

Italian Style Sheets



Background

1) Giulio Caccini (c.1546-1618)

2) Biographical Information

- Florentine singer, composer, voice teacher, and lutenist.
- Born in Trivoli, in the transition between the Renaissance and Baroque eras.
- Studied music in Rome, before moving to Florence, where he was a salaried court musician, as well as under the patronage of the Medici family.
- Considered to be “the first Florentine composer,” Caccini was a founding member of the “Florentine Camerata,” a group of intellectuals, musicians, philosophers, who met to discuss art and music, and their creative ideals. As a group, they influenced stylistic and cultural musical change during their time. Some of their musical ideals and changes were:
 - Music was meant to serve the text. All elements, whether melodic, harmonic, or rhythmic, were meant to heighten the textual emotion and drama.

- Songs were often written in monody, with a single voice above chordal accompaniment.
- Standardization of ornamentation nomenclature and notation.
- Published “Le Nuovo Musiche” in 1602. This was a collection of songs in the Florentine Camerata’s style of vocal music. This work was also a manual for vocal pedagogy and served to memorialize the Florentine Camerata’s specific notation for ornamentation.

3) Associated poets: Giovanni Battista Guarini, Ottavia Rinuccini, Francesco Cini

Stylistic Elements

1) Vocal Line

- Follows Florentine Camerata style – “style recitativo”
- Focus on textual and dramatic elements. All of Caccini’s music was meant to elicit an emotional response, or to convey the meaning within the text.
- The melodic line typically features specific ornamentation, as is dictated by “Le Nuovo Musiche”
- Can be technically challenging, featuring coloratura passages which require technical skill and a strong sense of the vocal mechanism.
- Always superior to the accompaniment, following the monody style.
- Syllabic stress in spoken words was considered and applied to the text setting, in order to more clearly convey the text.
- Due to the symbolic detail of his pieces, as well as the specific ornamentation, Caccini works should be assigned to intermediate students, bearing slightly

towards the advanced side of intermediate, so they can accurately capture the original artistic intent of the work.

2) Accompaniment

- Written for a continuo instrument, to be realized by the accompanist - only the bass line and figured bass notation was specified, while chords were filled in accordingly by the accompanist's intuition and knowledge. A good lutenist would complement the vocal line when appropriate.
- Meant to be chordal, so as to not overshadow the voice.
- Use of nonconventional harmonic progressions when the harmony served a meaningful purpose for the text and story.

Songs Studied

1) Amarilli, Mia Bella (1601)

- Translation: Amaryllis, my lovely one, / do you not believe, o my heart's sweet desire, / That you are my love? / Believe it thus: and if fear assails you, / Doubt not its truth. / Open my breast and see written on my heart: / Amaryllis, Amaryllis, Amaryllis, / Is my beloved.
- This piece comes from *Le Nuovo Musiche*, the collection of songs Caccini published in the early seventeenth century. It is a perfect example of Florentine Camerata style, as Caccini entirely fixates on the emotion of the piece, rather than flourish-filled vocal lines or accompaniments. Starting with the accompaniment, it is written in continuo style, to be realized for performance. The bassline is incredibly simple, rarely having shorter notes than quarter notes, as it is comprised mostly of half notes. Harmonically, the piece is set in a minor mode.

This makes sense for the piece's emotion, as according to the text, it is a solemn confession of love to the speaker's beloved Amarilli. Therefore, the minor key and gentle dynamic draw the audience in, to hear this intimate soliloquy. The melodic line is equally simple, intensifying later in the piece, to depict the speaker's passionate love for Amarilli. This melodic aspect is specifically notable on the repeated uttering of her name; the text "Amarilli is my beloved" is the most melodically intricate. In the final line specifically, it almost feels as though the speaker is caught up in their own love, getting carried away with passion, depicted through rhythmic complexity and ornamentation.

2) Tu Ch'hai Le Penne, Amore (date unknown)

- Translation: You who have wings, Love, / And know how to spread them in flight, / Pray, fly swiftly / To where my heart is. / And if you do not know the way, / My sighs will show you. / Then go: you will find it / Between the veil and the white breast, / Or in the sweet serenity of the luminous eyes, / or among the beautiful golden tresses / of my sweet treasure.
- As before, this piece fits into the style of the Florentine Camerata and stile recitativo. Based on the text, the speaker is imploring her lover, cupid, to come to her side and be with her. The minor mode is again used, but in this context, coupled with a driving compound meter, it reinforces an urgent tone, which lines up dramatically. The melodic line is not very complex, though it is consistent, and is certainly the focal point, sailing above the accompaniment throughout. Harmonically, it is also fairly straightforward. All of these simplicities further the plain nature of the text; it is an urgent call or demand, therefore, there is not time

for flashy coloratura passages. This song is strophic, which allows for ornamentation, though the piece moves at such a tempo that may make this difficult. In terms of Caccini pieces, this work may be better suited for an average intermediate singer, who can dig into the meat of the piece, without needing to connect to a large amount of symbolism. That being said, there is room for nuance in this piece, which can be unearthed by a more mature singer. Such nuance includes the textual stresses, in order to portray the text as articulately as possible.



Background

- 1) Barbara Strozzi (1619-1664)
- 2) Biographical Information
 - Known for her virtuosic singing and self-accompaniment on the theorbo.
 - Giulio Strozzi, her father, was a nobleman who was amongst the founders of the “Accademia Degli Unisoni,” an artistic society similar in function to the Florentine Camerata.

- Her musical patronage was most likely derived from her life as a courtesan, essentially a higher-class escort in seventeenth century Italy. Though she remained unmarried, she mothered three children, fathered by a member of the Unisoni organization.
 - Despite her station in life, most of her music was published during her lifetime, and has survived to this day, making her a relatively rare example of an early female musician and composer.
 - She also wrote for multiple voices, though most of her work was for solo soprano voice, accompanied by continuo instrument. She is also the composer of multi-sectional cantatas.
 - She was primarily an entertainer, earning her patronage by putting on gripping performances, specifically for Unisoni members. This strongly influenced her musical style.
- 3) Associated poets: many of her texts were by anonymous poets. She also set texts penned by her father, Giulio Strozzi, as well as other popular poets of the time.

Stylistic Elements

1) Vocal Line

- Use of prosody, or the fusion of rhythm and melody for the setting of the text, honoring the pulse and inflection of the lyrics.
- Strong use of word painting and musical symbolism.
- Primarily a performer, a lot of her works feature incredibly musical wit and suggestiveness, which was necessary to maintain the attention of her audience.

- As a virtuosic soprano, Strozzi accordingly composed her vocal lines to be exciting and flamboyant.
- Strozzi utilizes expressive elements freely, such as dynamics or tempo, in order to reach a maximum for expression and excitement.
- Her music varies in demandingness. Therefore, her repertoire should be chosen selectively, as some can be assigned to younger voices, while others require technical prowess in order to perform well.
- Theatrical nature is a key indicator of Strozzi's compositions.

2) Accompaniment

- Strozzi utilizes harmonies in order to advance her storytelling, while also maintaining audience engagement.
- Emotional changes are often punctuated by meter changes or modulations.
- Meant to complement the voice. As a frequent performer of her own music, accompanying herself, her accompaniments were utilized to accent the vocal line, while increasing the entertainment value of her performance, to secure more patronage.

Songs Studied

1) Amor, Non Dormir Più (Alt. Amor, Non Dormiglione)

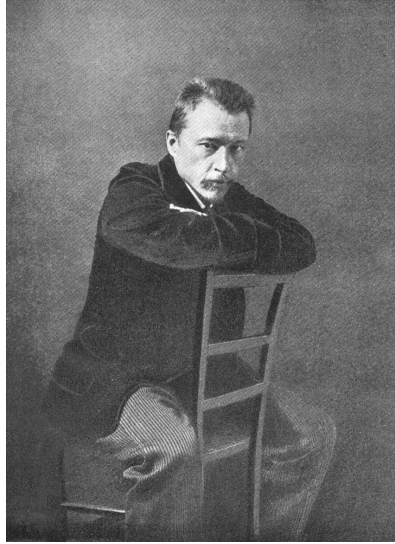
- Translation: Love, don't sleep anymore! / Up, up, wake up now; / For while you sleep, / My delights sleep, and laments are awake. / Don't be a good-for-nothing, Love! / Arrows, flame, / Arrows, get up, get up, / Flame, up, up! / Whether lazy or slow, / You have no feelings, / Stupid Love, Cowardly Love! / Ah, when I will be at peace / Within my own passion, / Then sleep, Love: I won't need you!

- This piece exemplifies Strozzi's style. The accompaniment is simple, but expands upon the voice, complementing and supporting it in a delightful way. It doesn't pull focus but acts as a harmonic embellishment for the piece. It is in continuo style, using a simple notated bassline and figured bass as the groundwork for what becomes realized by the accompanist as a unique and supportive backing part for the work. This piece characterizes her style through sectional contrast. In between two iterations of the A section, there is a musically unique B section. This is done for multiple reasons. First, the contrasting section contributes to the entertainment value of the piece, which is particularly important for Strozzi's compositions. Additionally, it illustrates the temporary change of heart experienced by the speaker. Initially, the speaker implores Love to wake up and come to her. However, when Love fails to do so, she renounces Love. Ultimately, the speaker returns to the imploring A section. These emotional changes, which were frequent in Strozzi's works, are also heightened by the melodic line. The melody, throughout the piece, is inconsistent and unpredictable, adding to the characterization of the speaker as someone lost in love, uncertain how to proceed. Especially in the A section, the tonal center is offset occasionally by non-diatonic melody notes, upsetting the balance and predictability of the piece. All of these point back to Strozzi's performance roots; each of these aspects contributing to the song's appeal to an audience, which was a primary aim for her compositions.

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German Style Sheets



Background

- 1) Hugo Wolf (1860 – 1903)
- 2) Biographical Information
 - a. Wolf is known as an Austrian Composer, despite being born in Slovenia
 - b. Though he attended the Vienna Conservatory, he is largely a self-taught composer, due to his being kicked out at the age of seventeen, due to comments made to the director about his dissatisfaction with his education.¹
 - c. Strongly influenced by Richard Wagner, receiving the nickname the “Wagner of the *Lied*,” due to his stylistic similarities
 - d. Largely prolific, composing around 250 songs in his lifetime, and composing one opera, leaving a second unfinished
 - i. His work was characterized by periods of intense productivity, in similar manner to *Lieder* composer Robert Schumann
 - ii. Around 200 of his songs were composed in three years, from 1888 – 1891
 1. This was followed by two years of depression without composition

- 3) Major Works – *Liederbuchen* – Wolf composed five collections of *Lieder*, all of which contained texts by the same poet, or translations of texts from similar languages:
- a. *Möricke Lieder* – poetry by Eduard Möricke
 - b. *Goethe Lieder* – poetry by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
 - c. *Eichendorff Lieder* – poetry by Joseph von Eichendorff
 - d. *Spanisches Liederbuch* – translations of Spanish and Portuguese poems
 - e. *Italienisches Liederbuch* – translations of Italian poems by Paul Heyse
- 4) Associated poets: Eduard Möricke, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Joseph von Eichendorff, Paul Heyse, Emanuel Geibel,

Stylistic Elements

- 1) General Musical Style
- a. He has been credited with composing “the caviar of *Lieder* music” (Kimball).
 - b. Everything in his music is compositionally deliberate. He merges text and music with incredible specificity.
 - c. The meter tends to be consistent, so long as it contributes to the text depiction.
 - d. As a Romantic Era composer, his tonality tends to be shifting, as various key centers are explored throughout the piece, in accordance with his reflection of the poetry being set. The harmony is chromatic, not following typical functional expectations established throughout the Baroque and Classical Eras.
 - e. Compositions envelop the transitional time between the *Lieder* of Schubert and Schumann, which established the form, and the compositions of Wagner, his primary influence, as music evolved deeply into the profoundly intellectual and dramatic works characteristic of the Romantic Era.

