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A GRADUATE RECITAL IN VOICE

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School in  
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
For the Degree of  
Master of Music

Whitley Chesney

Pittsburg State University

Pittsburg, Kansas

May 2020

A GRADUATE RECITAL IN VOICE

WHITLEY CHESNEY

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## A GRADUATE RECITAL IN VOICE

An Abstract of the Thesis by  
Whitley Chesney

This thesis is an extension of Mrs. Chesney's graduate vocal recital program notes. Each chapter includes biographical information about each composer, analysis of each piece, information about the larger work, and performance aspects. Composers include Dominick Argento, Gaetano Donizetti, Francis Poulenc, and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Whitley's recital takes place on May 2, 2020.

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Pittsburg State University  
Pittsburg, KS

Graduate Recital

Whitley Chesney, Soprano  
Lori Kehle, Piano

Saturday, May 2, 2020  
McCray Recital Hall  
3:00 p.m.

Program

Six Elizabethan Songs.....Dominick Argento  
I. Spring (1927–2019)  
II. Sleep  
III. Winter  
IV. Dirge  
V. Diaphenia  
VI. Hymn

from Don Pasquale  
Quel guardo il cavaliere...So anch'io la virtù magica.....Gaetano Donizetti  
(1797-1848)

Intermission

Airchantes.....Francis Poulenc  
I. Air Romantique (1899- 1963)  
II. Air Champêtre  
III. Air Grave  
IV. Air Vif

from Die Zauberflöte  
O zittre nicht, mein lieber Sohn.....Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
Ach, ich fühl's (1756–1791)  
Der Hölle Rache

## CHAPTER I

### DOMINICK ARGENTO

#### BIOGRAPHY

Dominick Argento was an American composer born to Sicilian immigrant parents on October 27, 1927 in York, Pennsylvania. When he was a young boy, he took piano lessons and taught himself music theory from books he checked out at the library. After serving as a cryptographer in the United States Army for two years, Mr Argento earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in music from Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore, Maryland. While attending Peabody, he met Carolyn Bailey, a soprano who often premiered his works and later became his wife.<sup>1</sup>

Between his bachelor's and master's degrees, Mr Argento went to Florence on a Fulbright Scholarship to study with Luigi Dallapiccola. When he came back to Baltimore for his master's degree, he studied with Henry Cowell and got more involved with opera. In 1957, after obtaining his master's degree, Mr Argento went on to earn a doctorate degree in composition in Rochester at the Eastman School of Music. The following year, Mr Argento spent time in Florence, Italy after being awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship.

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<sup>1</sup>*Argento, Dominick*. (n.d.). Grove Music Online. Retrieved March 30, 2020, from <https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.library.pittstate.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-1002248070>



Upon returning to the United States, Mr Argento and his wife moved to Minnesota, where he took a position at the University of Minnesota. Mr Argento was a professor of music theory and composition from 1958 until his retirement in 1997. He composed for many Minnesota ensembles, including the Minnesota Orchestra, the Minnesota Opera, and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra.<sup>2</sup> Mr Argento composed several works including, operas, solo vocal, choral, orchestral, chamber instrumental, and solo instrumental. Mr Argento continued composing into his 80s, but eventually stopped when he developed hearing issues. In 2004, Mr Argento published *Catalogue Raisonne as Memoir: A Composer's Life* in which he uses each chapter to expand on different compositions.

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<sup>2</sup>Tommasini, A. (2019, February 26). Dominick Argento, 91, "Traditionalist" Composer of Operas and Orchestral Works. *The New York Times*, B10(L). Gale Health and Wellness.

### *Six Elizabethan Songs*

Mr Argento composed these six songs for high voice in 1957-58. This 19-minute song cycle was premiered on April 23, 1958 by tenor Nicholas DiVirgilio and pianist David Burge at the Eastman School of Music. In 1963, Mr Argento scored the songs for baroque ensemble. The baroque ensemble arrangement was performed for the first time on March 8, 1963 at the First Unitarian Society in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The ensemble included soprano Carolyn Bailey, oboist George Houle, harpsichordist Jane Burris, violinist Jane LaBerge, and cellist David Ferguson.

Mr Argento received a letter from Nicholas DiVirgilio while he was living in Florence on his Guggenheim Fellowship. Mr Argento knew Nicholas from his time at Eastman, where Nicholas sang the tenor role in the premiere of Mr Argento's opera The Boor. In the letter, Nicholas asked if Mr Argento would compose some songs for his graduation recital. Mr Argento subsequently went to a bookstore and purchased Francis Palgrave's *The Golden Treasury*, from which he picked six poems from the Elizabethan era.

In Mr Argento's book, *Catalogue Raisonne as Memoir: A Composer's Life*, he states that *Six Elizabethan Songs* was the first work he composed after finishing graduate school and it is his most performed piece. He stated that he prefers the baroque ensemble arrangement to the original piano accompaniment. He also made a note in the text that he was informed that the work is required repertoire for voice major in Canadian music schools.

## Spring

*Spring* is the first song in the cycle and the text is by Thomas Nashe. There are words in the text that are reminiscent of bird calls. The poem is read as a narrator describing the beginning of springtime and the various things that are experienced. The accompaniment is rustling in nature, bringing about the bustling of the newness of spring.

Spring, the sweet spring, is the year's pleasant king,  
Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring,  
Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing:  
    Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!

The palm and may make country houses gay,  
Lambs frisk and play, the shepherds pipe all day,  
And we hear aye birds tune this merry lay:  
    Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!

The fields breathe sweet, the daisies kiss our feet,  
Young lovers meet, old wives a-sunning sit,  
In every street these tunes our ears do greet:  
    Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to witta-woo!  
    Spring, the sweet spring!

## Sleep

*Sleep* is the second song in the cycle and the text is by Samuel Daniel. This text was Mr Daniel's 45th sonnet in his 50 sonnet cycle *Delia*. This piece has a tempo marking of *Lentamente*, which means slowly. The text can be seen as somewhat of a lullaby, willing the listener to sleep. The contrasting middle section is slightly faster with agitated sixteenth note triplets in the piano. This can be construed as a dreaming part of the sleep cycle, before going back to the original tempo to suggest a calmness of sleep.

Care-charmer Sleep, son of the sable Night,  
Brother to Death, in silent darkness born:  
Relieve my languish, and restore the light,  
With dark forgetting of my cares, return;  
And let the day be time enough to mourn  
The shipwreck of my ill-adventur'd youth:  
Let waking eyes suffice to wail their scorn,  
Without the torment of the night's untruth.  
Cease dreams, th' imagery of our day-desires,  
To model forth the passions of the morrow;  
Never let rising sun approve you liars,  
To add more grief to aggravate my sorrow.  
Still let me sleep, embracing clouds in vain;  
And never wake to feel the day's disdain.

