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THESIS FOR GRADUATE STUDY IN VOCAL PERFORMANCE

Madison King
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THESIS FOR GRADUATE STUDY IN VOCAL PERFORMANCE

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

MADISON KING

PITTSBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

PITTSBURG, KANSAS

APRIL 2016

THESIS FOR GRADUATE STUDY IN VOCAL PERFORMANCE

MADISON KING

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THESIS FOR GRADUATE STUDY IN VOCAL PERFORMANCE

An Abstract of the Thesis by
Madison King

This thesis is an extension of Mrs. King's Graduate vocal recital program notes. Each chapter contains a brief biographical outline of the composers performed on the program. These composers include Joseph Haydn, Alban Berg, Alfred Bachelet, Léo Delibes, Sergey Rachmaninov, and John Kander. Also included will be analytical information about each single piece, the larger original work (when necessary), and descriptions of rehearsal and performance aspects specific to each song. Madison's recital took place on April 5th, 2016.

| TABLE OF CONTENTS | | PAGE |
|-------------------|--|------|
| CHAPTER | | |
| I. | PERFORMANCE PROGRAM | vi |
| II. | FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN | 1 |
| | BIOGRAPHY | 1 |
| | <u><i>Die Schöpfung</i> (The Creation)</u> | 4 |
| | With Verdure Clad | 5 |
| | PERFORMANCE ASPECTS | 6 |
| III. | ALFRED BACHELET | 8 |
| | BIOGRAPHY | 8 |
| | Chère Nuit | 9 |
| | PERFORMANCE ASPECTS | 11 |
| IV. | LÉO DELIBES | 12 |
| | BIOGRAPHY | 12 |
| | Les Filles de Cadix | 13 |
| | PERFORMACNE ASPECTS | 16 |
| V. | SERGEY RACHMANINOV | 17 |
| | BIOGRAPHY | 17 |
| | Oh, never sing to me again | 19 |
| | These summer nights | 21 |
| | Here it is so fine | 22 |
| | PERFORMANCE ASPECTS | 24 |
| VI. | ALBAN BERG | 26 |
| | BIOGRAPHY | 26 |
| | SIEBEN FRUHE LIEDER | 28 |
| | Nacht | 29 |
| | Schilflied | 30 |
| | Das Nachtigal | 31 |
| | PERFORMANCE ASPECTS | 33 |

| | | |
|-------|-------------------------------|----|
| VII. | JOHN KANDER | 34 |
| | BIOGRAPHY | 34 |
| | A Letter from Sullivan Ballou | 35 |
| | PERFORMANCE ASPECTS | 37 |
| VIII. | WORKS CITED | 38 |

Pittsburg State University
Pittsburg, KS

GRADUATE RECITAL
Madison Youngberg-King, soprano
Barbara York, piano

Sharon Kay Dean Recital Hall
April 5th, 2016
7:30p.m.

Program

| | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| With Verdure Clad From <i>The Creation</i> | Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) |
| Chère Nuit..... | Alfred Bachelet (1864-1944) |
| Les Filles de Cadix..... | Léo Delibes (1836-1891) |
| Эти летние ночи, Opus 14 No. 5 Здесь хорошо, Opus 21 No. 7 Не пой, красавица, Opus 4 No. 4..... | Sergei Rachmaninov (1873-1943) |

Intermission

| | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Nacht Shilflied Das Nachtigal from <i>Sieben frühe lieder</i> | Alban Berg (1885-1935) |
| A Letter from Sullivan Ballou..... | John Kander (b.1987) |

CHAPTER I

FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN

BIOGRAPHY

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) was a Classical composer whose career helped to set a solid foundation for the musical style of the Classical period. He was a “tireless worker with an inexhaustible musical imagination”.¹ His tireless imagination led him to be the co-creator of new principles in sonata form, compose more hours of music than any other notable composer of his time, instruct new composers like Ludwig von Beethoven, and influence the musical compositions of Mendelssohn, Schubert, and Brahms.

Joseph Haydn was born in 1732 in the town of Rohrau, on the border of Germany and Austria, to Mathias Haydn and Anna Maria Koller. Although the family was of meager means, Haydn received the qualities necessary to confront his difficult career path; a “deep religious sense, stubborn tenacity of purpose...desire to rise in the world...pride in good craftsmanship...and a healthy

¹ Staff, Rovi. "Franz Joseph Haydn." AllMusic. Accessed August 2015.
<http://www.allmusic.com/artist/franz-joseph-haydn-mn0000168380/biography>.

streak of sensuality”.² In 1740, at the age of eight, Haydn moved to Vienna to begin his study of music. He began singing as a choirboy at St. Stephen's Cathedral; and when his voice matured, he began working as an accompanist. In his early twenties, the nobility noticed Haydn's musical abilities, and his career began its ascent.

In 1759, Haydn worked as the Kapellmeister for Count Ferdinand Maximilian. However, his most important post began in 1761 as the Second Kapellmeister for the Princes of Esterhazy. In total, he worked under four generations of Esterhazy princes. During his time with the Esterhazy family, Haydn met Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Interestingly, both composers were supportive and uplifting of the others talents. Haydn's career took a turn in 1790-91 when he traveled to London. While in London, he was introduced to the mass performances of George Frideric Handel's oratorios. These performances served as an inspiration for some of Haydn's future compositions, including *The Creation*. In 1792, he returned to Vienna and began teaching. Beethoven was a pupil of Haydn's during this time. Haydn traveled again to London in 1794 for a short time, and returned to Vienna. His years spent in London and Vienna were a “period of his greatest renown and financial success”.³ In the years surrounding 1795, during his work on *The Creation*, Haydn began writing less instrumental music and, instead, focused on oratorio. In 1802, Haydn's health began to

² Geiringer, Karl. Haydn: A Creative Life in Music. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982.