- f. His music contains very specific performance directions, including tempo fluctuation marks and dynamic instructions, so that his desired effect can be exactly executed upon performance.
- g. Dubbed “the master of the miniature,” Wolf’s compositions often bear toward the shorter side. He is known for effective and intricate meaningful text depiction.

2) Vocal Line

- a. The melodic line tends to be complex, angular, and oblique, in order to best emphasize with the textual meaning.
- b. It often contains crucial jumps and intervals, to bring out textual meaning.
- c. Wolf’s ranges tend to be semi-daunting, as range is used to dramatize heights of the poetry and demand a singer with proficient control of a decent range.
- d. Lines tend to require an intermediate or advance singer in order to perform with the proper nuance and expression.
- e. He uses primarily syllabic setting, spreading syllables throughout moving lines.
- f. His music is often somewhat through-composed, though it often will have a section restated at the end of the piece. That being said, the melodies seem through-composed due to their inconsistent nature.
- g. His prosody is parallel to Schubert, as his composition is nuanced to blend the text intricate with the music.

3) Accompaniment

- a. Often, his accompaniments are a blend of supportive and independent elements. They bear on the side of supportive, however, in order to establish tonality changes and consistent rhythmic pulse.

- b. Some pieces contain intricate introductions or postludes, created to achieve a desired effect consistent with his depiction of the poetry being set.
- c. The left hand contains repetitive rhythmic drone figures, both for textual representation, in order to set the scene, as well as for musical function, to maintain metric consistency throughout the piece.
- d. These piano parts require a skilled pianist to accurately perform.
- e. The texture can vary, depending on the poetry being set to music.

Songs Studied

- 1) “Verborgenheit,” from the *Möricke Lieder*
 - a. Title Translation: “Seclusion”
 - b. Translation: Let, O world, O let me be! / Do not tempt with gifts of love, / Let this heart keep to itself / Its rapture, its pain! / I do not know why I grieve, / It is unknown sorrow; / Always through a veil of tears / I see the sun’s beloved light. / Often, I am lost in thought, / And bright joy flashes / Through the oppressive gloom, / Bringing rapture to my breast. / Let, O world, O let me be! / Do not tempt with gifts of love, / Let this heart keep to itself / Its rapture, its pain!
 - c. As the title and following poem suggests, this *Lied* represents the speaker’s feelings of isolation and loneliness, as well as their existential plea to be left in such solitary. To achieve this, the piece opens with a brief chromatic accompaniment introduction, which establishes the feeling of being lost deep in thought. Though it remains in a major mode, the chromatic harmonies leave the audience with a sense of unease, foreshadowing the theatrical heights to come throughout the piece, as the emotion and drama builds deeper into the poem. This

piece strongly aligns with Wolf's style, with his characteristic setting of the text in a disjunct syllabic line, in a consistent meter, with various intervallic leaps, and a decently wide range, expanding at the height of the song. It is a fairly high intermediate/advanced vocal line, filled with expressive nuance. The accompaniment is also characteristic of his style, acting primarily as accompaniment support, with a consistent ostinato rhythm in the left hand, maintaining the metric pulse. As earlier stated, the harmony, especially notable in the accompaniment, is incredibly chromatic, modulating to foreign key centers in alignment with the highs and lows of the poetry. It utilizes a wide portion of the piano's range. It would be considered a piece for an advanced pianist, due to its wide chordal voicings, technically challenging voice-leading in the accompaniment, tonal excursions, and specific instructions for performance. The piece ends with a sectional restatement of the opening, fully achieving the effect of "seclusion," by isolating the dramatic height of the piece within the bookends of the identical beginning and ending sections, which embody a colder, sparser, more neutral contemplation.

2) "Nun Wandre, Maria," from the *Italienisches Liederbuch*

- a. Title Translation: "Keep Going Now, Mary"
- b. Translation: Keep going now, Mary, keep going my dear. / I hear roosters crowing; the township is near. / Keep going my dear one, my precious gem: / we'll soon be arriving in Bethlehem. / And there you will lie down and sleep free from fear. / I hear roosters crowing; the township is near. / I know it, Mary, your strength is failing. / You find your pains are oh too compelling. / Keep on! We're

sure to find shelter here. / Roosters are crowing; the township is near. /// Mary, I wish you were safely delivered. / To hear that good news what would I not give? / I'd even give our donkey here. / The roosters are crowing; the place is near.

- c. This piece depicts the musical journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem, during the biblical account of the birth of Jesus. This piece's vocal line leans fairly linear, only incorporating larger leaps during the height of the text. However, this melodic treatment is still incredibly chromatic, as per his style. The meter features a single change from 4/4 to 6/4, in order to emphasize the pains of which the speaker sings about over the metric change, showing her dwindling strength. The melody is syllabic and could be performed by an intermediate singer with a strong ear, and a decent range, to accommodate the peaks of the song. The piano is especially interesting in this *Lied*, as it depicts the dunes and hills over which the couple are travelling. It functions supportively, but has a more interactive and independent role, acting as the moving scenery through which the couple is travelling. The introduction established the chromatic harmony and illustrative movement in the right hand by thirds, supported by the ostinato rhythm in the left hand. This format is consistent throughout the entire piece, from the beginning, through the exploratory sections of the piece, where harmony and tonal centers are skewed and exploited, all the way to the completion of the vocal line on the parallel major chord, the tonality which closes out the piece. An incredibly skilled pianist is demanded by the difficulty of the accompaniment part. This piece is nearly as illustrative as a movie, evoking strong imagery of the journey undertaken by Mary and Joseph, the subject of the poetic work Wolf sought to set.



Background

1) Franz Schubert (1797 – 1828)

2) Biographical Information

- a. Schubert was an Austrian composer, notable for his prolificacy, specifically within the German *Lieder* tradition. He spent most of his career living and composing in Vienna.
- b. Schubert was a student of the fairly renowned composer, Antonio Salieri.
- c. His compositional abundance and prowess began to show around age 16²
 - i. In 1814 he began to compose songs, string quartets, piano pieces, and even larger works, including symphony and an opera in three acts.
 - ii. His first *Lieder*, “Gretchen am Spinnrade” and “Erlkönig,” were composed the following year, while he was merely 18 years old.
- d. Throughout his lifetime, Schubert set over 600 songs to music. He is synonymous with the “song cycle,” a collection of songs by the same poet, bound by recurring thematic content, meant to be performed consecutively.
- e. Though he only lived for 29 years, his life was defined by composition.
- f. “I have come into this world for no purpose but to compose” – Franz Schubert

- g. Schubert often refused patronage, as he was incredibly adamant about his compositions, and refused to compromise his artistic ideas for funding.
- 3) Major Works – Song Cycles, with poetry by Wilhelm Müller
- a. *Die Schöne Müllerin* (The Miller's Beautiful Daughter)
 - b. *Winterreise* (Winter's Journey)
- 4) Associated poets:
- a. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Wilhelm Müller³

Stylistic Elements

- 1) General Musical Style
- a. Due to the sheer quantity of his works, it is possible to find a vast array of pedagogical functions from his repertoire; both vocal lines and accompaniments exist across a wide spectrum of degree of difficulty. It is feasible to find music by Schubert for a novice vocalist; meanwhile, Schubert's compositions comprise a significant portion of the repertoire of the professional vocalist. His accompaniments can be viewed in a similar perspective.
 - b. Schubert is known as the peak of prosody. His merging of text and music is highly skilled and creates the foundation for his entire compositional style. This is very characteristic of the *Lieder* tradition.
 - c. Alive during the early Romantic Era, Schubert's harmonic structures exemplify the transitional period from Classical to Romantic. On the whole, they sound fairly diatonic, yet they utilize chromatic harmonization when there is a definitive reason, which enhances the textual depiction.
 - d. Time and meter tend to remain fairly consistent throughout his compositions.

2) Vocal Line

- a. Schubert masterfully composed singable and memorable melodies with his vocal treatments, expertly blending text and melodic line, while treating them as equals, without sacrificing the musicality of the line for the textual expression.
- b. His lines tend to be syllabic in setting of the text.
- c. The vocal line sits in a fairly manageable range, reaching extremes occasionally, only with direct purpose serving the text and story being set to music.
- d. He uses strophic form frequently, recycling melodic content through different text, bringing a consistency to the musical work.

3) Accompaniment

- a. The piano becomes incredibly illustrative in Schubert's musical works.
 - i. It is often treated as a character, scenery, or critical concept to the story and poetry of the *Lied*.
 - ii. This is done through the careful construction of a representative part.
- b. Narrative and representative abilities are achieved through repeating ostinato patterns and recurring motifs, which solidify the dramatic function of the piano.
- c. The entire range of the piano is frequently used, drawing upon its orchestral capabilities. Schubert often treats the piano as a miniature orchestra, creating accompaniments with nuance and deliberateness in order to successfully blend it with the poetry and the vocal melodic line.
- d. Accompaniment parts are constructed to partner with the voice, acting as independent figures, but constructed in such a way that they remain supportive of the vocal line, allowing the singer to remain the musical focus of the *Lied*.

