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DISCUSSION OF FOUR ORCHESTRAL WORKS BY WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART,
PYOTR TCHAIKOVSKY, RICHARD STRAUSS, AND IGOR STRAVINSKY

by

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B.M., Berklee College of Music, 2020

A Research Paper

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Master of Music

Department of Music
in the Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
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RESEARCH PAPER APPROVAL

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CHAPTER 1

W. A. MOZART – *COSI FAN TUTTE*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) is undoubtedly one of the most famous composers to have ever lived. In his thirty years of active compositional activities, he has made an impact on the modern musical repertoire that few in history ever have. In fact, other than Handel's oratorios, no other composers have enjoyed such a consistent and prominent place in the repertoire. In minds of many musicians throughout history, he has achieved an almost god-like status, which were only epitomized by the gossips and fables surrounding his personal life, tales surrounding his prodigal talent, and his untimely early death¹.

One of the most notable things that made Mozart so revered is his ability to craft any form of music as well as the other. He is one of the only major composers in history to achieve such a firm standing in chamber, symphonic, choral, and opera repertoire. That is in stark contrast to his contemporaries, Joseph Haydn and Ludwig van Beethoven. The former of which have written operas but have largely fallen out of the repertoire, and the latter has struggled to complete a single opera in his lifetime through many revisions. Beethoven has gone so far as to declare that all the best operas have already been written by Mozart, and that he had tremendous difficulty in tackling the medium in Mozart's shadow².

Mozart's career is largely categorized into three major eras in its development. The first is his years he spent as a child prodigy, when he gained notoriety amongst the royals and other

¹ Richard Taruskin, *Music in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*. (London, Oxford University Press, 2005).

² Edward W. Said, "Opera Opposed to Opera: 'Così Fan Tutte' and 'Fidelio,'" *Modern Language Association of America*, 23-29, (1998).

musicians while touring with his father and sister. Tales of him performing virtuosic pieces on the violin and keyboard while blindfolded circulated, as well as the tales of him starting to compose during this time. Mozart's earliest operas were written around the time that he started writing symphonic works as well. His first opera was documented to have been written at age eleven, and was written in Latin with a premier at the University of Salzburg. He wrote in all major operatic styles of his day, including *opera buffa*, *opera seria*, and *singspiel*. His second opera, *La finta semplice*, was written as *opera buffa*, and his next opera, *Mitridate, re di Ponto* was an *opera seria*³.

For the majority of his middle years, while Mozart was an active musician, he struggled to rise to the top of his field as his fame as a child prodigy died down and he was forced to find footing as a professional. He also conflicted with his father, Leopold, on his career path, who wanted young Wolfgang to become a court musician and find stable income as he did. His middle years were spent in Salzburg, when he tried his best to follow his father's wishes. Yet, his music did not quite bloom into the style and mastery of Mozart as we know him, as he himself found creative constraints to be overbearing within his standing in the European courts⁴. Mozart eventually did find a position within the Salzburg courts, but grew increasingly frustrated with the nobility, who he thought did not adequately understand his music⁵. Even Emperor Joseph II, who achieved massive political reforms in his country, became known for not his

³ Richard Taruskin, *Music in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*. (London, Oxford University Press, 2005).

⁴ Harold C. Schonberg, *The Lives of the Great Composers* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1970), 102.

⁵ Maynard Solomon, *Mozart: A Life* (Harper Perennial, 2005).

accomplishments, but the fact that he commented on Mozart's music that they were simply "too many notes"⁶.

Upon being terminated from his position in Salzburg, Mozart finally left Salzburg and moved to Vienna in 1781, marking the beginning of his late years, as well as the beginning of the full bloom of his compositional genius. His transition from the courtly music of Salzburg to the popular music of Vienna is most notably marked by the premier of his Symphony No. 35, "Haffner" in 1782. The first and fourth movements of this symphony are exemplary of his Viennese style with grandiose orchestration, and a more evolved and complex thematic saturation. But the second and third movements embody the spirit of court music of Salzburg in his condensed orchestration and simplistic dance rhythms.

Mozart continued to write operas throughout his life, and he wrote some of his most notable operas during his late years. Operas seemed to have been an effortless pursuit to Mozart, as his speed in producing them were on par with many Italian career opera writers. In fact, he was one of, if not the only, Germanic composer at the time that could compete directly with the Italians in the field of opera.

Some of Mozart's attempts to compete directly with the Italians are reflected in his collaborations with Lorenzo da Ponte (1749-1838). Da Ponte was the newly appointed poet to the court theater, and was said to be the voice of the public's new-found love for *opera buffa* that followed the height of *opera seria*, as epitomized by the librettist Metastasio. Mozart and da Ponte's collaboration gave birth to some of the most popular operas ever written, including *Le*

⁶ Richard Taruskin, *Music in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (London, Oxford University Press, 2005).

nozze di Figaro, *Don Giovanni*, and, of course, *Così fan tutte*⁷.

Così fan tutte follows the story of two pairs of lovers: Ferrando and Dorabella, and Guglielmo and Fiordiligi. The main conflict of the opera arises when Don Alfonso, a friend of Ferrando and Guglielmo insists that their lovers are not faithful to them, just like any other women. The men are quite mad at the notion, as the women's characters have served as proof in their minds that they are indeed faithful, and demands proof to the contrary from Don Alfonso. He, in return, suggests a wager that he can indeed prove the women's infidelity if the men do not expose their plans and act out exactly what he says. The two men agree, betting quite a bit of money in favor of their women.