## Winter

The text for the third song in the cycle comes from William Shakespeare's *Love's Labors Lost*. Similar to the text of *Spring*, the text of *Winter* is describing the cold of winter and the effect it has on people. Again, we hear birds calling, which gets repeated in the piano accompaniment. There are five people that the singer describes in addition to the birds and the weather. The piano has eighth-note chords that alternate with the voice. While the singer is singing about Joan and the pot, the piano has a couple sixteenth-note descending/ascending runs that depict the swirling of the pot.

When icicles hang by the wall,  
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,  
And Tom bears logs into the hall,  
And milk comes frozen home in pail,  
When blood is nipped, and ways be foul,  
Then nightly sings the staring owl,  
To-whoo; to-whit, to-whoo, a merry note,  
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all aloud the wind doth blow,  
And coughing drowns the parson's saw,  
And birds sit brooding in the snow,  
And Marian's nose looks red and raw,  
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,  
Then nightly sings the staring owl,  
To-whoo, to-whit, to-whoo, a merry note,  
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

## Dirge

*Dirge* is the fourth song in the cycle. The text is from William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. The piece is the slowest in the cycle, with the eighth note marked at 60 bpm. The opening piano introduction gives the essence of death and a mood of finality. The opening phrases of the piano and voice together show a starkness with no bass to ground the singer. The text is portrayed in that the singer has died and no one mourns him. This piece is a sharp contrast from the fast paced *Winter* before and *Diaphenia* after.

Come away, come away, death,  
And in sad cypress let me be laid;  
Fly away, fly away, breath;  
I am slain by a fair cruel maid.  
My shroud of white, stuck all with yew,  
O prepare it! My part of death,  
no one so true did share it.

Not a flower, not a flower sweet,  
On my black coffin let there be strown;  
Not a friend, not a friend greet  
My poor corpse, where my bones shall be thrown:  
A thousand thousand sighs to save,  
Lay me, O, where  
Sad true lover never find my grave  
To weep there!

## Diaphenia

*Diaphenia*, the fifth song in the cycle, has a text written by Henry Constable. The poem's subtitle is "Damelus' Song to His Diaphenia". The text is from Damelus perspective and he is expressing his love for Diaphenia. The text has several one syllable words that are given a triplet, which helps emphasize the words. "Power," "dead," "life," and "love" are given long durations with several notes of different lengths, which emphasizes these words further.

Diaphenia like the daffadowndilly,  
White as the sun, fair as the lily,  
Heigh ho, how I do love thee!  
I do love thee as my lambs  
Are belovèd of their dams;  
How blest were I if thou would'st prove me.

Diaphenia like the spreading roses,  
That in thy sweets all sweets encloses,  
Fair sweet, how I do love thee!  
I do love thee as each flower  
Loves the sun's life-giving power;  
For dead, thy breath to life might move me.

Diaphenia like to all things blessèd,  
When all thy praises are expressèd,  
Dear joy, how I do love thee!  
As the birds do love the spring,  
Or the bees their careful king:  
Then in requite, sweet virgin, love me!

## Hymn

*Hymn* is the final text of the cycle. The text is from Ben Jonson's masque *Cynthia's Revells* and it is call "Hesperus' Hymne to Cynthia". The masque is in honor of Queen Elizabeth I, who is symbolized by Cynthia. The text is told from the viewpoint of Hesperus, as he is singing about the regality of his Goddess, Cynthia. The phrase "Goddess excellently bright" is repeated thrice, showing the importance of the phrase.

Queen and huntress, chaste and fair,  
Now the sun is laid to sleep,  
Seated in thy silver chair,  
State in wonted manner keep:  
Hesperus entreats thy light,  
Goddess excellently bright.

Earth, let not thy envious shade  
Dare itself to interpose;  
Cynthia's shining orb was made  
Heaven to clear when day did close:  
Bless us then with wishèd sight,  
Goddess excellently bright.

Lay thy bow of pearl apart,  
And thy crystal-shining quiver;  
Give unto thy flying hart  
Space to breathe, how short soever:  
Thou that mak'st a day of night—  
Goddess excellently bright.



## PERFORMANCE ASPECTS

Performance of *Spring* can be challenging as the introduction leaves the singer with only a quarter rest before coming in. The first word, “Spring”, is sung on an F5, which for some singers is not an easy pitch to begin a song with. Mr Argento does a great job of putting less-important words, such as “then” or “the”, on off beats so they are not stressed. The difficult part of this for the singer is that occasionally, these words are the beginning of a phrase, or the continuation of a phrase after a rest. This can become a challenge for singers to not emphasize the word because it is the first in a phrase.

The piano gives the singer plenty of support, while also maintaining a bustling of sixteenth notes, nearly throughout the piece. There are only two places in the piece that the singer starts on a downbeat, one of which is the phrase “And we hear ay birds tune this merry lay”. This phrase is interesting because while it does begin on the downbeat, the piano plays a strong D-major chord on beat two of the measure preceding the phrase. The singer comes in on beat one and the temptation is to come in early because the length of the rest between the preceding half of the phrase and the continuation feels like a long time. The singer may feel the urge to come in on the second half of beat two, rather than the downbeat of the next measure. The second place that the singer comes in on a downbeat is the final phrase of the piece, “Spring, the sweet Spring!” This is less of a challenge because the singer is reiterating the opening phrase, bringing the piece to a close.

Performance of *Sleep* can feel like a drastic change following *Spring*. The singer has to mentally shift for *Sleep* due to the dramatic tempo shift. The A section of *Sleep* is slow with the eighth note at 66 bpm. The singer has to take care to manage their breath so

that the lines do not feel disjointed. Mr Argento kindly placed rests at places where he knew the singer would need to breathe. This helps to not interrupt the line. He put quite a few chromatic notes in this piece and the singer must take care to keep every pitch in tune, which can be difficult when singing chromatically.

In the B section, the tempo goes 30 bpm faster, with the eighth note being marked at 96 bpm. The piano starts with eighth notes in the left hand and sixteenth note triplets in the right hand. The singer comes in on the fourth sixteenth note of the first measure and must sing straight sixteenth notes, with an occasional longer duration. This can be difficult if the singer listens too closely to the right hand of the piano. The singer needs to have a firm grasp of subdividing so that they can keep the piece going while still placing the words in the correct rhythmic place.

The return of the A section brings relief to what the singer had to accomplish in the B section. Again, the piece is marked at eighth note being 66 bpm. The challenge of this returning section is to count the rests carefully. There are more and longer rests than in the first A section. This can be challenging if the singer goes on autopilot rather than focusing on the piece.