Songs Studied

1) “Erlkönig”

- a. Title Translation: “The Elf King”
- b. Translation: Who rides so late through the night and wind? / It is the father with his child. / He has the boy in his arms; / he holds him safely, he keeps him warm. / ‘My son, why do you hide your face in fear?’ / ‘Father, can you not see the Erlking? / The Erlking with his crown and tail?’ / ‘My son, it is a streak of mist.’ / ‘Sweet child, come with me. / I’ll play wonderful games with you. / Many a pretty flower grows on the shore; / my mother has many a golden robe.’ / ‘Father, father, do you not hear / what the Erlking softly promises me?’ / Calm, be calm, my child: / the wind is rustling in the withered leaves.’ / ‘Won’t you come with me, my fine lad? / My daughters shall wait upon you; / my daughters lead the nightly dance, / and will rock you, and dance, and sing you to sleep.’ / ‘Father, father, can you not see / Erlking’s daughters there in the darkness?’ / ‘My son, my son, I can see clearly: / it is the old grey willows gleaming.’ / ‘I love you, your fair form allures me, / and if you don’t come willingly, I’ll use force.’ / ‘Father, father, now he’s seizing me! / The Erlking has hurt me!’ / The father shudders, he rides swiftly, / he holds the moaning child in his arms; / with one last effort he reaches home; / the child lay dead in his arms.
- c. As one of the first songs composed by Franz Schubert, “Erlkönig” is incredibly emblematic of his style. The text, a poem by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, is very narrative, depicting the story of a father and son, riding on horseback, racing against death, as the ill son runs out of time. The father attempts to remain calm,

while the son speaks of “The Elf King” approaching and beckoning him, which the father dismisses as illness-spawned insanity. Though it is uncertain which character is correct, the son ultimately loses his life, dying in his father’s arms. Schubert masterfully constructing his musical setting of the narrative. Beginning with a piano introduction, the accompaniment features consistent driving triplet figures in the minor mode, setting the dire tone of the work. Additionally, it creates a galloping pulse, as though it is the horse carrying the father and son. The harmony throughout the piece explores various key centers, characteristic of the Romantic period, though the modulations and relationships Schubert uses to arrive at these key centers are fairly functional, showing the lingering essence of the Classical music which preceded Schubert. Throughout the piece, the piano supports the vocal line, sometimes breaking away for transitional interludes. The song also ends with a punctuated harmonic resolution by the piano, following the out of time conclusion of the vocal line. This shows the Schubert expectation of a both supportive and independent accompaniment. Additionally, the part contains various repeated figures, specifically in the left hand, as well as large orchestral style chords, again commonplace in his compositions. The only instance of a break from the piece’s consistent meter is at the end, upon the revelation of the son’s death. The treatment of the vocal line is incredibly interesting as well in this work. The text is syllabically set and strophic. Textually it alternates between four personas. Schubert sets these personas very deliberately, utilizing the voice as a multifunctional theatrical instrument. First, the father and the narrator personas are fairly blended, singing in a middle range, in the tonic minor mode, with

simpler style and a calmer presence. However, when the son's lines are set, Schubert utilizes a lighter part of the voice, higher in the register, though remaining in the minor mode. Finally, the Elf King characterization is differentiated by the major mode, taking the melody into an entirely different realm, creating a welcoming yet uneasy presence, fitting for the textual treatment of the character. Though one of his earliest known works, "Erlkönig" is an incredibly accurate portrayal of Schubert's style of *Lieder* composition.

2) "Der Leiermann," from *Winterreise*

- a. Title Translation: "The Hurdy-Gurdy Player"
- b. Translation: There, beyond the village, / stands a hurdy-gurdy player; / with numb fingers / he plays as best he can. / Barefoot on the ice / he totters to and fro, / and his little plate / remains forever empty. / No one wants to listen, / no one looks at him, / and the dogs growl / around the old man. / And he lets everything go on / as it will; / he plays, and his hurdy-gurdy / never stops. / Strange old man, / shall I go with you? / Will you turn your hurdy-gurdy / to my songs?
- c. This work, concluding his song cycle, *Winterreise*, may be the least characteristic of Schubert's music. Telling the story of a singer's existential questioning and comparison to a lone hurdy-gurdy player, this *Lied* is far darker in content than many of his songs, and thus the music reflects the tone of the text. Schubert's characteristic repetition is present in the accompaniment, though the part is far hollower and sparser than his characteristic style. The vocal line is less predictable or comfortable than his typical *Lieder*; the well-known and beloved memorable melodic style of Schubert seems nearly entirely absent, though this

could be seen as a deliberate compositional choice, in order to more accurately fit the musical depiction to the text. The parts seem somewhat simpler than a typical Schubert composition, were it not for the incredibly mature subject matter of the poetry. The text serves as the rationale for saving this work for a mature student, who can reflect the emotional content of the song through the music, rather than an intermediate or beginner student who can merely perform the written musical content. Though a large departure from Schubert's characteristic musical style, the piece remains consistent with *Lieder* tradition, and could be understandably considered a more experimental work of Schubert's. It very effectively achieves a depiction of the cold atmosphere, while the piano portrays the hurdy-gurdy, with repetitive motives, and simple tonal A minor harmony. The vocal line stays within a very narrow range throughout the entire work. Only by the end does the piece ramp up to a pseudo-peak upon the second "verse." It could still be considered a strophic form, though it does not exemplify Schubert's typical memorable vocal style, feeling more abstract. The end takes the vocal line up to its true peak, ending on the fifth of the key, feeling unresolved and uncertain, while the hurdy-gurdy piano depiction continues to move along independently – another variation from Schubert's style. The piece remains in a consistent meter and tonal structure, creating a claustrophobic yet open and desolate feeling. Though it departs from the stereotypical style of Franz Schubert, it falls directly in line with the *Lieder* tradition of deep prosody – there is enough meaningful compositional choices within the *Lied* to fuel a doctoral dissertation. Schubert simultaneously leaves his compositional norms, while remaining within the style of which he is composing.

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French Style Sheets



Gabriel Fauré

(1845 – 1924)

Background

- 1) Fauré was born in France, as the youngest child to a school headmaster. Despite this, his family was not extraordinarily wealthy or affluent.
- 2) At nine years old, Fauré attended *École Niedermeyer*, a Parisian boarding school.²
 - a. He primarily studied music, including piano and harmony, He also studied literature. His initial focus was sacred music, gearing him toward a career as an organist or a choirmaster.
 - b. After four years here, Saint-Saëns was hired as a teacher and modernized the students' musical education. His instruction included great Romantic era composers, such as Wagner and Schumann.
 - c. Fauré graduated in 1865, yet four more years after the arrival of Saint-Saëns, giving him a very broad education of music.

- 3) Throughout his career, Fauré composed for a variety of instruments.
 - a. As with many French composers, his name is a staple in the repertory of the flute.
 - b. He also wrote a variety of piano works, as well as orchestral compositions.
 - c. Fauré, over his career, composed one hundred vocal pieces, or *mélodie*.
- 4) Three Compositional Styles – Early (1860-5) // Middle (1880-1904) // Late (1906-22)
 - a. Fauré’s compositional characteristics can be separated into roughly three “styles.”
(These will be more specifically expanded upon below)
 - b. These stylistic periods were impacted strongly by movements in French poetry.
 - c. Later in his life, Fauré began to lose his hearing, which may have also contributed to his musical transitions as a composer.
- 5) Major Works
 - a. *Cinq melodies de Venise* (1891) – five settings of texts by Paul Verlaine, which Fauré was inspired to compose during a trip to Venice, Italy. They do not share much thematic or harmonic similarities, other than the circumstances of creation.
 - b. *La Bonne Chanson* (1892-4) – Venetian inspired song cycle, setting nine Verlaine texts, according to the poetic themes and ideas.
- 6) Associated Poetic Movements and Poets
 - a. Early Style: *Parnassian* poetry,
 - b. Middle Style: *Symbolist* poetry, specifically Paul Verlaine
 - c. Late Style: This style was more clearly defined by the descent of Fauré’s hearing. Though he continued to use a wide range of poetry and poets, he continued to gravitate more toward the *Symbolist* poetry, Verlaine included, which he had frequently set prior.

Stylistic Elements

1) General Ideas

a. Range

- i. In both his vocal lines and accompaniments, the ranges began relatively varied. However, this usage narrowed into a middle register by his late compositions. This was due to his lack of ability to discern extreme pitches in conjunction with his increasing hearing loss.

b. Meter and Rhythm

- i. As with most of his music, Fauré's earlier compositions, as a general rule, were more straightforward, specifically in the early style. By his middle and late style periods, Fauré began to favor a more atmospheric approach to musical composition, creating senses of rhythmic uneasiness, and skewing the audience's, as well as the performer's, sense of meter and pulse.

c. Tonality

- i. According to Kimball, the musical style of Fauré can be considered an attempt to bridge the classical repertoire of the past with the modern musical style of the Romantic Era and 20th Century. This impacts his tonality, as his early style compositions, though written during the Romantic Era, reflect the diatonic and simple harmonic nature of the Classical Period. By his middle style, he begins to experiment more harmonically, both with vocal chromaticism and accompaniment modulation and exploration of tonality. This correlates with the *Symbolist*

poetry he frequently set during this time. By the late period of his composition, Fauré dove into non-diatonic harmonic progressions, bordering on an atonal style. This may also have been an effect of his poor hearing.

2) Vocal Line

a. Melodic Treatment

- i. Melodies are often set incredibly uniquely, with subtle sentimentality.
- ii. Lines tend to be relatively conservative, so as not to explicitly convey the emotion and meaning of the text.
- iii. Early on, melodic lines were fairly simple. Throughout the progression of his styles, they became more expressive and complex in the middle style. By his late style, Fauré's melodies were obscure, bordering atonal, representing his transition as he lost more and more of his hearing.

b. Rhythmic Tendencies

- i. His vocal lines were often set syllabically, creating playful and moving lines, typically lacking ornate melismatic material

c. Prosody

- i. Fauré's prosody was subtle. Direct depiction of the text was often less prioritized, in favor of discreet and nuanced, subtly set melodies.

d. Difficulty

- i. His earlier melodies were simpler and lyrical and would be more attainable for intermediate students. In his later works, the melodic lines became more difficult to perform, requiring an advanced singer.

3) Accompaniment

a. Supportive/Independent & Vocal Relation

- i. The accompaniment serves as a direct partner to the vocal line. This can manifest in the playing of its own melodic material, or more independence, when needed to complement the vocal line. In essence, the vocal line and accompaniment have a lot of interplay, which varies in terms of the specific piece being set. Independence and support were both common compositional tools for the accompaniment.

b. Introductions/Interludes/Postludes

- i. As his music shifted toward more experimental in style in his middle and late periods, solo accompaniment work became more common, in order to establish the musical character of the chosen setting. However, in his early style, it was more varied in accordance to the needs of the vocal line.

c. Texture

- i. Early on, Fauré composed accompaniments which were capable of creating countermelodic material to the vocal line. This resulted in a thick texture with a variety of different application.
- ii. Both his middle and later works saw a reduction in the complexity and intensity of his accompaniments. This was a combination of his switch of poetic selections from the *Symbolist* movement, as well as his weakening aural capabilities.

d. Difficulty

- i. Accompaniments, depending on the context and period, vary in difficulty.

Songs Studied

1) "Lydia" (1870)

- a. Title Translation: "Lydia"
- b. Translation: "Lydia, on your rosy cheeks, / And on your neck, so fresh and white,
/ Flow sparkingly / The fluid golden tresses which you loosen. / This shining day
is the best of all; / Let us forget the eternal grave, / Let your kisses, your kisses of
a dove, / Sing on your blossoming lips. / A hidden lily spreads unceasingly / A
divine fragrance on your breast; / Numberless delights / Emanate from you, young
goddess, / I love you and die, oh my love; / Kisses have carried away my soul! /
Oh Lydia, give me back life, / That I may die, forever die!"
- c. "Lydia" was composed relatively early in Fauré's career. Due to this, it is
incredibly characteristic of his early style. It is generally simple in nature. The
melodic content of the vocal line is more strophic and repetitive, using recurring
stepwise melodies of syllabically set text by Parnassian poets Leconte de Lisle.
The piece begins with a brief introduction of the tonal center. By harping on the I
chord just a tad at the beginning, Fauré showing a strong sense of Classical
diatonic functional harmony. However, as instantly as the piece progresses, the
mode is revealed to be Lydian, ironically playing into the subject of the poem.
Toward the end of each stanza, the harmony incorporated Mixolydian aspects,
using a flatted 7th scale degree to briefly accent the longing nature of this piece.
This represents the subtlety of Fauré's expressive nature, as well as the influence
of the Romantic Era's chromatic harmony, by which he would have been
surround at the time of the composition of "Lydia." The accompaniment is

incredibly supportive, doubling the melody, though taking expressive independent moments, both melodically, harmonically, formally, and rhythmically, including brief aspects of countermelody, chromatic harmony, small solo sections, and moments of driving eighth notes against vocal sustains. The range is relatively simple, a characteristic more typical of his later work. However, the simplicity of a small range aligns with the Classical nature. Additionally, the metric content of this work is entirely consistent. Overall, this piece would be beneficial for an intermediate pianist and vocalist, as there are few particularly difficult instances, at least in relation to Fauré's life's work of compositions.