Meanwhile, Dorabella and Fiordiligi are bragging about their lovers to each other and daydreaming about their futures with them. Suddenly, Don Alfonso appears in front of them, crying in despair. He tells the women that their lovers had been called to fight in the war. Both pairs of couples grieve the men's departure as they bid their goodbyes.

The next day, Ferrando and Guglielmo appear again in front of the women in disguise. They reveal themselves as long-time friends of Don Alfonso, as he asks the women to take the men in with open arms. Despina, a servant-woman of Dorabella and Fiordiligi, scoff at the men as they are exceptionally ugly in their disguise. Dorabella and Fiordiligi are also visibly in disgust, although they do not find the situation funny, unlike Despina who has been in on the plan since the beginning. Ferrando and Guglielmo continue to pursue each other's lovers instead of their own in their disguise.

Initially, Ferrando and Guglielmo are assured of their victory in the wager. But as they

⁷ David Cairns, *Mozart and His Operas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

continue to pursue the women, Dorabella falls first, and Fiordiligi persistently resists, but eventually she falls to Ferrando's charms as well. The men, upon sharing their results with each other, are enraged that their lovers could do such a thing, and hatch a plan to take revenge at them. So, to achieve revenge, they decide to propose in their disguises.

They have proposed, signed the papers, and are in the middle of the ceremony when Don Alfonso runs in and announces that Ferrando and Guglielmo have returned from war. Everyone scrambles to assume their positions. The women, of course, are trying to hide their almost-husbands, and the men are trying to get out of their disguise to appear as themselves again. When the men reappear as themselves, they pretend to have accidentally found the marriage contracts, and the women try their best to explain the situation. That is when the men reveal their disguises and tell the women about their plot. The couples promise fidelity to each other again, but it is unclear if they are promising that to their initial lovers or their new-found lovers.

The plot of *Così fan tutte* has undoubtedly been quite controversial, especially in the last few decades. The premise of the plot outlines that all women are dishonest, and Dorabella and Fiordiligi supposedly serve as the definitive proof within the premise of the opera. To condemn the opera and its plot as downright misogynistic is a stretch. But the work cannot be condoned as a feminist, or even a harmless work for women is rather ignorant, even considering the historical background of the work.

Considering Fiordiligi and Dorabella as purely musical roles, rather than considering their role within the plot, they are of equal footing as their counterparts, Ferrando and Guglielmo. Mozart specifically wrote in his letters to da Ponte of *Così fan tutte* to include two pairs of characters in equal magnitude and material. In fact, Fiordiligi's aria, "Per pietà, ben mio" is the most substantial aria in the whole opera in length, vocal virtuosity, and in musical drama.

In contrast to their musical footings, the women and men of *Così fan tutte* were not treated as equals when it came to how they were judged for their infidelities. No matter the intentions of the characters, the result is the same. They all committed acts of infidelities. But only the women asked for forgiveness, were condemned for their acts, and were generalized to lead the audience into thinking that all women were like that. The men were never condemned for their deceitful ways, nor confronted for their change of hearts. The title of the opera translates to “all women are like that” or “thus do all women”, but the attitude of the opera assumes the position of “boys will be boys, but that’s not okay for women”.

Just as Fiordiligi and Dorabella are counterparts of Ferrando and Guglielmo, Despina and Don Alfonso are counterparts of each other. Similar to the musical approach taken to the two pairs of lovers, Despina takes on a much more of a substantial musical role. Both of her arias are incomparably longer and more musically advanced than Don Alfonso’s mariettas, which are actually quite short. Despina takes on extra musical intricacies, as she is a more comic character rooted in *opera buffa*, but her arias follow the traditions of *opera seria*, including vocal ornaments, virtuosos, and 6/8 meters as it is usually prescribed to servants in the genre.

Don Alfonso takes on a much bigger role in the plot, as he is the one to instigate the wager and fleshes out the details of the plan. He is also the only person in the ensemble to not be given a specific motivation for his actions. His reason for causing all of this turmoil amongst the lovers seems to be nothing more than to create a spectacle for himself. Yet he is so dedicated to creating this spectacle that he is willing to take the time to flesh out his plan, and willing to pay not only Despina, his co-conspirator, but also the two men the money that he promised if they were to win, just to see them propose to the women.

Despina, in contrast, is given much more depth in character. The proposal to deceive

Fiorgiligi and Dorabella came with a considerable amount of money, which was only a cherry-on-top for Despina. In fact, Despina is depicted as someone who will do just about anything for money. While many contemporary audiences may see no harm in that, in the eyes of the contemporary audiences of Mozart, money-grubbing was not a favorable character in a woman. But money is not the only motivating factor in agreeing to Don Alfonso's plans. As a servant of the two privileged noblewomen in the opera, she has accrued quite a bit of resentment towards them. In Act I Scene 9, she is seen whipping chocolate for 30 minutes, which Dorabella flings to the ground as she weeps in despair. Coming from a servant who works day and night to cater to noblewomen who have always looked down on her, and will always have more money than she ever will, a desire for a little bit of revenge is seemingly justified.

Despina seems to be an amoral character in the opera. That is not to say that she has bad morals, but to say that she has no morals. When the noblewomen sulk about their men going off to war, she immediately suggests that they find other partners. Her reasoning is that if the men die, the ladies have other options, and even if they don't, she is sure that the men are also unfaithful to them. She approaches the issue of fidelity as she did her revenge toward the ladies: an eye for an eye. This is her way of achieving justice. Through this, she becomes the only character in the opera to suggest that "all *men* are like that" as well. She stands outside of the question of what is virtuous and what is not, and only considers justice, or revenge, depending on whether one sympathizes with her or not.

