a mutual dark humor as well. According to Seelig, Mörike was a novelist and illustrator, as well as a devout Protestant pastor, and describes him as Heine's younger, witty contemporary who didn't share "the older poet's vitriolic tendencies, but embodied instead the . . . 'graceful resignation' that epitomizes the Biedermeier period: a German version of the Realism that reigned in the aftermath of the Vienna Congress of 1815" (15). While Mörike's lyrical style did not often draw the attention of Schumann and Brahms, according to Kimball, it "remained for Wolf to discover the . . . utility of Mörike poetry in general, over a decade after the poet's death" (112). Mörike's variety of mood and color resonated with Wolf. He composed in 1888 all fifty-three songs he set to the poet's work. This is his first large collection and contains some of his best-known songs.

"Fußreise" ("A Country Walk") is immediately jaunty and merry: the swung do-mi-re figure in the right hand is answered in both hands—by a sweeping, short succession of fifths in the left, and a plodding of a dominant chord in the right, having a fa-sol major second in the right-hand thumb. Those right-hand chords are connected quarter notes, but the left hand's tonic-fifth-ninth sweeps are disjointed and must be played without connection. What intentionally sounds like a traipse through the meadow is a big challenge for the accompanist who plays the score as is (Sams 79). This music illustrates, says Sams, "just how a man might feel, walking a peace with himself. Then," he continues, "the voice strikes in with its fine swinging melody" (79). The piano's right hand and the singer enjoy a tertian duet while the left hand continues its disjointed skip. Under "ich in der", Wolf uses his "freedom" motif: "the use of the rising horn passage" (Sams 21), which is (in D major) a sixth (F#, D), a higher fifth

(A, E), and an even higher third (D, F#). On “-gel” of “Hügel auf und ab” (“uphill and down”), Wolf gives to the voice the piano’s first three-note motif up a fifth (*sol-la-fa*).

The second verse continues this lovely experience, extending through a new harmonic sequence under “gold’ne Traube Wonnegeister spürt in der ersten Morgensonne” (“golden grapes feel the delighting spirits of the first morning sun”) as Wolf uses the leading tone as the beginning of a quick transition to A as a brief tonic and raising the accompaniment an octave and a fifth. (“A central theme to Mörike’s writing is the concept of ‘goldenness’” (Kimball 112). Wolf places verse three back in D as it begins, repeats the material of the extension of verse two, ends on an inverted secondary dominant, and hints at the freedom motif.

The next verse begins with new material in a slightly tenacious feel, as “Also bist du nicht so schlimm, o alter Adam” (“You are not so bad, oh, old Adam”) begins on third-inversion dominant and winds both downward and upward through large, chromatically moving chords, continuing with the connected right hand and the disjunct left hand. Dramatic, shifting dynamics and unsettling, inverted chords and deceptive cadences underscore “Liebst und lobst du immer doch, singst und preisest immer noch” (“You still love and praise, sing and exalt”), until “lieben Schöpfer und Erhalter” (dear Maker and Preserver”) until reached at F#-major, which Wolf “often reaches at moments of special elation” (Sams 34). The piano remains in this euphoric key through seven measures of blissful contemplation until Wolf allows A dominant to quietly return just long enough to lead us again to D major and something of an epilogue, which expresses basically, “Oh, that, by His grace, every day could be like this morning journey!”

## CHAPTER 7

### PUCCINI: “MI CHIAMANO MIMÌ” FROM *LA BOHÈME*

Although he composed orchestral pieces, chamber music, and some songs, Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924) is known primarily for his contributions to late-Romantic opera. Including his triptych of one-act operas, he composed twelve. Some scholars label Puccini’s opera style as *verismo*, meaning “realism”, referring to the post-Romantic movement in which everyday life is depicted, especially among the middle and lower classes. Others do not view him as a pure *verismo* composer (Berger 7), but that he was merely influenced by the style (Grout & Williams 493). Grout adds, “[T]he realism of his operas is always tempered by . . . romantic and exotic elements. In *La bohème* common scenes and characters are invested with a romantic halo . . .”

In his music, Puccini successfully blended the traditions of Italy with more modern trends. As the critic Anthony Davis asserts: "Loyalty toward nineteenth-century Italian-opera traditions and . . . the musical language of his Tuscan heritage is one of the clearest features of Puccini's music" (8). But of great importance, he adds, is the "stylistic pluralism" in Puccini's work—influences from "the German symphonic tradition, French harmonic and orchestrational traditions, and . . . aspects of Wagnerian chromaticism" (8).