*Winter* is a difficult piece in that the singer starts on their own. The tempo is marked at dotted quarter note being at 138 bpm. It is very quick and rhythmic, meaning that the singer must be accurate with counting. The piano comes in a little over a measure into the piece, when the singer is holding an E5. Again, Mr Argento uses quite a few accidentals, which challenges the singer to tune precisely. The singer and the piano are in

unison for phrases such as “And milk comes frozen home in pail;” as well as, “And Marian’s nose looks red and raw;” which can challenge singers to be precisely in tune with the piano. When the singer sings the bird calls, they are repeated in the piano just after. This piece functions like a puzzle, having something on nearly every eighth note, often alternating between the voice and the accompaniment. This can be challenging to line up between the singer and the pianist.

*Dirge* is challenging for the singer to begin due to the tessitura of the piano accompaniment. The piano starts with contrasting motion meeting on an octave D4 and D5 before some thick chords in the bass. The piano then plays a B5 and D6 from which the singer must sing a G4. The singer who can learn where this pitch is with muscle memory has great success in finding their opening pitch. The singer’s first several phrases are sung with the piano soaring above the vocal line, almost as if it were a descant. In the B section, the piano changes to quarter note chords that are much lower than the piano has been in the preceding measures. The singer needs to be careful that this does not throw them off because the singer does not change registers. The return of the A section leaves the singer in the same tessitura, while returning the piano to the upper, descant type line. This piece is the most challenging in the cycle due to its tempo and tessitura differences.

*Diaphenia* is fast and has quite a few words, which can make it difficult for the singer to shift from the slow pace of the *Dirge*. The piano doubles the voice in quite a bit of this piece. This might make the piece easier for singers, giving them a break from the sharp contrast that the other pieces have. The challenge is for the singer to not use this as a crutch when learning the piece.

*Hymn* has a majestic feel to it that the singer has not had to portray in the other pieces. Notated in 6/8, the singer may have trouble feeling the pulse at the beginning because the piano has a held chord and it is up to the singer to have a precise understanding of the subdivision. The singer has some challenging intervals to navigate in the measures that precede the 9/8 bars throughout the piece. Navigating from a C5 to F4 to Eb5, followed by D5 to G4 to F5 in the next measure. This happens thrice in the piece, each time before the 9/8 bar with the phrase “Goddess excellently bright.” The third time the pattern happens, everything is raised by a half step. These six measures are arguably the most challenging in the song. The other major challenge in this piece is that sometimes the piano is doubling the voice and other times it breaks off into something completely different. The singer needs to be able to sing their line independent of the piano so as not to rely on the piano when it may not be there.

## CHAPTER II

### GAETANO DONIZETTI

#### BIOGRAPHY

Gaetano Donizetti was born November 29, 1797 in Bergamo to Andrea and Domenica Donizetti. He was the fifth of six children in his modest family. His family was not a musical family, although his oldest brother, Giuseppe, was a military bandsman and became the chief of music for the Ottoman armies.<sup>3</sup> Donizetti's first musical training came from Simon Mayr, who founded the Lezioni Caritatevoli, which was a school to train musicians for the cathedral. Mayr gave Donizetti a scholarship when he was only nine years old. Donizetti was able to take lessons in singing, keyboard, composition, and theory.

In 1815, Mayr was able to arrange for Donizetti to continue studying at Bologna's Liceo Filarmonico Comunale with Padre Stanislao Mattei. While studying in Bologna, Donizetti composed mostly fugues and some sacred music. After finishing his studies in 1817, Mayr again helped Donizetti. Mayr set up Donizetti's first professional gig, which was a commission for which Donizetti composed *Enrico di Borgogna*. After that success,

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<sup>3</sup>*Donizetti, (Domenico) Gaetano*. (n.d.). Grove Music Online. Retrieved March 3, 2020, from <https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.library.pittstate.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000051832>

he received three more commissions. During this period, he also started writing sacred works and string quartets.

In 1821, Donizetti was commissioned to compose an opera for the Teatro Argentina in Rome. He ended up composing *Zoraid di Granata*, which was his most successful composition up to that point. While in Rome, Donizetti met the Vasselli family. Donizetti became best friends with Antonio Vasselli and he eventually married Virginia Vasselli in 1828. Donizetti settled in Naples in February of 1822, and he stayed for 16 years.

Donizetti's thirty-first opera was *Anna Bolena*, and its success is what established Donizetti's reputation. After composing around 75 operas, among other works, Donizetti had to stop composing in 1845 due to complications from syphilis. In 1846, Donizetti was taken to an asylum in Ivry, a suburb of Paris. After demands of Donizetti's family, his doctors at Ivry allowed him to move home to Bergamo in the fall of 1848. He succumbed to syphilis on April 8, 1848 and was buried in a cemetery in Bergamo. However, in 1875, his remains, along with Mayr's were moved to the cathedral of Santa Maria Maggiore.

## *Don Pasquale*

*Don Pasquale* is an opera in three acts which was composed in 1842 and had its premiere on January 3, 1843. The premiere was at the Théâtre Italien in Paris. The libretto was based on Angelo Anelli's libretto for *Ser Marc' Antonio* and was written by Donizetti and Giovanni Ruffini, who used the pseudonym Michele Accursi. The cast has five main characters in addition to a chorus of servants, maids, and musicians. The main cast includes; Don Pasquale, an old bachelor and is sung by a bass; Dr Malatesta, a friend of Don Pasquale and is sung by a baritone; Ernesto, Don Pasquale's nephew and is sung by a tenor; Norina, a young widow who is sung by a soprano; and a notary, who is sung by a baritone or tenor. The opera takes place in Rome during the early 19th Century.

### The Plot Act I

Don Pasquale, a wealthy bachelor, has arranged for his nephew, Ernesto, to marry a wealthy spinster. Ernesto refuses because he loves the young, poor, widow Norina. Don Pasquale then decides that he will marry and have lots of children. He plans to punish Ernesto by disinheriting him and kicking him out. The show opens with Don Pasquale waiting, impatiently, for Dr Malatesta. When Dr Malatesta arrives, he suggests that his "sister" be Don Pasquale's bride as Don Pasquale does not have anyone in mind. Dr Malatesta describes his "sister" as a naive, timid, ingenuous girl who was brought up in a convent. Dr Malatesta is playing a trick on Don Pasquale because he is actually setting him up with Norina, who he is not related to. Don Pasquale breaks into a song about how he feels like a young man again.

Don Pasquale makes a plan to tell Ernesto that he is going to take a wife, which he has to repeat several times as Ernesto does not quite understand. When he finally understands, Ernesto realizes that since he will be disinherited, he will be cut off from his desired marriage to Norina. To make matters worse, Don Pasquale tells Ernesto that he has already consulted Dr Malatesta.

The scene changes to Norina's house where she is reading a novel about a love stricken knight. She thinks the story is comical and gives vent to her mirth in a lively song. After she sings, a letter arrives from Ernesto and she is barely able to read it before Dr Malatesta enters. Dr Malatesta tells Norina that Don Pasquale has fallen for his scheme, which will ultimately make him agree to Ernesto's marriage. Norina is not happy about the way things have gone because they haven't had time to fill Ernesto in on the scheme. Since he wasn't filled in, Ernesto wrote in his letter to Norina that he can't marry her and he plans to leave Europe the next day. Dr Malatesta tells Norina not to worry and then coaches her on how to behave with Don Pasquale when he meets her as his convent bred bride.