Not only does Despina agree to take part in Don Alfonso's deceptions, but she becomes a major component of it. She not only takes on disguises as Ferrando and Guglielmo did, but she also draws in Fiordiligi and Guglielmo to be more susceptible to the men, posing as an innocent bystander, and later even participates in the creative process of the wager. She has quick wit that

allows her to quickly find plausible explanations for her disguises when she is discovered as well. Even though she uses her talents for deception, she is still depicted as a person of intelligence and cleverness.

The stark contrast between Despina and the two ladies of the opera raises a question toward Mozart and da Ponte's opinions of women. While Fiordiligi and Dorabella serve as the model of how all women are the same, Despina serves as the one to raise the point that maybe all men are the same as well. If that is so, Mozart and da Ponte might not be making a statement about all women, but women of noble status, thus creating an exaggerated caricature of them.

Directors of opera through the last couple decades have made attempts to make the opera less misogynistic in their views, and amend it to be more palatable to the modern audience's tastes. In a 1989 production in England, Fiordiligi and Dorabella were depicted as more intelligent and aware of the men's deceptions, leading to mixed reviews⁸. Many other directors have attempted to find explanations for the ladies' behavior, attempting to lead the audience into thinking that only a few women were susceptible to those temptations. One of the most successful attempts in transforming *Così fan tutte* for the modern audience is that of Director Joshua Shaw of the Pacific Opera Project with a libretto adapted by himself in titled *COVID fan tutti*.

The title of the opera was transformed to convey the change in the setting and the message of the opera. *Così* changed to *COVID*, referring to the setting of the opera, which is set in a golf course in the year 2020, the beginning of the global COVID-19 pandemic. And more

⁸ Helen Kaye, "These 'Così' Ladies Have Cash but No Class," *Jerusalem: The Jerusalem Post*, 1994.

importantly, *tutte*, the feminine form of the word referring to “all women”, is now changed to *tutti*, referring to “everyone”, instead. This is reinforced in the Andante movement sung by Ferrando, Guglielmo, and Don Alfonso, “Tutti accusan le donne”, which concludes with the title of the opera sung twice. In Shaw’s adaptation, the first iteration remains the same, but Don Alfonso stops to refute it with a simple “no” before the three men sing “Cosi fan tutti” instead. In doing so, Shaw highlights the hypocrisy of condemning women but not the men, and perhaps reinforcing what Despina spoke about.

The most upfront nod to the feminist movement that was apparent in the year 2020 was given by Diana, formerly known as Despina in da Ponte’s libretto, at the end of her aria, “In uomini, in soldati” in Act I Scene 3, when she lifts her apron up to reveal the statement, #MeToo. In this act, Shaw actively positions the opera as a socially-conscious work with Diana in the forefront of changing the narrative of the original libretto in response to the modern audience’s view of women and feminism. This also signals the conscious shift in messaging as the opera distances itself from Mozart and da Ponte’s time period, and establishes its relevance to the modern audience.

As mentioned above, Shaw’s adaptation takes place in a golf course in America, close to April of 2020. The opera is first and foremost designed to account for social distancing protocols enforced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many references were made to safety protocols during that time, and characters were adjusted accordingly, including Fiordiligi and Dorabella, who were renamed Felicia and Gabriella.

In adapting Felicia and Gabriella to the modern audience, Shaw amplifies the distinction between the rich women and Despina, now renamed as Diana. Felicia and Gabriella are no longer depicted as a generalization of all women, but a caricature of the modern audience’s

perception of a stereotyped rich woman. Felicia and Gabriella's despair as they face the departure of their lovers is portrayed as over-exaggerated melodrama, heightening the comedy of the situation. Through their hyper-fixation of these women on their lovers, Shaw also highlights the fact that they have nothing on their mind other than the situation at hand. In addition, when their lovers deliver the news that they will be leaving, the women declare that they will be calling their parents to solve their problem. They take no course of action to remedy their situation, yet rely on their parents' money, again highlighting their sense of entitlement. Their exaggerated melodrama, lack of responsibility, and sense of entitlement are juxtaposed with Diana's particularly blasé attitude and her many responsibilities linked to the golf course setting to accentuate the rich women's caricature.

The utilization of caricatures rather than more realistic characters accomplishes two things. One is that the comedic effects of the opera are heightened through their satirical depiction. The other is that the message of "thus do all women" is quite blurred. The women in Shaw's adaptation that commit adultery are not easily-relatable due to their satirical nature. The opera is no longer a model for how women would behave in the farcical scenario, but a farcical scenario created by equally farcical characters.

The status of Felicia and Gabriella's wealth also stands in contrast to that of the male characters in the opera. Shaw's adaptation is set in a golf club, which is usually associated with financial prosperity because of the cost associated with the sport. Felicia and Gabriella are seen as members of the club with a standing reservation at their favorite table, flaunting their wealth. Don Alfonso, of course, has money to spare as the instigator of the wager and the facilitator of the marriage proposals, and is also seen as a member of the club. But Ferrando and Guglielmo's equivalents, Fernando and Gustavo are no longer at an equivalent status as the women. They are,

instead, caddies at the club that often work for Felicia and Gabriella. Financially, they are much less well-off than the women. In fact, their unstable financial status becomes more apparent in their given reason for their departure. While Ferrando and Guglielmo lied about having to go off to war, Fernando and Gustavo lied about being having been furloughed and being forced to give up their free housing provided by the club for their job.