From Puccini’s early period come his first three operas. *Manon Lescaut*, his third, was his first truly successful one. Had it not been successful, *La bohème* may have never been heard, or even composed, and Puccini might only have been named in the Verdi-wannabe list with Leoncavallo and his contemporaries. From his middle period, roughly 1895-1905, are his three most well-known: *La bohème* (1896), *Tosca* (1900), and *Madama Butterfly* (1904).

According to Operabase, they are currently the third, fifth, and fourth most frequently performed operas in the world, respectively (Web).

Henri Burger's book, *La Vie de Bohème* (1851), a collection of small stories, inspired a play and two operas, one by Puccini and one by Leoncavallo. (Leoncavallo's rendering of the same play is rarely mentioned, whereas Puccini's work inspired many more works based on the novel.) The bohemians in the opera reflect the younger days of Puccini himself, as all reports indicate.

The opera is in four acts and is set in the Latin Quarter of Paris around 1830. Mimì, a young seamstress, goes to the apartment of her neighbor, Rodolfo, to ask him to light her burnt-out candle. The two are immediately attracted to each other. Once Mimì drops her key, Rodolfo finds it, but pretends that he has not. He tells her a little about his life as a poor but hopeful poet, then asks her to share who she is. Mimì's famous aria follows.

As a complete interruption to Rodolfo's aria in A-flat, unrelated to any material heard thus far, Mimì's aria begins on E4, seems to go to F-major, but chromatically shifts to E dominant and A dominant, while an angular melody, Mimì's theme, is as puzzling as her opening statement: she states in essence, "People call me Mimì but I don't know why, since my name is Lucy." The music lands on D major, but in second inversion, to allow a pentatonic accompaniment in the violins to complement Mimì's next, nearly minimalist, speech-like claim: "My life story is short and dull, and I sew." Interrupting herself with a return of the disjunctive theme, she states that she loves her work, then Puccini returns her to D major. Recurring many times, a bass-less progression of inverted chords in the violins ensues: I, ii, I, vi, iv, vii°/V, V. The melody, Mimì's second theme, rises step-wise through a Lydian alteration until the musical phrase lands on C-sharp minor as the bass re-enters. In *Puccini, King of*

*Verismo*, Ray Macdonald refers to this as the “Flowers” theme, but says that “it’s so strongly associated with Mimì herself that it practically amounts to a secondary motive for her” (55). Moving in parallel motion downward, Puccini subtly moves to vi, a diatonic chord, before the progression and melody move together downward, returning to tonic. The first theme is heard again before new material is given: a repeated mixture of spritely outburst against quiet contemplation. Mimì explains that her work keeps her busy, she prays often, and out her window she sees rooftops and sky.

Then the most climactic section begins, in which lush seventh and thirteenth chords alternate against Mimì’s rapturous discourse on springtime. Geoffrey and Ryan Edwards claim that the quarter rest with a fermata “signals the dramatic shift in Mimì’s narrative . . . Her vocal line is now infused *con molto anima* [with great animation] and her intensity is reinforced by orchestral doubling” (65). The second theme reappears and rises in shortened form and, as the Edwardses claim, “Mimì speaks of springtime, but for her the [kiss of April] symbolizes a far more profound, and as yet unrealized, love” (66). Quickly ending her introduction is a funny epilogue skipping throughout tonic notes in *parlando* (spoken) style, as she claims to Rodolfo that she is merely an obtrusive neighbor.

## CHAPTER 8

### VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: *SONGS OF TRAVEL*

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) was one of the most important and influential British composers of the twentieth century, and no serious study of British art music would overlook him. Among his output are operas, ballets, chamber music, secular and sacred vocal pieces (choral and solo) and orchestral works (for which he is best-known) including nine symphonies and film music, written over a span of nearly half a century. It is primarily his work, influenced by the Tudor polyphony and British folk-song, that freed England's music from its German dominance of the nineteenth century (Kimball 363).

Vaughan Williams is regarded as one of England's premier symphonists, noted for his wide palette of emotion. He admired Wagner and studied with Max Bruch and Maurice Ravel. Yet he is also remembered as a great collector of English folk song. Although he never arranged any, his admiration and study of the genre led him to incorporate them into what Kimball calls "his own strong musical personality" (364). According to Kimball, both the composers Hubert Parry and Charles Villiers Stanford both British taught Ireland, Holst, and Vaughan Williams. On *The Ralph Vaughan Williams Society* page, Stephen Connock reveals:

Parry insisted that Ralph learn more Beethoven, especially the late quartets. Parry widened Ralph's musical knowledge, but also provided him with a sense of the nobility and greatness of the English choral tradition. Ralph had found something "peculiarly English" in Parry's music, awakening a consciousness of the national composer that was to flourish over a decade later (Connock).