## Act II

Act two opens with Ernesto in his living quarters. He is in complete despair at the thought of losing his bride and his home since Don Pasquale has ordered him out. In the main house, Don Pasquale has received Dr Malatesta and Norina, who is in disguise. She acts like she is shy while Don Pasquale is watching her and persuading her to speak. When she finally speaks to Don Pasquale, she tells him that her interests are in household chores, such as sewing, and looking after the kitchen. A notary has been sent for and Dr



Malatesta dictates the terms of the marriage while the others repeat after him. They realize that they need another witness, but no one comes until Ernesto comes rushing in proclaiming his betrayal. Dr Malatesta must figure out a way to let Ernesto in on the plan without letting Don Pasquale know.

As soon as the contract is signed, Norina switches her behavior from shy to a downright spitfire. This surprises Don Pasquale who fails at all attempts of authority. He does not understand the sudden change and is struck dumb with horror as Norina says to him that Ernesto is the man to take her out walking because it is obviously out of the capacity for a man of Don Pasquale's age. Norina calls out for the servants and when she realizes there are only three, she laughs and orders the hiring of more and that the wages be doubled. The second act comes to a conclusion as Don Pasquale can't stand it any longer and rages that he has been duped.

### Act III

The third act opens in the same room as the second act ends. The servants are rushing around and doing whatever Norina has ordered them to do. Don Pasquale sees that she is dressed up and about to leave the house and he asks where she is going. She tells him that she is going to the theater without him. They argue until Norina slaps Don Pasquale across the face. Don Pasquale realizes that this must be the end of his hopes and the hateful marriage he got himself in to. Norina is sorry, just for a moment, that it had to get to such a point for Don Pasquale to come to his senses. She runs from the room, but she is sure to drop a note on her way out. The note looks to be from Ernesto and he is requesting that Norina meet him in the garden that evening. Don Pasquale reads the note

and decides to use it to get rid of the whole affair so he sends for Dr Malatesta. As soon as Don Pasquale leaves the room, the servants come back in and comment on the happenings in the house. Dr Malatesta arrives and tries to give Don Pasquale his advice. This culminates in a duet between the men.

The scene changes to the garden where Ernesto serenades Norina and they end up singing a love duet. Don Pasquale and Dr Malatesta surprise them in the garden, but Ernesto escapes. Dr Malatesta is able to twist things in a way that satisfies everyone. Ernesto and Norina plan to be married and Don Pasquale, who is relieved at the turn of events, supports them.

Quel guardo il cavaliere...So anch'io la virtu magica

This aria takes place in the second scene of act one. The setting for this scene is in Norina's house. Norina is reading about a knight who is completely in love. As Norina is reading the novel, she finds it comical and proceeds to break into song about knowing how to flirt and tease. She says that she is fun, smart, and has an excellent heart.

Quel guardo il cavaliere...So anch'io la virtù  
magica

Quel guardo il cavaliere  
in mezzo al cor trafisse;  
piegò il ginocchio e disse:  
Son vostro cavalier.  
E tanto era in quel guardo  
savor di paradiso  
che il cavalier Riccardo,  
tutto d'amor conquiso,  
giurò che ad altra mai  
non volgeria il pensiero.  
Ah ah! Ah ah!

So anch'io la virtù magica  
d'un guardo a tempo e loco;  
so anch'io come is bruciano  
i cori a lento foco.  
D'un breve sorrisetto  
conosco anch'io l'effetto,  
di menzognera lagrima,  
d'un subito languor.  
Conosco il mille modi  
dell'amorose frodi,  
i vezzi e l'arti facili  
per adescare un cor.  
So anch'io la virtù magica  
per ispirare amor;  
conosco l'effetto, ah sì,  
per ispirare amor.

Ho testa bizzarra,  
son pronta, vivace,  
brillare mi piace,  
mi piace scherzar.  
Se monto in furore,  
di rado sto al segno,

That glance pierced the knight...  
I too know the magic power

That glance pierced the knight  
to the depths of his heart;  
he fell on bended knee and said:  
I am your knight.  
And there was in that glance such a  
taste of paradise  
that the knight Richard,  
totally conquered by love,  
swore that to another woman never  
would he turn his thoughts.  
Ha ha! Ha ha!

I too know the magic power  
of a glance at the right time and place;  
I too know how hearts can smoulder  
at a slow burn.  
Of a fleeting little smile  
I also know the effect,  
of a furtive tear,  
of a sudden languor.  
I know the thousand ways  
of amorous tricks,  
the charms and easy skills  
for enticing a heart.  
I too know the magic power  
for inspiring love;  
I know the effect, ah yes,  
of inspiring love.

I have an eccentric mind,  
I'm quick-witted, high-spirited;  
I like to sparkle,  
I like to have fun.  
If I fly into a rage,  
rarely do I hit the target;

ma in riso lo sdegno  
fo presto a cangiar.

Ho testa bizzarra,  
ma core eccellente. Ah!  
Ho testa bizzarra,  
son pronta e vivace.  
Ah, mi piace scherzar.  
Ho testa vivace,  
mi piace scherzar.  
Ah, mi piace scherzar!

rather, I make the anger  
quickly change to laughter.

I have an eccentric mind,  
but an excellent heart. Ah!  
I have an eccentric mind;  
I'm quick-witted and high-spirited.  
Ah, I like to have fun,  
I have a lively mind;  
I like to have fun.  
Ah, I like to have fun!

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<sup>4</sup>Larsen, R. L., & Gerhart, M. (Eds.). (2002). *Coloratura Arias for Soprano*. G. Schirmer, Inc.

## PERFORMANCE ASPECTS

In the opening when Norina is reading the book, the vocal line has a flirtatious attitude with the grace notes and melismatic passages. In the aria, both the piano and vocal line have grace notes, which give the illusion of a carefree and flirtatious song. The grace notes can be difficult to navigate if the singer has not had much experience with them. The word “facili” has a suspension which contrasts with the G7 chord in the piano on the downbeat. The contrast of the C in the vocal line and the B natural in the piano can be a pitfall for singers. The language can sometimes be difficult when there is a mouthful on one note. The elisions in Italian singing can often be a challenge for native English speakers, as they do not always have experience with elisions. Before the coda, there is a melismatic passage that can be difficult for singers to correct if they learn it incorrectly. It is important to take care to learn the pitches and intervals precisely.