Fernando and Gustavo's lack of wealth is connected to the fact that they also lack elements in their characters that make them caricatures. Their behaviors individually may fit a modern economic or social archetype for a heightened comical effect, but unlike Felicia and Gabriella, their behavior as a whole does not complete a satire of a certain character. That is coupled with the fact that much of their behavior is in conjunction with their disguises. The men, therefore, are not caricatures as with Shaw's depiction of wealthy women, but are closer to da Ponte's intention of having them model society as a whole. Thus, Fernando and Gustavo's raises the point that Diana may have been right to call them perfidious.

Così fan tutte is undoubtedly one of Mozart's great masterpieces, and is still performed frequently to this day. While scholars still place Mozart in a god-like stature to this date, that does not exempt Mozart from valid criticism. Modern audiences are more conscientious than ever of political and social issues surrounding music and opera. Where problems are present, those problems need to be diagnosed, remedies need to be made, and the audience needs to be aware of the faults present even in great musical figures as Mozart. Scholars must turn a critical eye to all composers, regardless of reputation for genius, and work to perform music by composers while still holding them liable within their historical contexts.

CHAPTER 2

P. TCHAIKOVSKY – VIOLIN CONCERTO IN D MAJOR

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893) lived a life that was quite fitting of the ideals of the Romantic Era. That is to say that he enjoyed a tumultuous love life, complicated relationship with his father, and meteoric rise to fame. His music also lived in the height of the Romantic Era, and remain as some of the most popular music in the modern repertory.

Even though Tchaikovsky was born, raised, educated in Russia, his music is much closer to the styles of Western Europe than that of Russia. In fact, his footing within the Russian musical circles stood diametrically opposed to that of the Russian Mighty Five, who aimed to create music rooted in Russian folk traditions. But unlike many Germanic composers that were prominent before and during Tchaikovsky's time, he was not an expert in form or thematic saturation. His rise to fame and reputation rested mostly in his ability to craft melodies⁹.

As opposed to the concentrated cells of thematic materials presented by composers like Beethoven and Brahms, Tchaikovsky's themes were generally much longer, less neurotic, and often served as the main source of emotional journey presented by the music. Many of them were also heavily influenced by Russian folk and popular music, which was quite present in his life during formative years.

On the other hand, his unique ability to create the most beautiful melodies should not discount his expertise in harmony and orchestration. He was in fact an expertly and versatile composer of many strengths spanning many genres of music including chamber, vocal, symphonic, piano, opera, and ballet music. His catalog of works resemble that of Mozart as they

⁹ Richard Taruskin, *Music in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford University Press, 2005).

both flaunted their compositional genius across numerous genres in both programmatic and absolute music.

Tchaikovsky wrote many works of programmatic nature including concert overtures, ballets, operas, and many others. And in his absolute music, his ability to create magnificent melodies coupled with the highly emotional nature of his music led the audience to incorporate his biographical events as the program. His tumultuous personal life only added to biographical connections with his music. That is especially unsurprising, since Tchaikovsky is perhaps the most famous homosexual composer in existence in the modern repertory. He spent most of his life unhappy due to this very fact as he struggled to keep this fact a secret during his lifetime.

Speculations regarding subject matters of his absolute works are only fueled by Tchaikovsky's brief marriage to Antonina Ivanovna Miliukova in 1877. She pursued him enthusiastically as she fell in love with his talents as a musician rather than the man. Tchaikovsky in his most vulnerable moments agreed to this marriage as a desperate attempt to hide his sexuality. This nine-week marriage eventually led him to attempt suicide by jumping in the river, not to drown but to catch pneumonia, which proved to be unsuccessful. He instead fled to St. Petersburg with his brother, Modest¹⁰.

Tchaikovsky never fully recovered from his tumultuous marriage and struggled with mental health his entire life. Thus, biographical interpretations of his music reach its pinnacle with his Symphony No. 6 in B minor, *Pathétique*. During the compositional process, Tchaikovsky remarked that "The program is subjective through and through, and during my

¹⁰ Harold C. Schonberg, *The Lives of the Great Composers* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1970), 369.

journey I often wept bitterly while composing it in my head”¹¹.

Not long after his marriage debacle, Tchaikovsky began to gain notoriety in domestic and international levels. Even as his Symphony No. 4 were beginning to be performed towards the beginning of 1880, quite badly in most cases, Tchaikovsky only enjoyed mild awareness within musical circles. The turning point for him was the reception of his Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor at the World’s Fair. After this, not only his Piano Concerto, but also his other works started gaining recognition in St. Petersburg, New York, and parts of Germany, elevating him to international fame.

Tchaikovsky struggled with his new-found fame for two main reasons. One was the he was an exceptionally private man, who enjoyed composing mostly in solitude. The fact that he referred to his patron, Nadezhda von Meck, whom he only exchanged letters with, other than the two times that they briefly met, as his best friend is no coincidence. The other was the fact that he achieved his fame only after the death of his father, who always thought that he should pursue music as only a hobby.

The Violin Concerto in D Major was written and planned for performance during this period, when Tchaikovsky was beginning to achieve international notoriety. The premier of this piece was delayed for several years as he struggled to find a suitable soloist. The concerto was originally intended for a premier by Iosif Kotek, who later refused on the grounds that the work was too demanding¹². Leopold Auer, one of the best violinists and pedagogues of his time, was requested by Tchaikovsky, but he turned down the work for the same reason, referring to the

¹¹ Ibid, 376.