Kimball also states it is "Parry's influence" that "is seen most clearly in . . . *Songs of Travel*," and the work "contains melodies that are vigorous, but elegant[.]"

Vaughan Williams composed more than 150 art songs, plus part-songs, hymn tunes, unison songs, etc. Heffer claims that the composer's rise to fame came because of his songs: Vaughan Williams's first popular piece, which started to make his name as a composer, was not orchestral but vocal: his setting of the poem "Linden Lea" . . . Michael Kennedy categorized [it] as 'midway between a folk song and an art song' . . . It sounds like an English song that has been around forever, but in writing the music Vaughan Williams revealed once more his instinctive Englishness, mimicking a version of national folk-song before he had embarked upon his heroic task of collecting them . . . Suddenly [he] found he had made a reputation as a writer of songs, and was in demand as such . . . Through songs such as *House of Heaven*, [including] one of his most celebrated songs, "Silent Noon", . . . [and] the cycle of Robert Louis Stevenson's *Songs of Travel*, [with its] qualities of robustness and sensitivity . . . he became properly noticed on the English musical scene."

The nine songs of *Songs of Travel* are musical settings of Robert Louis Stevenson's *Songs of Travel and Other Verses*, (1896), collection of more than thirty poems revealing the travels and experiences of the poet throughout his life. Although transposed later for other voice types, the cycle was originally composed for baritone voice. It was first performed in London in 1904. The ninth song, "I have trod the upward and the downward slope", did not appear until after the composer's death. His wife, Ursula Vaughan Williams, found it among his unpublished manuscripts. *Songs of Travel* is often criticized for clunky or unimaginative accompaniments—an observation with which this pianist disagrees. The accompaniments are challenging, elegant, and musical, and shall now be briefly discussed. (Note that strict adherence to the British standard of capitalization is used for all song titles.)

Shifting “fifths and fourths appear and a striding bass” (Howes 85) open “The vagabond” in C modal minor, and a jaunty outline of the minor tonic triad calls like a distant trumpet. As the traveler begins his life journey, he tells that he is determined regardless of the circumstances, echoing the right hand from the introduction. No sooner is his first line sung and Vaughan Williams shifts the singer up a minor-third to unrelated E-flat minor and G-flat major to refer to “the jolly heaven”. Resolved to sleep outside and eat meagerly, the restless, wandering chord changes—E major, B minor, B-flat major, E-flat major—and an ever-rising melody urge the singer to declare, “There’s the life for a man like me; there’s the life forever.” The accompaniment subtly slides back to tonic over an ambiguous i-to-VI sound in the bass, then uses that in place of V to return a solid tonic and the introduction.

Thus far the left hand has played oscillating seconds and minor thirds in a staccato *alla marcia* (march-like), but now plays full note values with the right hand. The major challenge in this song for the pianist is found in the recurring need to strike a staccato chord in the left hand while the right hand not only sustains a simultaneously struck chord, but then must be pedaled to the next right-hand chord while not allowing any left-hand notes to ride along!

“The vagabond” is strophic. The second verse restates the traveler’s resolve, adding that he seeks no wealth, hope, love, or friends, yet requires only heaven and the road.

A shift to E minor while keeping the beginning style opens the B section, and the traveler looks toward the inevitable harshness of autumn, and an even worse winter. Both hands are sustained except for the arpeggiated surges between phrases to the next, higher-pitched key. Beginning in G minor, moving to B-flat minor and D-flat minor, momentarily relaxing from F-sharp minor as vi to A major as “warm, the fireside haven” is sung, and resurging a staccato C-sharp major arpeggio to an unrelated A minor as the traveler sings that

he will not yield not only to autumn, but “not to winter, even!” while the tonality returns once again to C minor.

The composer’s choice of using the tonal shifts of a minor third to assist the traveler in expressing his wandering, anxious heart is unquestionable. Dickinson remarks, “Its bold and calculated ramblings of key, with an unconventional texture of fixated basses in random succession, keep the main strophe fresh and securely constructed, and apt for the proud, moody wanderer” (187). The third verse repeats earlier ideas. The song ends quietly, still in *alla marcia* style, and the traveler’s flint-faced resolve is set for the remainder of the cycle’s message.