2) "Mandoline," from *Cinq melodies de Venise* (1891)

- a. Title Translation: "Mandoline"
- b. Translation: "The gallant serenaders / And their fair listeners / Exchange sweet nothings / Beneath singing boughs. / Tirsis is there, Aminte is there, / And tedious Clitandre too, / And Damis who for many a cruel maid / Writes many a tender song. / Their short silken doublets, / Their long trailing gowns, / Their elegance, their joy, / And their soft blue shadows / Whirl madly in the rapture / Of a grey and roseate moon, / And the mandolin jangles on / In the shivering breeze."
- c. This piece, contrasting his earlier work, "Lydia," is representative of his middle style compositions. Stemming from his set of five Verlaine poems, a noted *Symbolist*, Fauré begins to experiment musically, in order to perfectly set this text. It retains a simple nature in sound, starting from the brief introduction of the accompaniment's ostinato pattern prior to the entrance of the vocal line. Despite this simplicity, there is a lot of complexity lying beneath the surface. Fauré plays

with tonality and modulation, moving quickly between tonal centers of distant keys, like I and III, and later on, bIII, entirely unrelated to the prior and upcoming instances of the III tonality. The piano is supportive of the text and vocal line, as it contains an advanced recurring rhythmic theme, as well as runs, which often transition between the distant tonalities. The metric drive of the piece is consistent, instead of playing with distant time signatures. The sense of pulse can often be upset by the emphases in the vocal line, as well as the accompaniment. The distant tonalities require an acute ear to discern and accurately perform, setting this piece between intermediate and advanced for vocalists. Additionally, the text setting is almost exclusively syllabic, except for key moments, to provide textual highlighting to the piece, as well as depictive contrast.



Hector Berlioz

(1803 – 1869)

Background

- 1) The son of a doctor, Berlioz initially experienced music through sacred traditions.¹
- 2) He began composing as early as age thirteen, experimenting with different chamber groups, as small as unconventional duets and quartets.¹
- 3) Initially studying to pursue a career in medicine, Berlioz transitions to a sole focus on music, specifically musical composition.¹
- 4) The term for a French art song, *mélodie*, is considered to have been coined by Berlioz.
- 5) He composed for a variety of styles, often for orchestra or vocal *mélodie*.
 - a. He is also an operatic composer.
 - b. Of his canon of work, Berlioz would compose fifty *mélodie*, many of which would be edited with orchestral accompaniment.
- 6) Major Works
 - a. *Symphonie Fantastique*, his orchestral “Program Symphony,” perhaps his most well-known work
 - b. *Les Nuits d’été* (1841) – considered to be the first French *mélodie* cycle.

7) Associated Poets: Théophile Gautier

- a. The text to his aforementioned cycle was penned by Gautier.

Stylistic Elements

1) General Characteristics

- a. Berlioz's compositional style is incredibly reflective of the Romantic era, though elements of the Classical certainly bleed through into aspects of his work.
- b. Berlioz composed with the "*idée fixe*," a recurring theme or motive, dramatically depicting a person, object, or concept in the musical work.
- c. Meter
 - i. In general, the meter is consistent throughout the work. However, expressive elements of rubato are present throughout performances of his composition, due to their musical potency.
- d. Tonality
 - i. Berlioz tactfully infuses diatonic harmony, reminiscent of the Classical Era, with the characteristic chromaticism of the Romantic Era. This is present in both the vocal line and the accompaniment, which often navigate somewhat prepared tonality changes, while still allowing them to seem sudden and out of the blue.

2) Vocal Line

- a. Melodic Treatment
 - i. An operatic composer, Berlioz typically wrote lyrical yet demanding vocal lines, all for the purpose of the text, as well as in alignment with the classical aspects of his musical climate of the time.

b. Range

- i. His vocal lines often sit in the higher register of the vocal range.

c. Rhythmic Tendencies

- i. The rhythm can often seem offset in order to accurately align with the text and the relevant stresses. The text is typically set syllabically, with variations of melismatic expression when the text and music allows.

d. Prosody

- i. The text and meaning was incredibly important to Berlioz in his composition of *mélodie*. This was done to give a cohesive sense to the overall musical work and could bleed between different movements or portions of an overall larger work.

e. Difficulty

- i. Due to the chromatic nature of some of his vocal lines, Berlioz's works may be more attainable for an intermediate, or even advanced student. This is supported by the wide and high vocal range often employed.

3) Accompaniment

a. Supportive/Independent Vocal Relation

- i. The accompaniment is incredibly partnered to the vocal line. The textual focus of the melody in the voice is expanded upon by the orchestral or piano parts.
- ii. That being said, independence is still incredibly present, due to the complexity of Berlioz's accompaniments.

- iii. Berlioz had a general boredom with the typical solo vocal timbre of “solo voice with piano accompaniment.” This impacted his compositional style, as his accompaniments, often for an orchestra, tend to be grand in scheme, exploiting the varied capabilities of such an ensemble.
- b. Introductions/Interludes/Postludes
 - i. As independence defines some of the harmonic transitions, including setups and closing resolutions, small areas of solo accompaniment are present, in order to solidify the tonality.
 - c. Range
 - i. Often composing for orchestra, Berlioz utilizes the various timbres and ranges of the orchestra as he sees fit, in order to express his musical aim.
 - d. Rhythmic Tendencies
 - i. The meter staying consistent, Berlioz wrote pulsating accompaniment parts, which propelled the work forward through the trajectory of the musical plot, as detailed by the text.
 - e. Texture
 - i. Accompaniment textures are often full and lush, especially the orchestral transcriptions.
 - f. Difficulty
 - i. It is difficult to judge the accompaniment’s difficulty. As they are often orchestral, it may be easy to put together an intermediate level student orchestra, or even chamber ensemble, to back the *mélodie*. However, the pure piano parts, as they imitate orchestral voicings and style, would be

much more difficult to accurately play, most likely requiring a more advanced piano accompanist, to ensure the most successful performance.

Song Studied

1) “Villanelle” (1841)

a. Title Translation: “Villanelle”

b. Translation: “When the new season comes, / When the cold has gone, / We two will go, my sweet, / To gather lilies-of-the-valley in the woods; / Scattering as we tread the pearls of dew / We see quivering each morn, / We’ll go and hear the blackbirds / Sing! / Spring has come, my sweet; / It is the season lovers bless, / And the birds, preening their wings, / Sing songs from the edge of their nests. / Ah! Come, then, to this mossy bank / To talk of our beautiful love, / And tell me in your gentle voice: / Forever! / Far, far away we’ll stray from our path, / Startling the rabbit from his hiding-place / And the deer reflected in the spring, / Admiring his great lowered antlers; / Then home we’ll go, serene and at ease, / And entwining our fingers basket-like, / We’ll bring back home wild / Strawberries!”

c. This piece is fairly characteristic of Berlioz. The harmony shifts rapidly at times, as well as somewhat experimentally, while still leaving the listening audience with a sense of function and general tonality. The vocal line sits high, making it difficult for beginner students. This is made harder by the chromatic nature of the piece. However, the setting is fairly stepwise and syllabic, making it potentially an easier option of Berlioz’s works, perhaps for an intermediate tenor or soprano, with a decent grasp on the French language. The orchestra drives with pulsating

rhythms throughout. Occasionally, smaller groups, like the woodwinds, will chime in with illustrative motives. In general, it sounds to be a decent orchestral option, so long as the players can follow a clear conductor and understand the basics of chromatic passages. The setting is strophic, contributing to the educational ease of the piece, as vocalists and instrumentalists alike would be able to fall back on familiar material throughout the piece. It is very characteristic of Berlioz, sounding deceptively tonal, and even simple to the inattentive ear, seamlessly guiding through the harsh modulations throughout the work. As evidence, the first major tonal change occurs early on, moving from a fairly established tonic up a half step, to the bII. This is incredibly unconventional by Classical standards, but the necessary transitions to smooth this transition out, as harkens to such an era. However, the modulation itself remains indicative of the Romantic era, with which Berlioz is more frequently associated.

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Enrique Granados

(1867 – 1916)

Background

- 1) Born in Lèrida, near Barcelona, the son of an officer in the Spanish Army.¹
- 2) His musical training began at age 8 with an army bandmaster.¹
- 3) He also studied piano with pianists Francisco Jurnet and Joan Baptista Pujol.¹
- 4) By age 20, Granados was studying music in Paris with Bériot.
- 5) He went on to find success both as a composer and a pianist.
- 6) He founded the *Academia Granados*, a successful educational institution, in 1901.¹
- 7) Died in a shipwreck at only 49 years old.
- 8) Major Works
 - a. *Goyescas* – Piano Suite (1911) inspired by Francisco Goya's artwork
 - b. *Goyescas* – Opera (1916) inspired by Goya's artwork, setting a libretto by Fernando Periquet
 - c. *Colección de tonadillas* – Collection of Character songs, uses Periquet poetry

9) Associated Poets: Fernando Periquet

General Stylistic Elements

1) Vocal Line

a. Melodic Treatment

- i. The melody tends to be less fluent, with athletic leaps and arpeggiations.

b. Range

- i. Can include moments utilizing the extremities of the vocal range, making pieces rangier than their general tessitura suggests.

c. Rhythmic Tendencies

- i. The text is typically set syllabically – melismatic figures are used to decorate the song with flourishes and ornaments, and to heighten important textual elements within a song.

d. Meter

- i. His works do not often vary in meter.

e. Tonality

- i. He utilizes different modes, preferring minor usually.
- ii. Modulation is also used stylistically within works to create musical contrast.
- iii. Despite this, his works tend to be relatively diatonic.

f. Prosody

- i. His melodic writing tends to prioritize prosody over melodic simplicity and beauty, choosing complex symbolic elements over straightforward, catchy melodies.

- ii. “Granados was essentially a miniaturist; his music is full of finely crafted details” (Kimball)

g. Difficulty

- i. Granados songs typically lie between intermediate and advanced levels of difficulty.

2) Accompaniment

a. Supportive/Independent Vocal Relation

- i. His accompaniments vary between supportive and independent.
- ii. In solo sections, they are very independent, and can even be independent during vocal pauses or rests, interjecting independent material.
- iii. When playing underneath the vocal line, they tend to be more supportive, simply outlining chords and defining the tonality of the song.

b. Introductions/Interludes/Postludes

- i. Long introductions, interludes, and postludes are used as commentary on the text being set, and to establish the setting of the piece.

c. Range

- i. His accompaniments span the full range of the piano.

d. Rhythmic Tendencies

- i. Granados’ accompaniments are meant to imitate a guitar.
- ii. Typically accompaniments include arpeggiations and quick chordal repetitions in order to achieve this emulation.

e. Meter

- i. As with the melody line, his works are usually fairly metrically steady.