¹² Minsoo Chang, “The Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto, Op. 35 in D Major: An Interpretive Study in the First Movement,” *Temple University* (1988).

work as simply unplayable. Auer spread the news of the impossibility of this new violin concerto, leading a couple other violinists to turn down the work as well. The piece was finally premiered in 1881 by Adolf Brodsky with great difficulty with the Vienna Philharmonic, conducted by Hans Richter.

The circumstances surrounding the premier were less than ideal, as the orchestra parts were also quite demanding. Challenges in the orchestral parts combined with the fact that the orchestra and Brodsky only had a single rehearsal before the premier¹³ led to a subpar performance of the concerto as well as a harsh reception by the audience and critics. As many violinists did leading up to the premier of the concerto, most people touted the violin solo part as unplayable and counter-intuitive to violin techniques.

Despite some of the best violinists of its day spreading legends of the concerto's unplayability, the work is now one of the most frequently played violin concertos in the modern repertory. Its place in the modern repertory can be attributed to Leopold Auer, who initially turned down the premier of the concerto. While Auer never performed the work himself, as a pedagogue, he ended up teaching Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto to many of his students, including Mischa Elman and Jascha Heifetz.

Performances and recordings by Auer's students that became legendary violin soloists gave Tchaikovsky a posthumous success on his Violin Concerto. Mischa Elman was one of those that initiated popularity of this piece, most notably through his recording in 1929 with the London Symphony Orchestra, with John Barbirolli as the conductor. Additionally, Jascha

¹³ Lawrence and Elisabeth Hanson, *Tchaikovsky: the Man Behind the Music* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1966).

Heifetz solidified the concerto's standing in the modern repertory through frequent performances handled with his trademark virtuosity¹⁴.

While the virtuosity required to perform Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto was the main reason for its slow success, the work is also challenging for the orchestra and the conductor. One of the biggest challenges for the conductor lies in performing the second movement, which is seldom discussed. The second movement in this three-movement concerto is often overshadowed by the virtuosity and complexity present in the outer movements of the concerto. But Tchaikovsky's genius in his melodic writing is ever present in this seemingly simplistic Canzonetta.

The second movement is appropriately titled as "Canzonetta", which means "little song" in Italian. In the same vein, the movement is in binary form (ABA), with the violin soloist functioning as the equivalent of a singer, and the orchestra as the accompanist. The movement opens with a chorale-like texture in the woodwinds and French horns. The tonality of the opening is rather ambiguous, until the solo violin enters and the piece settles down in G minor. The flute briefly takes over the melody before the theme of the B section is presented in the solo violin again in E-flat Major. And before the piece returns to the original theme, the melody is presented in the string section at large with the solo violin playing the accompaniment in triplet rhythms. When the original theme is presented in the solo violin again, it is with embellishments developed from the initial iteration. Finally, the movement comes to a conclusion with a chorale-like texture again in the woodwinds and French horns, followed by a transitional passage linking the second movement to the third.

¹⁴ Ibid.

Within the movement's simplicity in form and texture, the job of the conductor is as the mediator between the soloist and the orchestra. One approach to conducting this movement is following the more pianistic approach to rubato, especially according to performance practice relating to that of Frederic Chopin. In this approach, the orchestra holds down a constant tempo while the solo violinist is free to take slight liberties in tempo within that frame, which might lead to imprecise vertical alignment between the orchestra and the soloist. Another approach is to subject the orchestra completely to the soloist's decisions in tempo. The orchestra will take liberties in tempo with the soloist with their tempo, but runs the danger of performing the movement in incoherent tempos. Therefore, neither of these approaches in directing is practical for this movement. Rather, the conductor must find the balance between these two approaches to create both cohesive vertical alignment and tempo throughout. Fortunately, the conductor has the advantage of beginning the movement without the soloist in the wind chorale to establish tempo and texture for all that binds the movement together.

While Tchaikovsky boasts wide variety in genres within his compositional catalog as Mozart did, he wrote very few in each category unlike Mozart, leading to the composition of only one violin concerto in his lifetime. His only attempt at a violin concerto was initially received with much hostility, but through the years, it has gained recognition in its lyricism, unique harmonic texture, and inventive use of the violin, earning its prominent place in modern concert repertory.

CHAPTER 3

R. STRAUSS – WIND SYMPHONY NO. 2 “FROHLICHE WERKSTATT”

Richard Strauss (1864-1949) enjoyed quite a prominent career in the turn of the 20th century as a composer and a conductor. He had fame, popularity, and authority that no other composer in the era enjoyed. But his career also drew quite an unusual trajectory, especially towards the end of his life.

Strauss gained notoriety mostly through his tone poems, a genre which was developed by Franz Liszt. Tone poems belonged distinctly to the traditions of the Romantic Era, and have not enjoyed much popularity after Strauss. Strauss's tone poems towards the beginning of his career hint at the operatic maximalist that he was to become through large orchestrations, fantastical musical gestures, virtuosic passages, his narratives rooted in folklore, nature, and his own life¹⁵.