## CHAPTER III

### FRANCIS POULENC

#### BIOGRAPHY

Francis Poulenc was born on January 7, 1899 in Paris, France. His mother, Jenny, introduced him to the piano when he was five years old. His father allowed him to study at the Conservatoire after he got a traditional education at the Lycée Condorcet. However, all of his plans got interrupted when his mother died when he was 16 and his father died when he was 18. Thanks to studying with Ricardo Viñes, he was able to become an acquaintance of Georges Auric, Erik Satie, and Manuel de Falla. Everything that Poulenc composed before 1914 was destroyed by the composer. He debuted his first piece, *Rhapsodie nègre*, in Paris in 1917. He dedicated his first piece to Erik Satie. Igor Stravinsky helped him get his first works published by Chester in London.

Poulenc's works were often performed in concerts at the studio of Emile Lejeune, who was a painter. The concerts also included works of other composers including; Milhaud, Auric, Honegger, Tailleferre, and Durey. They formed the "Groupe des Six" in 1920. The six composers did not have similar composition styles, but their group was held together by their friendships. In 1921, he started studying with Charles Koechlin and was still his student when he got a commission for *Les biches*, which was performed for

the first time in Monte Carlo in 1924. In the late 1920's, he experienced his first serious time of depression. This was around the time that he became aware of his homosexuality.<sup>5</sup> Poulenc fell into a manic-depressive cycle.

In the 1930's, Poulenc became friends with baritone Pierre Bernac, for whom he composed around 90 *mélodies*. In 1947, he began collaborating with soprano Denise Duval. He took his first concert tour in the United States in 1948 and continued coming back until 1960. In the 1950s, he was dedicated to composing and distancing himself from mainstream music of the time. Poulenc died suddenly in his apartment in Paris of a heart attack on January 30, 1963.

Poulenc composed 146 *mélodies* with a variety of themes and levels of seriousness. He was quoted as saying, "One must set to music not simply the lines of the verses, but also that which lies between the lines and in the margins."<sup>6</sup> His vocal lines are often written with notes of equal value, and he did not want singers to shorten notes, even when they were weak syllables or weak beats. He preferred portamenti, but only when used with taste. He put indications of tempo in his scores because he was explicit in what tempo his *mélodies* should go, even going so far to put *sans ralentir*, which means no *ralentando*, in his pieces, especially at the end. Rather than using *crescendo* or *decrescendo* markings, Poulenc preferred to use dynamic contrast.

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<sup>5</sup>*Poulenc, Francis*. (n.d.). Grove Music Online. Retrieved March 14, 2020, from <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000022202>

<sup>6</sup>Bernac, P. (1970). *The Interpretation of French Song*. W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.

*Airs chantés*

*Airs chantés* is a collection of four poems written by Jean Moréas that Poulenc composed from May 1927-May 1928. Poulenc was quoted in 1954 saying, “I do not like this poet, but as a game, in order to tease my editor and friend, François Hepp, who adored him, I decided to set four of his sonnets to music promising myself all the sacrileges possible.” Later, he was even more harsh saying, “I detest Moréas and I chose these poems precisely because I found them suitable for mutilation.”<sup>7</sup> He composed this set out of order, starting with number four, *Air vif*, in May 1927. He composed number one, *Air romantique*, in August 1927, and finally numbers two and three, *Air champêtre* and *Air grave*, in May 1928.

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<sup>7</sup>Schmidt, C. B. (2001). *Entrancing Muse: A Documented Biography of Francis Poulenc* (Vol. 3). Pendragon Press.



Air romantique<sup>8</sup>

*Air romantique* is the first *mélodie* in the set of four by poet Jean Moréas. This poem comes from Moréas' book seven of *Stances*. It was composed in August 1927, after the composition of the fourth *mélodie*.

Air romantique

J'allais dans la campagne avec le vent  
d'orage,  
Sous le pâle matin, sous les nuages bas,  
Un corbeau ténébreux escortait mon  
voyage  
Et dans les flaques d'eau retentissaient  
mes pas.

La foudre à l'horizon faisait courir sa  
flamme  
Et l'Aquilon doublait ses longs gémiss-  
ments;  
Mais la tempête était trop faible pour  
mon âme,  
Qui couvrait le tonnerre avec ses batte-  
ments.

De la dépouille d'or du frêne et de  
l'érable  
L'Automne composait son éclatant  
butin,  
Et le corbeau toujours, d'un vol inexora-  
ble,  
M'accompagnait sans rien changer à  
mon destin.

Romantic Air

I walked in the countryside with the  
stormy wind,  
Beneath the pale morning, beneath the  
low clouds,  
A sinister crow followed me on my way  
And my steps splashed through the water  
puddles.

The lightning on the horizon unleashed  
its flame  
And the North Wind intensified its wail-  
ing;  
But the storm was too weak for my soul  
Which drowned the thunder with its  
throbbing.

From the golden spoils of ash and maple  
Autumn amassed her brilliant plunder,  
And the crow still, with inexorable  
flight,  
Without changing anything, accompa-  
nied me to my fate.

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<sup>8</sup>Moréas, J. (n.d.). *Air romantique*. Oxford Lieder. Retrieved April 4, 2020, from <https://www.oxfordlieder.co.uk/song/2761>

## Air champêtre<sup>9</sup>

*Air champêtre* is the second *mélodie* in the set of four by poet Jean Moréas. This poem comes from book six of *Stances* by Moréas. It was composed in May 1928, after the composition of the first and fourth *mélodies*.

### Air champêtre

Belle source, je veux me rappeler sans cesse,  
Qu'un jour guidé par l'amitié Ravi,  
j'ai contemplé ton visage, ô déesse,  
Perdu sous la mousse à moitié.

Que n'est-il demeuré, cet ami que je pleure,  
O nymphe, à ton culte attaché,  
Pour se mêler encore au souffle qui t'effleure  
Et répondre à ton flot caché.

### Pastoral Air

Lovely spring, I shall never cease to remember  
That on a day, guided by entranced friendship,  
I gazed on your face, O goddess,  
Half hidden beneath the moss.

Had he but remained, this friend whom I  
mourn,  
O nymph, a devotee of your cult,  
To mingle once more with the breeze that  
caresses you,  
And to respond to your hidden waters.

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<sup>9</sup>Moréas, J. (n.d.). *Air champêtre*. Oxford Lieder. Retrieved April 4, 2020, from <https://www.oxfordlieder.co.uk/song/2762>

Air grave<sup>10</sup>

*Air grave* is the third *mélodie* in the set of four by poet Jean Moréas. This poem is from book three of *Stances* by Moréas. It was composed in May 1928, after the composition of the first, second, and fourth *mélodies*.

Air grave

Ah! fuyez à présent,  
malheureuses pensées!  
O! colère, ô remords!  
Souvenirs qui m'avez  
les deux tempes pressées,  
de l'etreinte des morts.

Sentiers de mousse pleins,  
vaporeuses fontaines,  
grottes profondes, voix  
des oiseaux et du vent  
lumières incertaines  
des sauvages sous-bois.