- f. Texture
 - i. The texture can vary though it likely is contrapuntal and arpeggiated, in order to achieve the desired guitar-like sound.
- g. Difficulty
 - i. His accompaniments are advanced, requiring an experienced pianist.

Songs Studied

- 1) “Amor y odio,” from *Colección de tonadillas*
 - a. Title Translation: “Love and Hate”
 - b. Translation: “I thought I could / conceal my sorrow / So that it might be so deep / As to be imperceptible to the world: / This secret love / that a roguish man / Enkindled in my soul. // And it wasn't / because he glimpsed / The grief hidden within me. / But it was in vain / that he glimpsed it / And did not / separate himself / From that which he loved. // And this is the punishment / I now suffer: / To feel my soul / filled with love / For one who / has forgotten me, / Without an encouraging light / To pierce the shadows / Of my life.”
 - c. The tonality of this piece begins in minor, switching halfway through to major, and back to minor. However, even when it is in minor, it seems tonally ambiguous, using major diatonic chords to skew the tonal sense. This aligns with the duality concept of “love and hate” that this piece aims to capture. In the sections in the minor mode, the meter is a very consistent and simple three; however, the major section feels freer, and loses its consistent pulse, blurring the sense of a consistent meter. However, the rhythms in both the vocal and accompaniment parts are simple are even during the minor mode sections. The

rhythms are equally blurry in the major mode. Though they are consistent and even, the stressed beats are masked within the longer phrases and melisma. The vocal range sits a tad toward the high side. Though it lies in a medium range throughout, a few moments are punctuated by leaps into the upper register, which require a soprano or tenor to comfortably reach. Other than that, the range is not incredibly wide in the vocal line. This is similar in the piano; the middle to high range is most frequently used, with very little of the low register utilized. Prosody is important to this song, as the high peaks in the vocal line accent important aspects of the text being set. Additionally, the vocal line is set very deliberately, as is characteristic of Granados' works. In the minor mode sections, the melody is somewhat lyrical, and almost exclusively syllabically set. However, the major section features departures from the syllabic setting, with more melisma. It is even broader and more lyrical in this section. Though the intervals are regular, the rhythms feel somewhat disjunct, as though it is an in-time cadenza. The accompaniment begins with an introduction to set the minor tone of the work. Though it is generally very supportive of the vocal line, especially in the major section, it contains moments of independence, with featured flourishes and small solo instances, like miniature interludes between phrases. To support the vocal line, the texture of the accompaniment is fairly sparse, so as to not take away from the vocal line's prominence. When it is fuller, it is due to homophonic chordal motion. It might be possible for an intermediate pianist to perform this work, though the trickier sections would be safer in the hands of an advance pianist. The

vocal line could be handled by an intermediate tenor or soprano, due to the range, unless it were to be transposed into a friendlier key.

2) “El tralala y el punteado,” from *Colección de tonadillas*

- a. Title Translation: “Tra La La and the Plucked Guitar”
- b. Translation: “It is in vain, my boy, that you go on talking, / For there are things to which I ever answer in song. / Tra la la... / No matter how many times you ask: / Tra la la... / You cause me no grief / And I will not cease to sing. / tra la la...”
- c. The song begins with a quick accompaniment introduction, in which the piano is meant to imitate a guitar. This is fitting, due to the title of the poetry being set in this song. This introduction is featured as an interlude before both the second and third verses, and functions as a postlude after the third verse as well. The accompaniment maintains a simple, consistent meter throughout the song, with which the vocal line easily aligns. However, there are very obvious moments of dramatic rubato, used to heighten the textual meaning. The prosody of the song is fairly obvious; as a song about singing, the rubato and expressive moments are easily milked in order to align with the text. The tonality of the piece switches throughout. Predominantly in major, the first and third verses, as well as the accompaniment solos, are all in major. However, the second verse deviates, staying in the parallel minor, in order to heighten the text of the verse. Other than a higher peak in the second verse, the range of the vocal line sits fairly comfortably in a moderate range. The melody is syllabically set throughout the song, with a fairly predictable melodic line that is easy to listen to and aesthetically pleasing. The rhythm of it is simple and steady, with very little

decoration or flourish. Overall, it would be considered an intermediate vocal line, as it is not very technically challenging, and only peaks in the higher register once. It could be a good piece to work up to that range while exposing a student to repertoire in the Spanish language. The accompaniment is very supportive throughout. Other than the solo sections, it merely provides light tonal support for the vocal line. It lies typically in the middle to low range of the piano. The rhythms are very simple, mostly quarter notes under the voice, or quick runs during the interlude. It does a very good job capturing the sound of the plucked guitar. This is especially achieved through the light sound and sparse texture. The only audible instance of the sustain pedal occurs during the minor second verse to give some contrast to the light, bouncy major verses and interludes. However, even with the sustain, the accompaniment remains sparse, background, and light. The accompaniment could most likely be played by an intermediate pianist, as there is very little complexity to the part other than the runs in the interlude, which is repeated throughout the song, and a few runs in the verses to complement the vocal line.



Carlos Guastavino

(1912 – 2000)

Background

- 1) Carlos Guastavino was born in Santa Fe, Argentina.
- 2) Having composed 200 works for solo voice, chamber ensembles, guitar, and piano, Guastavino earned the nickname the “Argentine Schubert.”
- 3) He was a skilled piano player, though his reclusive personality caused him to avoid a career in performing. He primarily made his money composing and teaching.
- 4) He began his study of piano at a young age. However, his formal study of music began after first pursuing chemical engineering, until he received a scholarship to study music at the National Conservatory at 26 years old.²
- 5) Guastavino was known to be staunchly opposed to the progressive music of his day – what we now classify as “20th Century Music.” He preferred straightforward, melodic works that were tonal and enjoyable to listen to, rather than works of artistic commentary and experimental music, like that of Webern and Schönberg.
- 6) Throughout his life, he travelled to various corners of the world.
- 7) He retired from teaching harmony at the Buenos Aires Conservatory, in 1973.
 - a. He then composed until his 1992 creative retirement, 8 years prior to his death.

8) Major Works:

- a. *Doce canciones populares* – Twelve popular songs

9) Associated Poets: Francesco Silva, Arturo Vasquez, Hamlet Lima Quintana

General Stylistic Elements

1) Vocal Line

a. Melodic Treatment

- i. Primary compositional aim was to create beautiful melodies that were enjoyable and memorable.

b. Range

- i. Typically they are kept in a medium, comfortable range.

c. Rhythmic Tendencies

- i. Guastavino's compositions hinge on Argentinian dance rhythms

d. Meter

- i. These Argentinian dance rhythms typically influence the sense of meter, as they typically involve repeating rhythmic patterns with shifting beat emphases, skewing the sense of a consistent meter.

e. Tonality

- i. In general, they have a clear sense of diatonic harmony.
- ii. However, Guastavino's pieces can be harmonically explorational, containing uses of the modes, as well as modal mixtures and modulation.

f. Prosody

- i. His music is mainly textually based – he is compared to Schubert due to both his prolificacy and his focus on prosody and musical beauty.

- g. Difficulty
 - i. His vocal lines tend to be around an intermediate difficulty, though this can vary based on the individual song and style of each work.
- 2) Accompaniment
 - a. Supportive/Independent Vocal Relation
 - i. Accompaniments vary between independent and complex, and closely related and supportive of the vocal line.
 - b. Introductions/Interludes/Postludes
 - i. To reflect the mood of the piece, Guastavino will utilize solo accompaniment passages.
 - c. Range
 - i. The wide range of the piano is employed expressively in his accompaniments.
 - ii. When functioning supportively, the accompaniment tends to lie in a medium range.
 - iii. When functioning more independently, the accompaniment will utilize the high and low extremities to accentuate the part.
 - d. Rhythmic Tendencies
 - i. Accompaniments are often rhythmically complicated, using ostinato patterns which feature syncopation or hemiola figures.
 - e. Meter
 - i. See vocal line – the meter of the piece is influenced by Argentinian dance rhythms. These are often found in the accompaniment consistently

throughout the piece, giving the song a sense of consistent meter, though it may not fall into a simple metric symbol like common time or $\frac{3}{4}$.

f. Texture

- i. Accompaniments vary in texture from simple chordal homophony to disjointed and complex parts.

g. Difficulty

- i. Though they vary, Guastavino's accompaniments tend to require either an intermediate or advanced pianist.
- ii. If featuring a complex Argentinian dance rhythm, an advanced pianist is of utmost importance to deal with the potential recurring syncopation.

Songs Studied

1) "La rosa y el sauce"

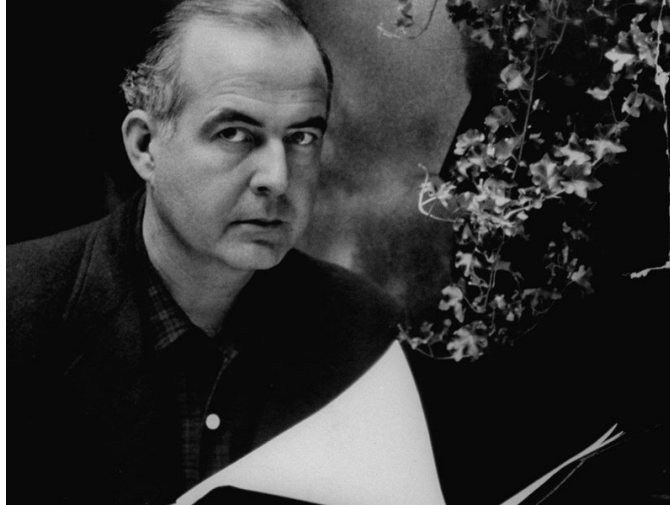
- a. Title Translation: "The Rose and the Willow"
- b. Translation: "The rose was starting to open, embracing the willow. The passionate tree loved her so much. A frivolous girl robbed her [of the rose] and the desolate willow is crying."
- c. Though this song is set in the minor mode, it utilizes instances of major tonality. This is done to create the melancholic atmosphere of the text; in the moments of major tonality, it points to the fond remembrance of something now lost, though it remains clearly in the minor mode, due to the sorrow expressed by the willow in the poem over the loss of its rose. Prosody is important within this work. This is best exemplified by the sorrowful "ah" passage; the vocal line is clearly emulating the cries of the willow. The melody is fairly straightforward, moving mostly by

stepwise motion, creating a melody which is easy on the ears, and enjoyable to follow. It is also mostly syllabic, with instances of melisma for added dramatic effect. As is typical of Guastavino, it is memorable and beautiful, and does not stray toward the abstract style of his day. The same can be said for the piano; despite its crunchier chords and non-diatonic harmonies, it is very lyrical and representative of the mood of the poem. In terms of ranges, the piano utilizes the extent of its range: the middle range is used throughout to support the voice, while the upper range is used to bring out independent melodic lines in the accompaniment, and the lower range is used for pronounced bass notes, which accent the drama of the song. The voice lies in a comfortable range, only building up into the high range at the peak of the song. In total, it encompasses about an octave and a fourth. Rhythmically and metrically, the piece is in 3/4, and stays even and consistent in both the vocal and accompaniment lines. The parts both sound steady and controlled, with simple rhythmic patterns throughout the entire song. In the accompaniment, there is an introduction, which sets up the darker melancholic mood of the work. It sounds as though there is a postlude, though it contains the “ah” passage, concluding the lamenting tone of the work. The accompaniment is fairly independent, though it occasionally backs off to lie supportively under the vocal line. The texture is a blend of homophony and polyphony, with chords under the vocal line, but countermelodies in the upper voice of the accompaniment. The vocal line for this piece is fairly simple, making it about an intermediate difficulty level. However, the accompaniment would most likely demand an advanced pianist to perform.