What brought Strauss to the forefront of European music during his time were his operas. As Mozart achieved with his operas, Strauss was able to incorporate both German and Italian traditions in his operas. His two most famous operas, or rather the most infamous operas, *Salome* (1905) and *Elektra* (1909) bore many aspects of a Wagnerian opera, including the use of leitmotifs, large orchestral parts, and a continuous flow to the opera that nearly made it “numberless”, with no distinction between arias and recitatives¹⁶. In those two operas, Strauss's harmonies became the most radical and far-fetched from tonal ideas of Romanticism in his career. His harmonies were rapidly changing and disturbingly chromatic, which were coupled

¹⁵ Harold C. Schonberg, *The Lives of the Great Composers* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1970), 430.

¹⁶ Richard Strauss, *Music in the Early Twentieth Century* (London, Oxford University Press, 2005).

with an even more disturbing plot involving gruesome murders, mad women, and incest. Many thought these works marked a new beginning for Strauss, where he would break from tonal traditions altogether.

After the premiers of his two operas, *Salome* and *Elektra*, at the height of his popularity and influence over European music, Strauss's music takes a turn. While the above-mentioned operas seemed to be musical descendants of Wagnerian operas, the operas that came after started to incorporate a lot more aspects of the Italian verismo operas. Strauss might have been much less conscientious than Mozart when he incorporated Italian traditions into his operas, but the influence was nevertheless apparent.

Strauss began working with Hugo von Hofmannsthal starting with *Elektra*. And it was Hofmannsthal who turned Strauss to the traditions of Italian operas, including *commedia dell'arte*, *opera seria*, *opera buffa*, and the more contemporary verismo. Operas such as *Der Rosenkavalier* (1911) and *Ariadne auf Naxos* (1912) were exemplary of such influences (Gilliam 77). These operas nevertheless contain complex musical materials, but are more conservative in both the subject matter and its use of chromaticism¹⁷.

The incorporation of more Italian influences in his operas also marked a beginning of a new era for Strauss. Instead of stretching tonality further and further, as he seemed to have done with *Salome* and *Elektra*, his works increasingly became less dissonant, more domestic in subject matter, and more incorporative of the traditions that came before him. These changes were starting to appear in his works outside of the opera as well, starting with his *Sinfonia domestica* (1904) and *Eine Alpensinfonie* (1915). While his symphonic poems before these became

¹⁷ Richard Strauss, *Music in the Early Twentieth Century* (London, Oxford University Press, 2005).

progressively more maximalist, these seemed to go back in time to the audience of his time, and were received with hostility upon premier¹⁸.

Despite the harsh reception of these works, his works never turned back to the sensationalist and maximalist styles incorporated in his earlier works. Instead, he dove deeper into his studies of the composers that came before him, and started writing pieces that paid homage to them. Some of the works in this category included a Dance Suite from Keyboard Pieces by François Couperin (1923), which he later turned into a ballet, Symphony for Winds No. 2 in Eb, “Frohliche Werkstatt” (1945)¹⁹, and more famously, *Metamorphosen* for 23 solo strings (1945) based on a theme from Ludwig van Beethoven’s Funeral March from his Symphony No. 3, “Eroica”²⁰.

His Symphony for Winds No. 2, “Frohliche Werkstatt”, or translated to “Happy Workshop”, and *Metamorphosen* comes at a strange time in Strauss’s lifetime, and a momentous time in world history, the conclusion of World War II. Strauss is a subject of much controversy for his standing with the Nazi regime. He was undoubtedly at the pinnacle of cultural status when the Nazis were taking over Germany, which caused quite a headache for the new government. Strauss chose to continue residing in Germany, and to the Nazis, exemplified German superiority in the arts, yet he also continued to collaborate with a Jewish librettist, Stefan Zweig in his opera *Die schweigsame Frau*. He opted to stay silent in political matters, and

¹⁸ Harold C. Schonberg, *The Lives of the Great Composers* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1970), 430.

¹⁹ Hanudel, “Wind Sonatinas,” *American Record Guide*, (2014): 169.

²⁰ Kristiansen, Morten, and Joseph E. Jones, *Richard Strauss in Context* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 241.

wished to remain distanced from both the Nazi regime and their opposing powers²¹.

Even despite Strauss's desire to remain outside of political matters during his time, his works were still subject to political interpretations. *Metamorphosen* is strongly associated with the fall of Munich during war times, and many have argued that the piece was an elegy to commemorate the "Bavarian Pompeii"²². Regardless of Strauss's political intentions in this piece, it remains one of his greatest works of all time, and a musical lens into his psyche. Strauss treated his Wind Symphony No. 2, "Frohliche Werkstatt" in a different light from *Metamorphosen*. He considered the word "Werkstatt" or "Workshop" quite literally in interpreting his work, and referred to the symphony as a "workshop work"²³, a technical work for the players and the conductor. He even inscribed the work with an opus posthumous to discourage public performances. The symphony was nevertheless premiered towards the end of Strauss's life in Winterthur Musikkollegium, directed by Hermann Scherchen in Switzerland, with Strauss in attendance.

"Frohliche Wekstatt" is still a great representation of Strauss's musical styles and pursuits in his last few years. Just as he incorporated elements from Beethoven in *Metamorphosen*, Strauss emphasizes his dedication to his musical idol with the inscription on the title page, "To the spirit of the divine Mozart at the end of a life full of gratitude."

As Strauss wished, the piece is rarely performed, especially compared to Strauss's more popular works. But the piece is filled with the charms of Classical Era wind symphonies, as well

²¹ Harold C.Schonberg, *The Lives of the Great Composers* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1970), 435.

²² Bryan Randolph Gilliam, *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and His Work* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1992) 191.