Simona Pakenham says, “The piano accompaniment to “Let Beauty awake” is intoxicatingly pretty in a conventional sort of way” (121). Whatever Pakenham meant by this polite, one-sentence description of the composer’s work on this piece is vague. What happens: a busy, thirty-second-note flurry of ascending and descending arpeggi in F-sharp minor introduces the song while only the bass note moves downward through the phrases, until the traveler sings, “[Let] beauty awake from rest,” as we land on E major, the apparent tonic, before new thirty-second-note duplet arpeggi, shifting downward immediately lead to the real tonic, C-sharp minor. Only now is the 9/8 pulse obvious, as the left hand has relaxed to sixteenths. The traveler tells of waking Beauty as birds awake. The vocal part returns to a rising interval of a minor-sixth, G-sharp to E, and then a stepwise descent to tonic throughout the song: 5 ↑ 3 ↓ 2 ↓ 1, or *sol-ma-re-do*. The end of verse one (as well as in verse two) rests on F-sharp minor. (If F-sharp is truly the center, Vaughan Williams set the piece in Dorian.) Connecting to verse two (and again, the piece ends in the same way), a lovely, floating, right-

hand duet, suitable for woodwinds, echoes the singer's melody in thirds, over the static, left-hand F-sharp arpeggi, creating ninths and elevenths.

The second verse's accompaniment sees the greatest difference from the first verse: rippling octuplets rising upward in harp-style underscore the melody, still in 9/8, as the traveler now sings of Beauty awaking "in the crimson eve". The aforementioned "flute" duet closes the piece, punctuated by a suggestion of endlessness—a succession of F-sharp minor arpeggi. Thinking the piece is set in F-sharp minor is erroneous. The song never ends in the listener's mind, at least as Vaughan Williams wrote it, and therefore is heard as the iv of C-sharp minor.

And now, every accompanist's heartache: "The roadside fire". What Dickinson describes as the "impressionist sparkle" (42) is pretty and fun, but in it are a list of challenges some pianists never encounter until receiving this score. The jaunty rhythmic motif is immediately stated in both hands: the left has a D-flat tonic dyad followed by an A-flat open fifth, as the right hand has static D-flat in the thumb, and the top voice oscillates from third to fifth, quickly and staccato, of course. The tricks are firstly to train the left hand to make its gesture quickly and accurately while not pounding the D-flat loudly, secondly to keep the right-hand thumb on one note, and thirdly to play all of it softly. (Good luck.) Perhaps these are the "splendid jangling chords" (122) to which Pakenham refers.

The voice, conversely, sings a simple, almost completely pentatonic melody, in a spritely but smooth line: "I shall make you brooches and toys for your delight / Of bird-song at morning and star-shine at night." The accompaniment proceeds at "bird-song" to vi, descending to E-flat dominant at "star-shine" to A-flat, but minor, surprisingly, to set up D-flat dominant during the singer's breath for his next phrase over a G-flat accompaniment. As the lyric speaks of a palace of "green days in forests and blue days at sea," the accompaniment

shifts through Lydian or A-flat dominant in third inversion, chromatically shifts to inverted C-flat major, shifts down a whole-step to B-double-flat (A in the accompaniment), and returns to tonic with no setup. A new challenge appears in that last episode: wandering sixths and fifths to play neatly and smoothly.

The accompaniment of the second verse abandons one left-hand problem for another: rising and falling, two-measure, D-flat staccato arpeggi spanning a seventeenth. At least the pedal is now employed and the progression remains the same. The traveler continues to paint a Romantic picture of a white river, washed linen, rainfall, and dew. Moving the B section, the pianist has to subtly shift from jauntiness to lush, harp-like major-sixth chords, which fortunately begin in D-flat. Quaint chromatic shifts lead to E, and some descending bass tones lead further to b minor, and the traveler rejoices in concepts of music and song. More tonal shifts—A, G, G augmented, C inverted—and more giant left-hand work with uneven beat divisions have the burden of underscoring an intimacy expressed by the text: “. . . [a song that] only I remember / that only you admire.” “Broad road that stretches” is painted by a B-major sixth chord in every voicing, unendingly arpeggiated in both hands. The pulse should be kept, and then stretched, without sounding like there is one. The motivic shift of a whole-step downward to A again appears here just before ending on a relaxed, sweeter rendition of the verses, sounding bell-like, and again in D-flat. Dickinson calls this, “an ‘after-song’, a recovery of the initial impulse at the last moment” (88).