Insectes, animaux,  
Beauté future,  
Ne me repousse pas  
Ô divine nature,  
Je suis ton suppliant

Ah! fuyez à présent,  
colère, remords!

Grave Air

Ah! begone now,  
Unhappy thoughts!  
O anger! O remorse!  
Memories that oppressed  
My two temples  
With the embrace of the dead.

Paths full of moss,  
Vaporous fountains,  
Deep grottoes, voices  
Of birds and wind,  
Fitful lights  
Of the wild undergrowth.

Insects, animals,  
Beauty to come—  
Do not repulse me,  
O divine nature,  
I am your suppliant.

Ah! begone now,  
Anger, remorse!

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<sup>10</sup> Moréas, J. (n.d.). *Air grave*. Oxford Lieder. Retrieved April 4, 2020, from <https://www.oxfordlieder.co.uk/song/2763>

## Air vif<sup>11</sup>

*Air vif* is the fourth *mélodie* in the set of four by poet Jean Moréas. This poem is from book five of *Stances* by Moréas. It was composed in May 1927, the first composed of the set.

### Air vif

Le trésor du verger et le jardin en fête,  
Les fleurs des champs, des bois  
éclatent de plaisir  
Hélas! et sur leur tête le vent enfle sa voix.

Mais toi, noble océan  
que l'assaut des tourmentes  
Ne saurait ravager,  
Certes plus dignement lorsque tu te lamentes  
Tu te prends à songer.

### Lively Air

The treasures of the orchard and the festive  
garden,  
The flowers of the field, of the woods  
Burst forth with pleasure  
Alas! and above their head the wind swells  
its voice.

But you, noble ocean who the assault of  
storms  
Cannot ravage,  
You will assuredly, with more dignity,  
Lose yourself in dreams when you lament

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<sup>11</sup> Moréas, J. (n.d.). *Air vif*. Oxford Lieder. Retrieved April 4, 2020, from <https://www.oxfordlieder.co.uk/song/2764>

## PERFORMANCE ASPECTS

*Air romantique* has a tempo marking of quarter note at 152, which makes this a quick piece. The vocal line starts with an unaccompanied pick up, which can be intimidating for a singer. Poulenc added pitches for the ends of words that would not typically be said in spoken French. This is helpful to differentiate between spoken and sung French, which can be difficult for someone fluent in spoken French. While the vocal line and accompaniment fit together, they are often independent of one another, making it challenging for the singer if they are not confident in their line. This piece has four dynamic markings, alternating between forte and fortissimo. As the first piece in the set, it can be a challenge for the singer to pick the correct dynamic level so that the dynamics are relative to the entire set, rather than just the first piece.

*Air champêtre* has the quarter note marked at 144, slightly slower than the first piece, but still quite lively. The piano introduction gives the singer time to adjust to the new tempo, as well as preview the opening melody. Again, Poulenc gives the syllables which are unvoiced in spoken French their own pitch. He goes so far as to give the final syllable in “déesse” a half note. Sometimes he elevates the spoken unvoiced syllables to the same level as spoken voiced syllables. Like the previous song, he has few dynamic markings, only having a mezzo forte marked for the voice at the beginning and a piano marking for the last phrase. The phrase marked piano may be a challenge because the phrase contains the highest note in the piece. It may be difficult to make the line sound effective with the pitch and dynamic marking if the singer is not careful.

*Air grave* is the slowest piece in the set, with the quarter note marked at 66. As a song of grief, this piece is in sharp contrast with the other three of the set. It can be difficult for the singer to keep this piece at the correct tempo since it is in such a contrast with the others. The vocal line starts on the first downbeat, so getting into the correct mind setting is important for the execution of this song. There are several bars of 3/4 stuck in the piece, which can make counting more difficult if the singer is not careful. Poulenc only puts three dynamic markings in the piece, a mezzo forte at the beginning, and a forte for the phrase “ne me repousse pas oh divine nature je suis ton suppliant.” Immediately following, he has a mezzo forte marked for the final phrase. This shows the singer that the phrase marked forte is the most important in the piece, and they must take care to sing it that way.

*Air vif* is the fastest piece in the set, with the quarter note marked at 192. The tempo alone can be a challenge for singers to get the words out. Poulenc only puts three dynamic markings in this piece. He starts the piece with a four bar piano introduction before the voice comes in with a dynamic marking of forte. The next dynamic marking is fortissimo. It comes at a place in the music where the voice is beginning the second stanza of the poem, providing a contrast to the first stanza. The first two lines of the second stanza are sung fortissimo, but the second two lines are sung at mezzo forte. Poulenc puts a repeat of the first stanza at the end of the piece, ending with a melismatic passage on the final “voix.” In addition to adding the melisma on the final word, he also notates *sans ralentir* in the score to avoid the pitfall of slowing down. It becomes a challenge for the singer to keep the tempo and avoid changing as the set comes to a close.

## CHAPTER IV

### WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

#### BIOGRAPHY

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born in Salzburg on January 27, 1756. He was baptized the day after he was born at St Rupert's Cathedral in Salzburg. Mozart's full baptized name was Joannes Chrysostomus Wolfgangus Theophilus. The first two names refer to his date of birth being the feast day of St John Chrysostom. Wolfgangus was the name of his mother's father and Theophilus was taken from his godfather, who was Joannes Theophilus Pergmayr. Mozart went by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Wolfgang is the German version of the Latin name Wolfgangus, and Amadeus is the familiar Latin form of the Greek name Theophilus, meaning 'friend of God'. Mozart sometimes used Gottlieb, which is the German version, instead of Amadeus.

Mozart was born to Leopold Mozart, the deputy choirmaster for the Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg, and his wife Maria Anna. He was the seventh and last child. Unfortunately, only Mozart and his older sister Maria Anna, who went by Nannerl, survived. Wolfgang and his sister were taught by their father in mathematics, reading, writing, literature, languages, dancing, and music. He also instructed the young siblings in moral and religious training. Mozart showed musical gifts at a young age. His father noted in Nannerl's music book, *Nannerl Notenbuch*, that young Mozart had learned some of the pieces

when he was four years old. Mozart's earliest compositions were written in 1761, he was five years old.

The first known public appearance made by Mozart was in September 1761. After taking several European tours with his family, the young Mozart moved to Vienna in March 1781. He was summoned by Archbishop Colloredo, for whom he was employed. Mozart wanted to perform for the emperor, but Archbishop Colloredo would not let him. This upset Mozart because he believed he could make a living as a freelance composer and performer in Vienna. In May, Mozart asked Archbishop Colloredo for a discharge. The archbishop would not let Mozart out of his employ until June 8.