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American Style Sheets



Samuel Barber

(1910 – 1981)

Background

1) Biographical Information

- a. Barber was born in March of 1910, in West Chester, PA.
- b. His aunt and uncle were both musically involved and successful
 - i. His aunt was a contralto, named Louise Homer
 - ii. His uncle was composer Sidney Homer, who encouraged his nephew's musical development throughout his life.
- c. Barber studied for nine years at the Curtis Institute. His study was split between piano, voice, and composition, all of which he honed tremendously at Curtis.¹
- d. The recipient of two Pulitzers, Barber received great recognition for his accomplishments during his lifetime.
- e. Though Barber was a skilled instrumental composer, he also wrote 106 songs throughout his life
 - i. Only 48 of his songs were published

- f. Many of his songs were written for the soprano voice of Leontyne Price (b.1927)
- g. Barber is known for his work “Adagio for Strings,” which is featured in various media to this date. The text “Agnus Dei” is used for a choral setting of this work.
 - i. Multiple works of his have been set for choirs.
- h. In the last 15 years of his life, Barber struggled with depression, alcoholism, and creative blocks, all of which significantly decreased his compositional output. cite
 - i. Barber also faced cancer hospitalizations in 1980, prior to his 1981 death.

2) Major Works

- a. Barber’s published songs were often published individually, or in sets of two to four songs, such as *Four Songs* (Op.13), which includes “Sure On This Shining Night,” as well as three other compositions.
- b. *Hermit Songs* (1953) is a song cycle, in which ten anonymous poems from 8th-13th Century Irish monks and scholars, which cover varying subject matters.

3) Associated Poets

- a. Barber sets a variety of poetry and texts, including those set in *Hermit Songs*, poems by James Agee, James Joyce, and W.B. Yeats.

General Stylistic Elements

1) Vocal Line

- a. Melodic Treatment
 - i. Melodic lines are very lyrical and exhibit romantic tendencies.
 - ii. Melodies are written primarily to emulate the text.
 - iii. This textual emulation leads many of his melodic lines to be set syllabically, rather than melismatic.

- b. Range
 - i. Barber's pieces tend to lie in a challenging range, using a wide spectrum of pitches, and sitting towards higher notes.
- c. Rhythmic Tendencies
 - i. Rhythms are constructed to emulate the text being set.
 - ii. As mentioned above, this leads to syllabic setting.
- d. Meter
 - i. Many of his songs are fully unmetered, with variable quantities of beats per measure
 - ii. A singer with a strong rhythmic sense is necessary to perform Barber's works.
- e. Tonality
 - i. Though some of Barber's works are relatively diatonic, his harmonic tendencies include non-diatonic and chromatic techniques, reminiscent of the Romantic Era.
- f. Prosody
 - i. Barber's music was very text-centered
 - ii. Melodies and rhythms are sculpted to the contour of the text being set.
 - iii. Sophisticated texts are often chosen, demanding impressive prosody
- g. Difficulty
 - i. Due to the elevated texts, wide ranges, and strange rhythmic and metric usages, Barber's music demands a strong singer, most likely late intermediate to advanced.

2) Accompaniment

a. Supportive/Independent Vocal Relation

- i. Barber's accompaniments are orchestral in scope, and therefore tend to be very independent from the vocal line.
- ii. His accompaniments often interact with the vocal line, sharing an expressive musical relationship.

b. Introductions/Interludes/Postludes

- i. Expressive solo sections are used in order to enhance the textual drama Barber is depicting.

c. Range

- i. Mimicking orchestral sounds, the accompaniments vary in range, and can utilize the full extent of the piano.

d. Rhythmic Tendencies

- i. Due to the way Barber employs meter (or the lack thereof), his rhythmic tendencies tend to be complicated and complex, contributing to the thick textures of his orchestral scope accompaniments.

e. Meter

- i. As discussed earlier, his pieces tend to be unmetered, being based solely on the text being set.

f. Texture

- i. Complicated and thick textures are prevalent in Barber's works.

g. Difficulty

- i. Accompaniments tend to vary in difficulty.

Songs Studied

1) “Sure On This Shining Night”

- a. Text: “Sure on this shining night / Of starmade shadows round, / Kindness must watch for me / This side the ground. // The late year lies down the north. / All is healed, all is health. / High summer holds the earth. / Hearts all whole. // Sure on this shining night / I weep for wonder / Wandering far alone / Of shadows on the stars.” – James Agee
- b. The text to this piece, though relatively short, is from the perspective of someone wandering, and reflecting upon nature, human nature, and life while they wander. It seems to be relatively optimistic; the lines “the late year lies down the north. / All is healed, all is health” seem to imply that the speaker feels they are heading toward a time or place of health and goodness. Additionally, there is a component of wonder to this piece, which Barber atmospherically creates in his accompaniment, and symbolizes expressively through the vocal line. To start, the vocal line is written very characteristically for Barber; it is entirely syllabically set, with melodic and rhythmic peaks emulating the natural rhythms and contours of speech. This helps create a simplicity to the the piece and gives the sound a very natural sound. The work averages in a medium-high range of the voice, with peaks occurring on the words “*all* is healed, all is *health*.” This accomplishes two functions. First, in art, when lines are repeated, it is desirable to switch the emphasis between repetitions. This happens exactly here; first, the speaker is in wonder that “all” is healed. On the second iteration, they marvel at the fact that all is “health.” We can very clearly see that prosody is incredibly important. Barber

was very sensitive to the texts he set, and he composed with lyrics as a priority. The meter to the piece, unlike many of his works, is very straightforward. Again, this adds to the simplicity of the piece, creating a simple and awestruck mood for the work, which aligns with the textual meaning. The same can be said for the texture. Though there is interplay between the accompaniment and vocal line, it is all kept relatively simple. The interplay then seems to function as a duet, between the speaker in the vocal line, and the accompaniment, serving as the nature which inspires awe in the speaker. There is also interesting interplay between the accompaniment and voice. In the first verse, the voice has the melody, and the accompaniment, the countermelody. However, later in the piece, the accompaniment and vocal line switch melodic materials, duetting opposite how they had earlier. This adds to the direct connection between the voice, being the speaker of the poem, and the accompaniment, serving as the nature about which the speaker sings. When not directly in interplay with the vocal line, the supportive accompaniment is very pulsating, creating atmospheric simplicity, while not diminishing its own presence. It also serves to drive the piece forward structurally, giving a sense of longing to the work. The range of the accompaniment varies, depending on the context within the piece, though it typically stays lower in the range of the piano, bringing a feeling of weight and authority to the accompaniment. In terms of independent sections, the accompaniment has a single measure of introduction, in order to establish the pulsating drive. This is recapitulated after the bridge, before the second verse. However, the accompaniment is featured at the conclusion of the piece, playing a

brief postlude. This postlude is nearly reverent, pulling the piece to a close with powerful IV chords, both of which hang in the air just briefly, before resolving at last to a gorgeous I chord in the lower voices of the piano. This effectively summarizes the awe which the speaker feels toward nature and existence. The vocal line would require at least an intermediate singer; it is not incredibly technically challenging, but it does require careful attention to the emotional weight of the piece. The accompaniment would require an intermediate or advance player, based on similar logic. Though it is not the most complex in the world, it is incredibly sensitive, and must be treated as such by the pianist.

2) “The Monk and His Cat” from *Hermit Songs*

- a. Text: “Pangur, white Pangur, / How happy we are / Alone together, Scholar and cat. / Each has his own work to do daily; / For you it is hunting, for me, study. / Your shining eye watches the wall; / My feeble eye is fixed on a book. / You rejoice when your claws entrap a mouse; / I rejoice when my mind fathoms a problem. / Pleased with his own art / Neither hinders the other; / Thus we live ever / Without tedium and envy. / Pangur, white Pangur, / How happy we are, / Alone together, Scholar and cat.” – Anonymous 8th or 9th Century Irish Text
- b. Originating from an anonymous Irish monk from the 8th or 9th Century, this text is told from a first-person perspective. It describes the monk’s life in comparison with his white cat, Pangur, analyzing their routines and actions. However, there seems to be a slight hint of longing from the monk, who wishes they could live as simplistically as Pangur does. Barber creates a very natural sounding vocal line in this piece. It is set rather speech-like, mimicking the natural stresses of the spoken

lines, and it is syllabically set. However, the rhythmic tendencies and meter of the piece are both very disjunct. Though it works incredibly well, it is clear that there is not a consistent pulse to the song, in neither the accompaniment nor vocal line. However, this works in accordance with the meaning; the song is meant to be a dialogue between a scholar monk and their cat. Naturally, such a conversation is not going to be fully natural – it is likely the result of the monk’s isolation with the cat. However, it still sounds as though it works successfully, representing the text accurately. As similar approach is taken harmonically – though the song is certainly in F Major, it deviates suddenly at various points, in accordance with the form of the set text. The range of the piece is not incredibly wide, though it push up towards a higher part of range during critical points in the song. All of these point to the strong prosody of the piece. Barber, always concerned with the setting of text, made sure to create a very accurate and thorough representation of the text. Similar aspects evidence this notion in the accompaniment. To start, the accompaniment has an independent relationship to the vocal line. This is likely due to its representation of the cat in the piece. Often throughout the song, it sounds as though Pangur is walking across the keyboard. At times, this even starts to seem like a reciprocal dialogue between the cat and the monk, with the piano responding to the vocal part conversationally with seemingly random chromatic lines. This creates a pleasantly variable texture, as the accompaniment and vocal line are always moving independently of each other. Other than quick moments to establish tonality, there are few independent passages for the accompaniment. However, the piece concludes with another iteration of the ascending chromatic

passage, which represents Pangur strolling across the keys of the piano. In general, the piano range sits fairly toward the middle of the instrument. However, higher lines are used to contrast the melodic content of the voice, as well as to bring out the chromatic “Pangur paw-step” lines. It is safe to assume that both the vocal line and the accompaniment demand an experienced and advanced singer. The unmetered nature of this song, along with the complex interplay between the voice and piano, and the passages of nebulous tonal centers all contribute to the difficulty of this song. Experience is certainly critical when choosing to assign this song to a student of voice or piano, to make sure they are capable of the advanced aspects of Barber’s solo work.



William Grant Still

(1895 – 1978)

Background

1) Biographical Information

- a. Still was raised in Little Rock, Arkansas. His mother and grandmother were his primary caregivers during his childhood and early life.²
 - i. His first musical experience here was taking private violin lessons.
- b. William Grant Still's early career was influenced by various paths of study:²
 - i. Still began a study of medicine at Wilberforce University, before transitioning into a musical career.
 - ii. First, he studied composition at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, and later he studied with George W. Chadwick at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, Massachusetts.
 - iii. He studied with notable avant-garde composer Edgard Varèse, an early proponent of electronic music.