“Youth and love” serves to bare more of the romantic, pained heart of the traveler, “the progress of a junior vagabond . . . pressing on to his ‘nobler fate’, rejecting life’s glitter . . .” (Dickinson 88). In 3/4, an *andante sostenuto* gives the second-inversion, four-note G major chord (D-G-B-D), set above middle C, an ethereal, travelling pulse in eighth notes—a “gently

hovering accompaniment,” describes James Day (224); interspersed in the eighths are interruptions of triplet eighth-note chords in relative voicing placed at unpredictable times, containing melodic elements in the alto line, unrelated to the vocal line. The traveler, perhaps retrospectively, says, “To a young man, the world is an everlasting pause, surrounded by gardens and orchards (fresh opportunities) with lighted (clear) directions.” Excepting the two *misterioso* measures in E-flat minor, which strangely underscore “far on the level land”, the entire song thus far has remained in inverted G, painting the “forever” concept of the text.

Starting the B section, left-hand eighth note arpeggi in E major, B Dorian, and A Dorian provide the solid movement and contrast for the right-hand alto triplets descending down the same modes (somewhat like Debussy’s second arabesque), illustrating “pleasures assail him”. *Risolto* (resolute), he brushes them off (“He to his nobler fate Fares”) as the music suddenly bursts into a half-diminished C-sharp forte and the right hand calls in two octaves the vagabond’s thematic “Give to me the life” melody from the cycle’s opening. The left hand descends through nervous, augmented and diminished tremolos at the same time. Dickinson says, “The sheer exuberance of the intrusive ‘song’ (high piano octaves) nearly wrecks a delicate, monotonous, atmospheric setting . . .” (89). The “roadside” tune here is “vulgarized by fresh treatment; an uncomfortable sensation” (89). Still rising in volume, the music turns back to the “Youth and love” pulse, but in third-inversion G7. As the traveler dismisses the danger with a wave, one more beat of the dissonant half-diminished C-sharp before the cycle’s climactic fortissimo on “cries”. G in first inversion is played again, but in a triumphant blast of octave, bass D, a loud tremolo, and a quote from the motif of the melody of “roadside fire” (“I shall make you brooches”), echoing the promises the lover had made to his beloved. As a soft F major interrupts the tension, the “down a step, up two steps” motif

returns; the young man (in the text) merely gives “a word to her at the garden gate,” and sings a childhood tune as the piano plays those dainty sixths and fifths from “Roadside Fire” again, and (reverting now to the initial, inverted G motif of this song) disappears. Vaughan Williams adds a subtle, triumphant tenor horn solo below the pretty shimmering alto line here, though, saying in essence, “Ha-ha! I win!”

The nightmarish “In dreams” follows. Dickinson describes its melancholy mood as “semitonal, sophisticated, and impersonal” (89). A tolling middle C, one per beat, obfuscates the real beat; Vaughan Williams scored it entering on the half of beat two. The second-inversion C-minor chord and singer enter on the real beat and the effect is jolting and confusing. “In dreams” (originally “In dreams unhappy”) recounts a former love that has ended. Pakenham asks, “[W]as there ever a sadder song . . .? [It] suggests that the young Vaughan Williams had his fits of melancholy like any other young man . . .” (123). A highly colorful tone palette gives the song tonal ambiguity and anxiety. The hands move contrapuntally, until bursts of emotion bring wide-spaced minor chords descending chromatically, followed by ascending, alternating half-diminished and dominant chords merely suggesting some tonality. Though the first and last chords are both second-inversion C minor, the piece only partially “arrives” tonally at “smile”, as G7 with a 4-3 suspension moves to what could be called C minor in second inversion with a 2-1 suspension. The song’s long ending could be described as having alternating French augmented and suspended chords which eventually resolve to C minor, but no analysis can be certain and it remains harmonically vague, just as Vaughan Williams fittingly intended.