Mozart subsequently moved in with the Weber family until rumors started circulating two months later about Mozart's relationship with Constanze. He moved out and eventually marrying Constanze on August 4, 1782. Mozart did a lot of composing during his marriage to Constanze, as well as teaching a few pupils. However, in November 1791, he fell ill and was confined to his bed. He died on December 5, 1791. Mozart's compositions include 27 piano concertos, 23 string quartets, 35 violin sonatas, and 41 symphonies.



*Die Zauberflöte (The Magic Flute)*

Mozart, who was a Freemason, was asked by Emanuel Schikaneder, who was also a Freemason, to compose the music for his libretto, *Die Zauberflöte*. Mozart had known Schikaneder for about 10 years, as they had met in Salzburg where Schikaneder's theatre company was on tour. The Freemasonry that the men were involved in was heavily influential in *Die Zauberflöte*.

Freemason elements are present in *Die Zauberflöte*. These elements include the number 3, which can be seen in the three chords in the overture that are played three times to mark off sections. The number 3 is also noted by the three ladies in waiting and the three guiding spirits. The temple's brotherhood also represents the Freemason brotherhood. Tamino and Papageno must go on a quest for virtue with trials of silence, fire, and water. This quest is representative of the Freemason ideal that men must be of good repute, so there is to be a purification of their lives.

ACT I

*Die Zauberflöte* is set in an Eastern country, likely representative of Egypt, where Freemasonry began. The opera opens with Tamino, who is a prince, being chased by a snake. He falls unconscious and is found by the three Ladies in Waiting to the Queen of the Night. The Ladies kill the snake and leave to tell the Queen. When Tamino wakes, he finds Papageno, who claims that he is the one who killed the snake. The Ladies hear Papageno lying to Tamino and subsequently padlock his mouth closed. The Ladies give Tamino a portrait of the Queen's daughter, Pamina, who he instantly falls in love with. The Queen tells Tamino that she will give consent for him to marry Pamina if he will rescue her from the High Priest Sarastro.

The three Ladies give Tamino and Papageno a magic flute and magic bells respectively. They inform them that the instruments will protect them on their rescue mission. The three guiding spirits help to lead Tamino and Papageno to Sarastro. Meanwhile, Monostatos, who is a Moor in the service of Sarastro, tries to seduce Pamina. He is frightened away by Papageno. Papageno explains to Pamina that Tamino is in love with her and he has come to rescue her. Tamino plays his magic flute and the wild animals come and listen. Papageno brings Pamina to meet Tamino, but they are caught by Monostatos. As Monostatos is chasing them, Papageno plays his magic bells and Monostatos is bewitched. Tamino, in the temple, learns that the Queen is the one who is evil and Sarastro is part of a noble brotherhood, which Tamino wants to join.

Sarastro wants to know why Pamina is trying to escape. She tells him that she tried to escape because Monostatos was trying to seduce her. Sarastro lets Pamina know that he wants her happiness, but he does not want her to go back to her mother. He says she must be guided by a man. Tamino is brought in and he and Pamina finally see one another. Sarastro tells Tamino that he must undergo trials to prove his worthiness of Pamina.

## ACT II

Tamino and Papageno are led to the first trial, where they are sworn to silence. The three Ladies appear and attempt to frighten Tamino and Papageno into speaking and Papageno fails. While the men are in the first trial, Pamina is asleep in her room. Monostatos enters and tries to kiss Pamina, but is frightened away by the appearance of the

Queen. The Queen gives Pamina a dagger and demands that she kill Sarastro or she will disown her.

Tamino and Papageno enter the second task, which Papageno fails. Tamino plays the flute, which Pamina hears and she finds him. He will not speak to her, which makes her think that he no longer loves her. After Tamino's success in the first two trials, the priests pray that Tamino will succeed in the final trial.

Tamino ultimately resists all the temptations and passes the trials. The Queen and the Ladies try to storm the temple and sink into the earth. Sarastro proclaims the triumph of good over the powers of darkness.

The opera has a large cast and was written for Schikaneder's troupe which had a variety of levels of performers. Schikaneder himself portrayed Papageno, while the Queen of the Night was portrayed by Constanze's sister Josepha Hofer. Since Mozart knew the voices of the cast, he was able to play to their strengths. There was virtuosic singing for the Queen and Sarastro. He also was able to introduce melodies in the orchestra before the singer had to sing it for some of the less virtuosic performers. Mozart included lots of variety, such as, ensemble sequences and chain finales. He composed the Queen in a serial style. Mozart used strophic songs for Papageno and hymn like pieces for the priests and Sarastro.

O zittre nicht, mein lieber Sohn<sup>12</sup>

*O zittre nicht, mein lieber Sohn* is the first aria of the Queen of the Night. It takes place in the first scene of act one. The Queen appears to Tamino to give him a portrait of her daughter, Pamina, who she is asking that Tamino go and rescue from Sarastro. She promises that Tamino can marry Pamina after he rescues her. The Queen sings as though she is the “good guy” and Sarastro is the “bad guy,” playing the part of a heartbroken mother who just wants her daughter to be freed from her captor.

O zittre nicht, mein lieber Sohn

O zittre nicht, mein lieber Sohn;  
du bist unschuldig, weise, fromm.  
Ein Jüngling, so wie du, vermag am  
besten  
das tiefbetäubte Mutterherz zu trösten.

Zum Leiden bin ich auserkoren,  
denn meine Tochter fehlet mir.  
Durch sie ging all mein Glück verloren;  
ein Bösewicht entfloß mit ihr.  
Noch seh' ich ihr Zittern  
mit bangem Erschüttern,  
ihr ängstliches Beben,  
ihr schüchternes Streben.  
Ich mußte sie mir rauben sehen.  
<< Ach helft! >> was alles was sie  
sprach  
allein vergebens war ihr Flehen,  
denn meine Hilfe war zu schwach.

Du wirst sie zu befreien gehen;  
du wirst der Tochter Retter sein, ja!  
Und werd' ich dich als Sieger sehen,  
so sei sie dann auf ewig dein!

Oh tremble not, my dear son

Oh tremble not, my dear son;  
you are guiltless, wise, pious.  
A young man such as you is best able  
to console the deeply afflicted mother's  
heart.

For suffering am I destined,  
as my daughter is absent from me.  
Because of her all my happiness was  
lost;  
a villain took flight with her.  
Still I see her trembling  
with fearful emotion,  
her anxious quivering,  
her meek struggle.  
I had to watch her bereft of me.  
“Ah, help!” was all that she said  
but in vain was her supplication,  
for my help was too feeble.

You will go to free her;  
you will be the daughter's rescuer yes!  
And when I see you as victor,  
so may she then be forever yours!

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<sup>12</sup> Larsen, R. L., & Gerhart, M. (Eds.). (2002). *Coloratura Arias for Soprano*. G. Schirmer, Inc.