- iv. Still worked as an arranger for esteemed musicians of his time, including the bandleader Paul Whiteman, and the blues composer W. C. Handy.
- c. William Grant Still made history as a successful African American composer and conductor. These achievements include being the first African American to:³
 - i. Conduct a major symphony orchestra in the United States
 - ii. Have an opera produced by the New York City Opera
 - iii. Conduct a major American radio orchestra
 - iv. Have a piece performed by a major U.S. Symphony
- d. Due to his prevalence as a composer, Still has been given the alias, “The Dean of African American Composers”
- e. Though he was primarily an instrumental composer, writing ballets, operas, and symphonies, he still composed songs for solo voice.

2) Major Works

- a. *Afro-American Symphony* (1931), premiered by the Rochester Symphony

3) Associated Poets⁴: Langston Hughes, Paul Lawrence Dunbar, Countee Cullen

General Stylistic Elements

1) Vocal Line

a. Melodic Treatment

- i. Still approaches his melodic composition with lyricism in mind.
- ii. They are typically very catchy and melodically pleasing, making them more musically accessible to performers and audiences alike.

b. Range

- i. As an operatic composer, the ranges of his vocal lines tend to be wide.

- c. Rhythmic Tendencies
 - i. His melodies are approach freely as it pertains to rhythms.
 - d. Meter
 - i. The free approach he takes to rhythm translates metrically into the presence of irregular phrase lengths and structures.
 - e. Tonality
 - i. Still's melodies feature lowered scale degrees, such as the 3rd or 7th, which align with blues scales and his jazz influences.
 - ii. Blues scales and modes characterize the tonality of Still's works
 - f. Prosody
 - i. This seems to be important to William Grant Still. Unlike composers like Charles Ives, who often wrote music for the sake of writing music, Still sought to expressively capture heavier emotions and content in his songs.
 - g. Difficulty
 - i. Due to the subject matter of some of his selected poetry, Still's music might require at least an intermediate singer, in order to grasp the maturity of his compositions.
- 2) Accompaniment
- a. Supportive/Independent Vocal Relation
 - i. Still takes a harmonic approach to accompaniment writing, focusing more on the harmonic support of the part, rather than complexly woven independent melodies and lines.
 - b. Introductions/Interludes/Postludes

- i. Still's accompaniments do not typically contain any independent passages.
- c. Range
 - i. In mimicking an orchestral style, his accompaniments utilize various ranges and registers of the piano.
- d. Rhythmic Tendencies
 - i. The rhythms of Still's works are heavily influenced by jazz rhythms.
- e. Meter
 - i. Overall, the time of his pieces remains fairly consistent. They can sometimes feel off kilter due to the jazz rhythms present in his works.
- f. Texture
 - i. Still's accompaniments often contain thick textures, representative of his orchestral compositions.
- g. Difficulty
 - i. Though they vary in difficulty, Still's accompaniments tend to veer toward the advanced end of the difficulty spectrum

Song Studied

1) "Grief"

- a. Text: "Weeping angel with pinions trailing / And head bowed low in your hands. / Mourning angel with heart-strings wailing, / For one who in death's hall stands. // Mourning angel silence your wailing, / And raise your head from your hands. / Weeping angel on your pinions trailing / The white dove, promise, stands!" – LeRoy V. Brant

b. Though it seems self-explanatory, the Brant text that Still chose to set is a depiction of the human experience of grief. As the text song progresses, it follows the natural human progression through grief, including denial and anger, and finally, resignation. It is a very heavy subject matter, which aligns with the nature of the music Still wrote for voice. As is characteristic of his works, the vocal line in this song is very accessible and lyrical. It is very natural and simple, yielding towards the text. However, as the emotion of the song intensifies, so too does the intensity of the vocal line. For example, at the onset of the song, the vocal line stays on a single note for the majority of the section, only moving by a second or third occasionally. This changes as the song progresses, symbolically showing the progression of grief within a person in mourning. As the song moves back into acceptance and resignation, the vocal line returns to simple and repetitive. Just from this, it is clear that the prosody of the piece is incredibly important; Still is attempting to evoke the feeling of mourning through his musical composition, which he does incredibly consciously and carefully. In terms of vocal rhythms, the text is syllabically set, and the rhythms are constructed in accordance with the natural rhythms of the speech. This adds to the realism of the piece, making it sound and feel more natural. The range is fairly medium, and it consistently stays here; the only exceptions to this occur on the iterations of the word “mourning,” which take the line up to a high F and high G and raise the general tessitura of the phrase. This is done intentionally, to add to the passion of this stage of grief. The meter at the beginning and end is difficult to discern; it feels almost as if it is a recitative, due to the simple chords and arpeggiations in the accompaniment, and

the repeated sustained notes in the vocal line. However, the passionate middle section has a clearer meter, with defined rhythms in both the vocal line and the accompaniment, which drive the passion of the grief in this piece forward. The tonality is fairly Romantic – though it is solidly in minor, it contains unexpected chords and instances of chromaticism in order to further the mourning feeling of the song. The accompaniment switches between supportive during the recitative styled sections, and independent during the more passionate section. This aligns with the texture of the song, which thickens with the song's passion. There is not anything in terms of independent section work for the accompaniment. The range of the piano varies, becoming more extreme during the passionate peak, then returning to the moderate range during the tamer sections. Though the accompaniment may be somewhat more intermediate, the vocal line's difficulty is not based on the technical aspects of the song. It is technically intermediate, but the emotion the piece strives to capture requires a sensitive and expressive musician, who is able to move the music beyond the notation on the page. Therefore, it is reasonable to consider it between intermediate and advanced.

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Ralph Vaughan Williams

(1872 – 1958)

Background

- 1) Ralph Vaughan Williams is considered to be one of the most influential composers from the British tradition in the modern era.
- 2) His musical talents and abilities revealed themselves at the early age of six, at which time he began his study of the piano, organ, and violin, and also composed his first piece.¹
- 3) Three years later, he began his study of viola, and began having his works performed in concerts. After this he studied at the Royal College of Music.¹
- 4) Vaughan Williams developed and maintained a close personal friendship with renowned instrumental composer Gustav Holst, known for his concert band suites, and instrumental suite *The Planets*.¹
- 5) His compositions, along with those of Holst, aided in the development of a distinct British musical style.

- a. Many of his music drew directly from unearthed English folk songs, which aided in the creation of this nationalistic compositional style.
- 6) Vaughan Williams composed symphonic and choral works in addition to his 150 songs.
- a. He was also the editor of the official “English Hymnal” of the Anglican Church.
- 7) Major Works
- a. *Songs of Travel*, a baritone song cycle, with poetry by Robert Louis Stevenson
 - b. *The House of Life*, a soprano song cycle, with poetry by Dante Gabriel Rossetti²
 - c. *On Wenlock Edge*, a tenor song cycle accompanied by string quartet and piano, with poetry by A.E. Housman³
- 8) Associated Poets⁴: Robert Louis Stevenson, William Barnes, William Shakespeare

General Stylistic Elements

- 1) Vocal Line
- a. Melodic Treatment
 - i. Many of Vaughan William’s vocal lines are set syllabically, in order to evoke the spirit and meaning of the texts being set.
 - ii. His melodies are incredibly catchy and melodically pleasing.
 - b. Range
 - i. The ranges of his pieces vary, and often are set for specific voice parts.
 - ii. All of his cycles are composed for a singular voice part, putting them in similar ranges and tessituras throughout.
 - c. Rhythmic Tendencies
 - i. His vocal lines incorporate the dance rhythms of English folk music, which served as an inspiration for his musical style.

d. Meter

- i. Though the meter will sometimes change, Vaughan Williams tends to keep his metric structures simple.

e. Tonality

- i. As was common in the folk music which inspired his compositions, his songs are often written in minor keys and modes.
- ii. In general, his music is fairly diatonic to the key in which it is written.

f. Prosody

- i. Vaughan Williams paid careful attention to the text he was setting and was highly concerned with evoking the drama of the poetry.

g. Difficulty

- i. His songs vary in difficulty, making his repertoire viable for every level of vocalist.

2) Accompaniment

a. Supportive/Independent Vocal Relation

- i. Vaughan William's accompaniments often partner the vocal line, even to the point of doubling the melody.

b. Introductions/Interludes/Postludes

- i. Independent expressive passages in the accompaniment are utilized.

c. Range

- i. To evoke textual drama, various ranges and registers of the piano are used.

d. Rhythmic Tendencies

- i. The accompaniment is used to express textual meaning, so the rhythms will often be emblematic of something relevant to the text.
- e. Meter
 - i. As above, Vaughan Williams typically composed in relatively simple meters, though he occasionally would employ some shifts in time.
- f. Texture
 - i. Vaughan Williams' accompaniments tend to be incredibly atmospheric.
 - ii. To accomplish this, the textures of his accompaniments are often varied, with some songs having arpeggiated polyphonic accompaniments, and others with chordal homophony.
- g. Difficulty
 - i. Pianists should typically be intermediate to advanced, considering the variability of difficulties of his writing.

Songs Studied

1) "The Vagabond," from *Songs of Travel*

- a. Text: "Give to me the life I love, / Let the love go by me, / Give the jolly heaven above / And the byway night me. / Bed in the bush with stars to see, / Bread I dip in the river -- / There's the life for a man like me, / There's the life for ever. // Let the blow fall soon or late, / Let what will be o'er me; / Give the face of earth around / And the road before me. / Wealth I seek not, hope nor love, / Nor a friend to know me; / All I seek, the heaven above / And the road below me. // Or let autumn fall on me / Where afield I linger, / Silencing the bird on tree, / Biting the blue finger; / White as meal the frosty field -- / Warm the fireside haven -- /

Not to autumn will I yield, / Not to winter even! // Let the blow fall soon or late, /
Let what will be o'er me; / Give the face of earth around, / And the road before
me. / Wealth I ask not, hope, nor love, / Nor a friend to know me. / All I ask, the
heaven above / And the road below me.”⁶

As the opening piece to his cycle *Songs of Travel*, Ralph Vaughan Williams’ “The Vagabond” serves as the profession of the wandering vagabond lifestyle and doctrine of the cycle’s speaker. The melodic line is set with a declamatory treatment, befitting of the textual meaning of Stevenson’s poetry. It is clear throughout, as is evidenced in the following examples of both melodic and accompaniment nuance, that prosody and textual depiction was incredibly important to Vaughan Williams when setting this poem.

Rhythmically speaking, the simple patterns of quarter and eighth notes, in combination with the syllabic setting, give the piece a natural sound, as though the vocal line is constantly in motion. The melody moves predominantly stepwise, adding to this natural feeling a wandering sense, aligning accurately with the speaker’s personality and station in life. The range is relatively medium, pushing up slightly higher into the baritone head voice in some sections. However, each stanza peaks with a forte high note, on critical words, such as “all I ask,” “all I seek,” and “that’s the life.” These phrases are punctuations of the vagabond speaker’s philosophy, making them deserve of pinnacle melodic treatments, as Vaughan Williams’ gave them.

The meter is fairly consistent throughout; however, a stanza in the middle is set at a faster tempo than the rest of the piece. Looking toward the text, which states, “not toward autumn will I yield,” it is clear that this section is meant to carry more intensity than the typical wandering of the verses. This stanza emulates the struggle of a vagabond’s lifestyle, which, through endurance and persistence, is then resolved at the return of the initial calmer tempo. This section also

modulates up from C minor into E minor, increasing the dramatic urgency mandated by the text. However, though this modulation and all the stanza cadences are distinct, the tonality fluctuates throughout each verse, symbolically wandering through various key centers, as though the tonality is a vagabond itself.