As if waking from the nightmare and walking out into the night, “The infinite shining heavens” creates a quiet but sparkling picture of stars; similar to the pace and expansiveness

employed by Charles Griffes in “Clouds” or by Claude Debussy in “Sunken Cathedral”, Vaughan Williams uses a tolling, high-octave A, adding scalar notes from D minor descending one chord per beat, allowing the chords to thicken and arpeggiate. Sixth and seventh chords abound, already in F major, as the voice joins the piano. Parallel to the duplet-triplet-duplet pulse of the piano part in “Youth and love”, the voice here regularly sings triplets interrupting the duple meter: “infinite”, for example, is stretched over the singer’s first full beat. Following “sorrow and light”, the piano oscillates between A dominant and B-flat major 7, both inverted. At “dead”, D minor unexpectedly shifts to suddenly to shifting E-flat minor and G minor chords, increasing the ambiguity, but lessening the turmoil of “In dreams” to a sense of wonder. A-flat major ends this section, and descending chords of A-flat major and G minor are quietly interrupted by octave A’s, this time in the middle of the piano, for a shortened reprise of the introduction. More thickly voiced chords, shifting ambiguously and always shimmering, continue to underscore the voice. Often, only one note changes per beat, or an entire chord shifts chromatically, as in the final measures under the voice: cued from the word “down”, D-sharp half-diminished leads to D dominant, then to C-sharp half-diminished, then to C dominant, then to B half-diminished and again in third inversion, then G-sharp half-diminished to G dominant. That progression sets up a final delicate, cheery, and contented D major arpeggio.

One of the saddest songs ever, “Whither must I wander?” breaks the cycle’s modernity: both hymn-like and folkish, the strophic, tonal piece can easily stand alone (and often does). Identical in both hands, introductory thirds in C minor sigh and fall, from *forte* to *piano*, in merely one measure, followed by a solemn and thick C minor, now the submediant, and then B-flat without the seventh.

The first line of each verse is always in E-flat major, the second line begins on the subdominant, and the third line always shifts to C minor from B-flat dominant. In verse one, the word “home” is sung on the hearing of the E-flat major chord. The heavy C minor chord under “cold” is just as brutal as the word. A flurry of ascending thirds sets up “lov’d of wise men” and a momentary tonicization of G minor. “True word of welcome” is briefly in a resolute E-flat major before returning to bleak C minor. (“The infinite shining heavens” has a similar major-and-minor interplay.)

The introduction is repeated for both remaining verses. The accompaniment continues to sing with the singer, mostly in thirds and sixths. The second verse is practically the same as the preceding one. The respite of the sweet accompaniment at the beginning of the third verse calls the listener away briefly: its right hand, in contrary motion to the text “Spring shall . . . bring the bees and flowers”, arches high in rising thirds just before returning, through C harmonic minor, to the dismal relative minor. The concept is repeated in sixths at “Fair shine the day on the house with open door.” Yet the singer concludes, “I go forever and come again no more,” as burdensome C-minor chords are struck in two registers.

A jolting, “three-handed” C-major chord in one measure responds, loudly announcing the stately “Bright is the ring of words”. The nearly gigantic octaves in the left hand move contrarily to right-hand chords and the voice, the counterpoint therein spanning an octave and containing unpredictable scalar leaps: *do-ti-sol-mi-re-do* in the soprano meets *do-re-mi-la-ti-do* in the bass. The relative minor is only briefly suggested while the pianist gets to play A0 and B0 and the counterpoint devolves into more dissonance. D-flat over pedal F interrupts on the second half of the first verse, parallel thirds in both hands play as they did in “Whither”; then through chromatics, C major is reached again under “buried” sung on *sol*. Large, arpeggiated

pianissimo chords replete with sixths and sevenths (as in “shining heavens”) follow the singer down the *do-ti-sol-mi-re-do* theme, only this time through non-diatonic chords, to land in temporary E major. Tonal ambiguity finishes the second half of verse two, from A major and D major to D-flat major and G-flat major. (The heavily romantic E-flat minor ninth chord under “the lover lingers” is a rich moment.) The last chords impressionistically rise through A-flat and B-flat to C under “and the maid remembers.”

As explained, the epilogue, although composed by Vaughan Williams, was added to the cycle posthumously. “I have trod the upward and the downward slope” serves as a summary to the cycle, quoting much of its material. Kimball explains that the “primarily chordal” accompaniment has “moving octaves in the bass. The vocal line opens with a declamatory measure marked *quasi recitative* [recitative-like] and broadens to sustained phrases of reflective character . . .” (367). Opening music from “The vagabond” is repeated at the conclusion, but weathered resolve supplants its youthful urgency.

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## VITA

Graduate School  
Southern Illinois University

Tim DePriest

tdpiano@hotmail.com

Southeast Missouri State University  
Bachelors of Arts in Music, December 2010

Research Paper Title:

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Major Professor: Dr. Diane Coloton