## Der Hölle Rache<sup>13</sup>

*Der Hölle Rache* is the second aria of the Queen of the Night. It takes place in scene three of act two. The Queen has gone to Sarastro's temple and caught Monostatos trying to seduce Pamina. She rescues Pamina from Monostatos and sends him away. She gives Pamina a dagger and orders her to kill Sarastro. She tells Pamina that if she does not do as she says, she will no longer claim her as a daughter. This aria is full of rage, in sharp contrast to the Queen's first aria.

### Der Hölle Rache

Der Hölle Rache kocht  
in meinem Herzen,  
Tod und Verzweiflung flammet  
um mich her!

Fühlt nicht durch dich Sarastro  
Todesschmerzen,  
so bist du meine  
Tochter nimmermehr,  
nein, meine Tochter nimmermehr.

Verstoßen sei auf ewig,  
verlassen sei auf ewig,  
zertrümmert sei'n auf ewig  
alle Bande der Natur,  
wenn nicht durch dich  
Sarastro wird erblassen!  
Hört, Rachegötter!  
Hört der Mutter Schwur!

### The rage of hell

The rage of hell seethes  
in my heart;  
death and despair flame  
all around me!

If Sarastro does not feel, through you,  
the pain of death,  
then you will be  
my daughter nevermore,  
no, my daughter nevermore.

May you be rejected forever;  
may you be forsaken forever.  
Shattered be forever  
all the bonds of nature  
if not, through you,  
Sarastro will die!  
Hear, gods of vengeance!  
Hear a mother's vow!

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<sup>13</sup> Larsen, R. L., & Gerhart, M. (Eds.). (2002). *Coloratura Arias for Soprano*. G. Schirmer, Inc.

Ach, ich fühl's<sup>14</sup>

*Ach, ich fühl's* is Pamina's aria in scene four of act two. Pamina feels completely rejected because she has gone to see Tamino and he refuses to speak to her. What Pamina does not know is that Tamino has sworn a vow of silence as part of an initiation ceremony for Sarastro's brotherhood. Pamina laments that love has left and she will no longer be happy. She makes a point to tell Tamino that she only loves him and if he will not love her, she would rather be dead.

Ach, ich fühl's

Ach, ich fühl's, es ist verschwunden,  
ewig hin der Liebe Glück!  
Nimmer kommt ihr, Wonnestunden,  
meinem Herzen mehr zurück.  
Sieh, Tamino, diese Tränen fließen,  
Trauter, dir allein.  
Fühlst du nicht der Liebe Sehnen,  
so wird Ruh im Tode sein.

Ah, I feel it

Ah, I feel it; it has vanished—  
forever gone, the happiness of love!  
Never will you, blissful hours,  
com back again to my heart.  
See, Tamino, these tears flow,  
beloved one, for you alone.  
If you do not feel the longing of love,  
then peace will come to be in death.

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<sup>14</sup> Larsen, R. L. (1991). *Arias for Soprano*. G. Schirmer, Inc.

## PERFORMANCE ASPECTS

*O zittre nicht, mein lieber Sohn* can be deceptively difficult in terms of character. The Queen of the Night is an evil Queen, however in this aria she needs to come across as loving and sincere. The singer may have difficulty portraying the underlying evil character while still coming across as kind. The aria starts with the reassurance that she means no harm. The Queen is trying to calm Tamino down after frightening him with her entrance. In this section, the singer needs to be inviting to give the illusion of comfort.

When the 3/4 section starts, the Queen is explaining what happened and why she is distraught. The singer needs to convey the emotion of a mother who has had her child ripped away from her and she does not know what to do. This can be a difficult emotion for anyone to portray, but it is even more difficult because the Queen is putting on a front so Tamino does not truly know what is going on. This requires a high level of acting from the singer to portray so many emotions at once. Musically, there is a relatively high tessitura. The singer needs to be careful to keep the larynx relaxed so there is not much tension. This section leads into the melismatic section that brings the piece to a close and if the singer gets tense in the middle section, the end is nearly impossible to execute correctly. The singer also needs to be aware of the grace notes. For this time period, the grace notes fall on the beat so the singer has to be careful to execute them correctly.

In the final section, the Queen is telling Tamino that he should go and rescue her daughter and when he returns, he can marry her. There is a long melisma on the word “dann.” The singer must be careful with the vowel as the pitches flirt with the top notes of head voice, almost into whistle register. A relaxed “ah” provides the singer with the

best vowel throughout the melismatic section. The first four measures of the melismatic section need to be learned carefully as there are a few skips tucked in with the stepwise motion. The singer needs to keep this section from being heavy because there is a risk of slowing down and becoming flat. The ending phrase “auf twig dien, auf ewig dien!” is on half notes, which contrast with the melismatic section right before it. The singer needs to keep power and energy through these last five measures. The temptation might be to relax too soon.

*Der Hölle Rache* has a completely opposite character from the Queen’s first aria. This aria is full of anger and vengeance. The singer needs to portray the angry character of this piece while still maintaining musicality. This is a dangerous piece due to its popularity. As an easily recognizable aria, the singer needs to learn it carefully so as to execute it properly. The famous eighth note melismatic section of this aria is quite difficult. The singer needs to be able to keep all the pitches in tune while simultaneously transitioning from head voice to whistle and back again for the F6’s. Some sopranos are able to keep these F’s in head voice, which does make the section a bit easier as they do not have to switch registers.

After navigating this section, the singer is thrown into the middle section where they have to navigate octaves. The singer needs to be careful when shifting from F5 to F4 that they do not lose volume. Since the F4 is at the end of the word, it can be lost if the singer does not navigate the octave properly. Following the octaves is a four measure triplet melisma followed by six measures of staccato eighth notes. These measures are on the word “Bande,” so the singer needs to be careful with the vowel. It can be difficult to



navigate the triplet section. The singer needs to be careful when learning these pitches so that they remain accurate. Another pitfall is keeping the tempo in this section. Some singers have a tendency to slow down, which could be detrimental. The aria finishes with the declaration for the gods of vengeance to hear her vow. The singer needs to portray the anger carefully. It can be difficult because after navigating the triplets and eighth notes, the singer must slow down to make the declaration in quarter notes and half notes.

*Ach, ich fühl's* is contrasting to the Queen's arias because Pamina is inherently good. In this aria she is desperate for Tamino to talk to her. The singer needs to keep the dramatic emotion throughout the piece. The temptation with this aria is to take it too slow. The marking that is given is *andante*. The piece is in 6/8 and needs to feel like it is in two. The temptation is to sing it in six because it is so dramatic. The issue is that if it is sung too slow, the line can be lost. The singer may have trouble with where emphasis needs to go on the words. The most difficult aspect of this piece is in the penultimate phrase, "so wird Ruh im Tode sein." The singer has to start the phrase on a G4 before jumping to a G5 and making the line seem effortless. Right after the G5, the singer plunges to C#4. The temptation is to be too loud on the G5 and not have enough volume on the pitches before and after.

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