The accompaniment is fairly supportive of the vocal line, at times doubling and harmonizing directly with the vocal line. In the pianissimo sections, such as the openings to each C Minor stanza, it almost feels as though the accompaniment is transparent, as the texture is incredibly thin, and the range is relatively medium. However, in stanza peaks, as well as the intensified E minor stanza, the texture of the accompaniment thickens, the extremes of the piano's range are employed, and the rhythmic figures become more complex, with arpeggiated figures and runs appearing. Looking specifically toward accompaniment rhythm, Vaughan William's gives the piano's bass range a simple bassline, which moves stepwise back and forth, as though it is wandering. It immediately evokes the textual notions of a vagabond's lifestyle. IN terms of independent passages, the accompaniment opens the piece with this simple bassline, as well as repeating a melodic motif in the treble range. This serves two purposes: establishing the tonality, and building up the atmosphere of a wandering vagabond, travelling through their life.

This piece could likely be classified as a late-intermediate difficulty level for both vocalists and pianists. Provided the vocal range is comfortable, a semi-experienced singer could successfully perform this work. The natural sound of the vocal line would assist the singer, allowing them to focus on phrasing, control of the upper range, and the more difficult intense stanza. There is very little fanfare in the accompaniment other than the E minor stanza, and it is fairly repetitive, making it likely middle to high intermediate level.

2) “Bright is the Ring of Words,” from *Songs of Travel*

- a. Text: “Bright is the ring of words / When the right man rings them, / Fair the fall of songs / When the singer sings them, / Still they are carolled and said– / On wings they are carried– / After the singer is dead / And the maker buried. // Low as the singer lies / In the field of heather, / Songs of his fashion bring / The swains together. / And when the west is red / With the sunset embers, / The lover lingers and sings / And the maid remembers.”⁷

This piece serves as a testament to the endurance of art and, specifically, song music, which has the capability of outlasting its creator and performer. The speaker comments on this process, and how it can bring to life memories of the past, immortalizing those whom it survived beyond. The text is incredibly bittersweet; due to this, Vaughan Williams’s carefully approached his setting of the poetry. A mixture of various tonal centers, flipping major and minor sonorities. These pivots align with the textual meaning, indicating his attention to prosody in this work. For example, the final lines “the lover lingers and sings / and the maid remembers” contain one of these pivots. The lover’s reminiscing is set in minor, which is contrasted by the major cadence of the memories of the passed singer, brought back to the maid by the music. This is an example of the endurance and power of music, as the speaker describes throughout the song.

Continuing with prosody, Vaughan Williams repeated various melodic and harmonic content throughout this song, altering the stylistic approach, in order to fit the text being sung in the vocal line. For example, the opening lyric, “bright is the ring of words,” is fittingly proclamatory and proud. The second stanza begins with “low as the singer lies,” set to the exact same pitches in accompaniment and vocal line as the opening lyric. However, it is far more delicate, and the piano chords are now rolled, creating contrast between the texts being depicted.

The melody to this song is set incredibly naturally. Moving with stepwise motion and simple rhythmic figures, it seems as though the music is directly crafted in accordance with the natural speech of the poetry. This is partially achieved through the alternations between triple, quadruple, and quintuple meter. Essentially, the metric framework of this song is secondary to the text being set. The vocal line is also set in a lower tessitura of the vocal range, utilizing the vocal basement on the text “sunset embers,” as though the voice itself is the sun dipping below the horizon. All of this natural setting is done in order to give way musically to the text being set, so that the emotions evoked by the text can synthesize with the music, in order to bring back memories in the audience, as the speaker affirms that music has the power to do.

The accompaniment is entirely supportive of the vocal line throughout this song. It serves to increase the effect of all of the aforementioned musical elements. The rhythm of the accompaniment aligns with the stylistic changes, done in order to heighten the listener’s awareness of the text and meaning. The range and texture also varies throughout, in accordance with the textual emotions Vaughan Williams sought to evoke. Due to the subservient role of the accompaniment in this piece, there are no independent passages in the accompaniment.

In light of the prosody and nuance of this piece, it would likely require both an advanced singer and pianist. Other than the ametric feeling of the piece and the usage of the low baritone range, there is very little technically demanding about this piece. However, Vaughan Williams’ very carefully crafted this song to convey the text; therefore, an intermediate singer could sing the music fine, but an advanced singer would be required to fully grasp the nuance and thematic content of this song. For the accompaniment, an advanced pianist should be employed in order to ensure all the stylistic variations, contrasts, and nuance be duly honored.



Madeleine Dring

(1923 – 1977)

Background

- 1) Madeleine Dring was known for her various abilities in multiple artistic disciplines:
 - a. Dring began studying violin at the age of 10.
 - b. Aside from violin, Dring played the piano and sang.
 - c. Dring was also a successful composer.
 - d. She found success as an actress, writer, and artist.
 - e. In her time at the Royal College of Music, she studied mime and drama, along with her various musical skills.⁵
- 2) Starting at age 10, Dring attended the Royal College of Music on scholarship for her violin talent. She studied multiple disciplines under a variety of teachers.⁵
- 3) Some of Dring's teachers include⁵: Stanley Drummond Wolff, Leslie Fly, Percy Buck, Herbert Howells, and Ralph Vaughan Williams
- 4) Dring had both perfect pitch and synesthesia, which greatly influenced her creative artistic endeavors, including her compositional output.

5) Many of her compositions were written for theatrical productions, plays, and films, leading her to develop an incredibly expressive and theatrical musical style.

6) Major Works

a. *Five Betjeman Songs*, a collection of settings of texts by Sir John Betjeman

7) Associated Poets: William Shakespeare, John Dryden, John Betjeman, D.F. Aiken,

General Stylistic Elements

1) Vocal Line

a. Melodic Treatment

i. Due to her perfect pitch, her melodies often contain unusual intervallic content, which may be difficult for some singers to achieve.

b. Range

i. Her pieces tend to be written in keys for middle to high voices.

c. Rhythmic Tendencies

i. Her music often incorporates idioms from jazz, cabaret, and Latin music, which influences the rhythmic content of her vocal lines.

d. Meter

i. Dring's metric content is fairly difficult, with unusual and shifting time signatures used in her songs.

e. Tonality

i. Her melodic lines are written modally, with influences from jazz and English folk song music.

ii. The general tonality of her pieces is diatonic, though unprepared dissonance and strange harmonic content is used often in her works.

- f. Prosody
 - i. Due to her theatrical composition style, prosody and drama in her music was incredibly important.
 - g. Difficulty
 - i. As her perfect pitch influenced her melodic composition, an advanced singer, or even a strong intermediate singer with an adept ear would be needed to perform her vocal works.
- 2) Accompaniment
- a. Supportive/Independent Vocal Relation
 - i. Her accompaniments were written to be atmospheric. Due to her synesthesia, Dring created soundscapes that matched the dramatic content of the poetry being set.
 - b. Introductions/Interludes/Postludes
 - i. Dring's accompaniments contain long and theatrical independent sections.
 - c. Range
 - i. Ranges of accompaniments tend to vary for the sake of creating soundscapes.
 - d. Rhythmic Tendencies
 - i. Dring used repetitive rhythmic figures, which can often be challenging and intricate.
 - e. Meter
 - i. As stated above, the meters of Dring's works were metrically diverse.
 - f. Texture

- i. With most of her accompaniment elements, Dring used diverse textures in order to create soundscapes based upon her synesthesia.
- g. Difficulty
 - i. Her accompaniments are fairly challenging, which likely requires a strong pianist to successfully play.

Song Studied

1) "Song of the Nightclub Proprietress"

- a. Text: "I walked into the nightclub in the morning, / there was Kummel on the handle of the door, / the ashtrays were unemptied, / The cleaning unattempted, / And a squashed tomato sandwich on the floor. // I pulled aside the thick magenta curtains / So Regency, so Regency, my dear / And a host of little spiders / Ran a race across the ciders / To a box of baby 'pollies by the beer. // Oh sun upon the summergoing bypass / Where ev'rything is speeding to the sea, / And wonder beyond wonder / that here where lorries thunder / The sun should ever percolate to me. // When Boris used to call in his Sedanca, / When Teddy took me down to his estate, / When my nose excited passions, / And my clothes were in the fashion, / When my beaux were never cross if I was late, // There was sun enough for lazing upon beaches / There was fun enough for far into the night; / But I'm dying now and done for, / What on earth was all the fun for? / I am ill and old and terrified and tight."⁸

This piece is a great example of Dring's theatrical compositional style. In this song, she describes the plight of a nightclub owner, lamenting about their current state of life, then reminiscing upon the days gone by, when life was simpler and more enjoyable. In order to

achieve this theatrical quality, the accompaniment is given an independent introduction and postlude, both of which create a soundscape for the text to be set prior to and following the vocal part's feature. Additionally, she musically reflects the text through her prosody, specifically utilizing tonality to achieve this. The opening lamenting section, as well as the closing section, beginning with the return from the reminiscing on the past tense lyric "there was sun enough," are both set in minor tonalities, in order to evoke the melancholic state of the speaker. However, the reminiscing, beginning with the lyric "Oh sun upon the summergoing bypass," is set entirely in a major key, brightening the mood of the audience and speaker with the memories of the good times in the speaker's life. This also heightens the dark tone of the return to the minor key, by contrasting the two sonorities.

The influence of jazz upon Dring's compositional style is incredibly apparent in this work. Blues scales and patterns are used both in the vocal line and accompaniment, bringing embellishment to the tonalities utilized. The meter is fairly straightforward, staying in common time throughout, though the rhythms are certainly influenced by the jazz style. In swing throughout, the vocal line's rhythms are natural and befitting to the text. The melody is set entirely syllabically, treated as though it is a standard jazz ballad. The piano is incredibly flashy, with jazz riffs occurring frequently. It sounds as though a jazz musician is present in the nightclub with the speaker, underscoring their laments and reminiscing.

During rests in the vocal line, the accompaniment can be relatively independent, though its primary purpose is to support the melody throughout the song. The accompaniment's range stays fairly in the middle, gravitating slightly higher in order to pierce the texture when interjecting jazz styled riffs. The accompaniment serves as its own voice, even in support, giving it a unique solo style texture, with running lines contrasting chords, as is common practice in the

jazz style. In terms of the vocal range, it stays mostly in the middle of the voice, only reaching up higher for stronger cases of lamenting, like the penultimate phrase “what on earth was all the fun for?” This heightened use of the vocal range increases the melancholy, while also adding to the questioning nature of this line.

The accompaniment, due to the jazz style in which it is written, should be performed by an advanced pianist, preferably with some experience with jazz piano, in order to bring an additional level of authenticity to the performance. The vocal line is not very technically challenging, making it a decent pick for an intermediate singer. However, it is important that the singer learns to do their homework, so they can learn the specific language and nuance of this piece. It may also be a good choice to introduce the vocal jazz style to an advanced singer without much experience in this realm. It is filled with detail that could be expressed well by an advanced singer, so assigning this to an advanced singer would both behoove the performance of the piece, as well as the singer’s personal musical diversity.

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