²³ Hanudel, "Wind Sonatinas," *American Record Guide*, (2014): 169.

as harmonic complexities of Strauss handled with magnificent compositional control by a composer towards the end of a great career, creating an engaging work worth performing and listening to.

Strauss contributed four major works to the wind ensemble literature, two as a youth and two as an aging composer. His four-movement Suite for Winds in B-flat Major, Opus 4 and the beautiful single movement Serenade, Opus 7 in the same key as this Wind Symphony, came when he was just eighteen²⁴. The late Strauss's "Frohliche Wekstatt" has a companion Sonatina No. 1 for Winds in F Major, subtitled "The Invalid's Workshop," and carrying the same Opus Posthumus²⁵.

"Frohliche Wekstatt" is written for two flutes, two oboes, three clarinets, basset horn, bass clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, and four horns. The piece is comprised of four movements, following the structure of a Classical Era symphony.

Strauss's wind symphonies are the most closely associated with Mozart's wind serenades, which is only fortified by his inscription on the front page of his second wind symphony. They bear the most resemblance to one of Mozart's greatest works for winds, the Gran Partita, which was premiered in 1784 for a benefit concert organized by the clarinetist Anton Stadler²⁶. The Gran Partita, also known as Serenade No. 10 for winds in B-flat Major, K. 361 is written for thirteen instruments including two oboes, two clarinets, two basset horns, two bassoons, four

²⁴ Michael Carter, "Classical Hall of Fame: R. Strauss - Serenade for Winds in E[flat]; Suite for 13 Winds in B[flat]; Sonatinas: No. 1 in F, 'From an Invalid's Workshop'; No. 2 in E[flat], 'The Happy Workshop,'" *Tenafly, N. J.: Fanfare, Inc.* (2009).

²⁵ Kristiansen, Morten, and Joseph E. Jones, *Richard Strauss in Context* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 268.

²⁶ Colin Lawson, "Mozart: Serenade in B Flat, K. 361, 'Gran Partita,'" *Early Music* 18, no. 2 (1990).

horns, and a double bass or contrabassoon. The instrumentation is quite similar to that of Strauss's wind symphony, especially the heavy incorporation of the clarinet, including the bass horn, which were relatively new inventions during Mozart's time.

Both Mozart's *Gran Partita* and Strauss's "Frohliche Werkstatt" span about 50 minutes each, but Mozart's work is in seven relatively short movements, while Strauss wrote four longer movements.

Strauss's 15-minute first movement is in triple meter, decorated with a plethora of musical themes. The first theme heard in two oboes, clarinet in C, and horn in Eb in unison, and the first melodic interval heard is a tritone, creating a rather jarring atmosphere before the piece settles down to the tonic chord. The themes incorporated in this movement are mostly longer melodies, resembling those in Mozart's symphonic works, especially in his later years, rather than smaller, more nuclear thematic ideas used by Beethoven. Yet the frequency of iterations as well as the frequent modulations and development upon the theme is more reminiscent of Beethoven in his utilization of thematic materials. The movement is made virtuosic by frequent syncopated rhythms, simultaneous iterations of duple and triple rhythms, and frequent changes in tempo throughout the course of the movement.

The second movement begins with a familiar tempo and rhythm that resembles the beginning of one of Strauss's more famous tone poems, *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks*, both with an eighth-note pick up in a 4/8 meter descending into the downbeat in a leisurely tempo. But unlike the tone poem, this movement is a graceful homage to the classical era, heightened by an accompaniment that frequently imitates bird calls. As the shortest movement of the piece, the *Andante* provides a sense of relief and light-heartedness to Strauss's grand scheme. In this aspect, it resembles the function of many of Mozart's works, wherein which he uses internal

dance movements to achieve the same effects.

The third movement is perhaps the most resemblant of the Mozartian texture. This Menuet is graceful and joyous, containing robust, clean, and crisp rhythms that are contrasted with more rounded and elegant triplet rhythms. Specifically, the rhythmic materials resemble the second movement, Menuetto, of the Gran Partita very closely. Strauss's frequent use of the dotted-eighth and sixteenth rhythm in the beginning of the piece is widely utilized in the first part of Gran Partita's menuetto, which also re-appears in Trio II of the same movement. Additionally, in Trio II, the grounding rhythm of the section is in the triplets, which trade off between different instruments. The same effect is created in Strauss's menuetto in his utilization of triplets throughout the movement.

Strauss originally intended the final movement as a stand-alone piece, which might have contributed to its length and thoroughness. The movement is comprised of opening in Andante and the main body in Allegro. The Andante opens with a dark and ominous theme and texture, with occasional glimpses into the more flamboyant section that follows. In a way, the rhythmic material of this section serves as the culmination of the movements that came beforehand, as it frequently alternates from quadruple, triple, and duple rhythms.

The main body of the final Allegro closely resembles that of the finale of Mozart's Gran Partita, including the opening rhythmic material comprised of four sixteenth notes and two eighth notes, although Mozart's is displaced by a use of an incomplete measure. But while Mozart's finale retains that rhythmic as the basis for the whole movement, Strauss further incorporates rhythmic elements from the Andante opening, alternating between quadruple, triple, and duple rhythms throughout the piece. Both are able to achieve great momentum within their music leading to a fantastic conclusion.

Whether Strauss was satisfied with “Frohliche Werkstatt” or not, the piece is still a great culmination of his compositional technique, scholarship and dedication to Germanic composers prior to him, and his knowledge in orchestration. The piece was not only a great homage to the music of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, but also a testament to Strauss’s genius.

CHAPTER 4

I. STRAVINSKY – *L'HISTOIRE DU SOLDAT*

As Richard Strauss's popularity was waning following the premiers of *Salome* and *Elektra* as he started to write with more conservative harmonic materials, Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971) took the helm of the course of European music as the leader of the modernist movement. Approaching his music with precision and intellect in creating texture and sonority, he was the ultimate force against Romanticism.

Stravinsky in his developmental years was in no way a prodigy. He was gifted in music, but his later successes as one of the best composers alive during his time was in no way foreshadowed in his early years. In fact, he remained as a student of law in university until the age of 23, when he began to study composition seriously with Rimsky-Korsakov. Still, the works he wrote while in Rimsky-Korsakov's tutelage were not much more than student works modeled after Russian composers of the past²⁷.

After the death of Rimsky-Korsakov in 1908, Stravinsky became a musical celebrity overnight upon the premier of his ballet, *Firebird* (1910). Immediately following *Firebird*, he solidified himself as a prominent figure in European music with his next ballet, *Petrushka* (1911). And of course, he conjured up a storm in the European music circles with his next work, *Le Sacre du printemps* (1913), also known as *The Rite of Spring*. All three of these ballets are in the Russian nationalistic style, incorporating the ideals of the Russian Mighty Five. They all involved large orchestras akin to ones of the maximalists that were active during this era.

Following the musical sensations that were his three ballets, Stravinsky instead turned to

²⁷ Harold C. Schonberg, *The Lives of the Great Composers* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1970), 482.

smaller ensembles and concise writing in the Neoclassical style. Some of this is attributed to decreased musical performances and resources during World War I, as large orchestras and management thereof became near impossible. Music of his Neoclassical period had attributes to Germanic and Russian music from the Baroque and Classical Eras, including dance rhythms he frequently employed in his music, but they were nevertheless presented with much compositional ego and the unique voice of Stravinsky.

L'Histoire du soldat (1918) is one of the most widely performed works from Stravinsky's Neoclassical Era, and is a theatrical work that was intended to "be read, played and danced" (Nam). The instrumentation calls for a violin, double bass, clarinet, bassoon, cornet or trumpet, trombone, and percussion, and the script calls for a dancer and three actors as Joseph, the devil, and the narrator.

L'Histoire du Soldat follows an interaction between Joseph, a Russian soldier, and the devil. The scene opens on Joseph marching toward his hometown on leave from his duties. He carries with him his lucky St. Joseph medallion, a mirror, a picture of his fiancé, and his violin. Joseph plays his violin to rest his soul when the devil appears in front of him. He convinces Joseph to sell his violin to him in exchange for a book of events that will happen in the future. Joseph agrees to the deal, and they spend three days together with Joseph teaching the devil how to play the violin, and the devil teaching Joseph how to decipher the contents of the book.

Upon Joseph's return to his hometown, the townspeople run away in terror at the sight of Joseph. Not only that, he also finds his fiancé with her husband and children. He is confused and enraged when he finds out that the three days that he spent with the devil were not three days, but three years. Joseph confronts the devil about this, but the devil simply calms Joseph down and reminds him about the book. Joseph quickly acquires a great deal of wealth using the contents of

the book, but soon realizes that he is not fulfilled.

Joseph mourns his loss of love, friends, and family and regrets his deal with the devil. The devil, seeing Joseph in agony, appears in front of him disguised as an old female peddler. He presents a few items for sale, including a lucky medallion, a mirror, a photo of a woman, and a violin. Joseph hastily purchases the violin, but he can no longer make a sound on the violin. Enraged, he violently throws the violin away, tears the book in pieces, and leaves his hometown.

While staying at an inn, Joseph hears the news that the king's daughter is ill, and whoever can cure her will be given her hand in marriage. At once, Joseph marches to the palace, where he meets the devil yet again. He loses all of his money to the devil in a card game, and he becomes free of the devil's curse, and he is able to play the violin again. Using his violin, Joseph miraculously cures the princess of her illness and defeats the devil.

Joseph and the princess have found love in each other, but the devil warns that Joseph shall not leave the castle, or he will re-possess Joseph. But years later, Joseph is tempted by the idea of having both his mother and his wife in his life and crosses the frontier post. The devil is found waiting for Joseph, as he turns back to find his wife now gone. The plot contains a rather conspicuous moral that one cannot have two good things, and one must compromise to keep one instead.

While the work is in the Neoclassical style, the instrumentation resembles that found in jazz, which Stravinsky was newly discovering in his compositional studies. What he knew of jazz was not from listening, but from scores of jazz works, therefore the rhythmic styles that define jazz is almost entirely missing in Stravinsky's works. Instead, jazz finds its influence in his instrumentation and subtle harmonic language. In this case, the use of the double bass alongside the percussion, which are placed next to each other on stage as jazz ensembles do, as

well as the heavy utilization of brass instruments.

L'Histoire du soldat is made up of fifteen small movements, each lasting no more than a few minutes. Each movement is best described as a miniature, incorporating a single texture and style. Themes are rarely developed throughout each movement, but they are uniquely stylized to starkly contrast with other movements. Some of these styles include chorales, marches, and dance movements such as the tango, waltz, and ragtime. Considering Stravinsky's highly intellectual approach to music, incorporation of these styles can be perceived as studies in different styles ranging from nineteenth-century opera, Lutheran chorales, and contemporary dance movements. And these stylized approach to each movement is able to drive the drama of the work forward without rapid and concentrated development of each theme.

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