³ Clark, Caryl Leslie. The Cambridge Companion to Haydn. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

decline and he was unable to continue composing. He died a few years later in 1809 in Vienna.

Haydn's output of music was more numerous than the other composers of his time. His compositional genres included symphony, oratorio, sonata, and string quartet. His *London Symphonies*, written during and between his trips to London; and the *Sunrise Symphony* are just two of his most notable large instrumental works. In oratorio, his *Die Schöpfung* (The Creation) and *Die Jahreszeiten* (The Seasons) are his most notable. Haydn is also credited for writing the Austrian national anthem in 1797. Although Haydn was an extremely renowned composer during his lifetime, he was always concerned with the influence of his music on the audience and the performers. He believed in the importance of reaching his audience through the music: "it must communicate persuasively with an audience through the medium of performance...so that what originated in his (Haydn's) own spirit and sensibility would remain in the listener's heart".⁴ Haydn wanted other people to enjoy listening to and performing his music. He believed that to "write for their strengths is not only to reap the benefits of a happy group of employees but to make his own music shine"⁴. Haydn's masterpiece was everyone's masterpiece.

⁴ Clark, Caryl Leslie. *The Cambridge Companion to Haydn*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Die Schöpfung (The Creation)

One of Haydn's most renowned works is his oratorio, *The Creation*, written in 1798. Haydn was inspired during his trips to London with the oratorios of Handel, and the audience's eager reception of their performances. The libretto was given to Haydn by Salomon entitled, "The Creation of the World", and was originally intended for the compositional powers of Handel. The libretto contains the Biblical story of creation from the Bible and parts of Milton's "Paradise Lost". Upon receiving the libretto, Haydn's counterpart, Baron Gottfried von Swieten, immediately recognized its potential for greatness and took upon himself the task of translating it into German. This oratorio is mostly performed in its English translation, especially in the United States. Composition of this work began in 1796 and was completed in 1798. The first public performance was in 1799, and was very successful. Its success was "owing to multiple factors: its commission by the politically conservative but artistically forward looking Viennese...its production as an 'event' of high cultural-political significance, its sublime subject, its appeal to both connoisseurs and ordinary listeners, Haydn's unrivaled stature as the greatest living composer, the grandeur, boldness, and originality of his musical setting."⁴

The Creation, as it is most often called by its English title, is in three parts describing the creation story. Part One is titled "Representation of Chaos" and begins with the darkness and disorder that ruled before creation; and then continues with creation days one through four, the heavenly bodies, land, and

water. Part Two continues with days four through six with the creation of living things, and Part Three is the creation of Adam and Eve. Each new creation is described by creative tone painting. With each new day, an archangel begins with a recitative followed by aria or chorus. The archangels are Gabriel, Uriel, and Raphael, sung by soprano, tenor, and bass.

With Verdure Clad

The archangel Gabriel, exclaiming the beauty of God's creation, sings this aria, from Part One. As is fitting with the characteristics of Haydn's oratorios, the soprano begins with an accompanied recitative, declamatory in nature. The aria is presented majestically as the angel proclaims the creation of the earth's vegetation. Haydn uses creative tone painting to give a better picture in the listener's mind of each plant springing to life. In the first line of the aria, the melody ascends as "the fields appear". This ascending melody happens throughout the aria as various plants grow forth. The word "ravish'd" is painted with a turn in the melody, depicting extravagance or gloriousness. Another example is the melismatic passage found on the word "plant". The melisma winds up and down as the shoot of a vine would as it grows toward the sunlight. This aria is a true example of Haydn's tireless musical imagination.

Recitative

And God said,
Let the earth bring forth grass,

the herb yielding seed,
and the fruit-tree
yielding fruit after his kind,
whose seed is in itself upon the earth
and it was so.

Aria

With verdure clad the fields appear,
Delightful to the ravish'd sense;
By flowers sweet and gay
Enhanced is the charming sight.
Here fragrant herbs their odors shed;
Here shoots the healing plant.

With copious fruit th'expanded boughs are hung;
In leafy arches twine the shady groves;
O'er lofty hills majestic forests wave.⁵

PERFORMANCE ASPECTS

This aria presents many moments for the soprano to show her vocal skills. In this piece the tempo is kept strict, which is an element of classical music as a genre. This is both a struggle and help for the soprano. The melismatic passages depicting the growing foliage can be difficult to keep in tempo. Spending a good amount of time practicing with a metronome is key in solidifying a steady tempo. Since this oratorio is most often performed in English, clear diction is imperative. Specifically words like “shoots” and “odor” present a struggle. In the word “shoots”, she must be sure that the lips are pursed and very forward to prevent a sound more like [ə] or [ʊ]. The beginning “o” of “odor” can be difficult to articulate without a harsh glottal stroke. However many the difficulties, this aria does present moments for the soprano to show off her skills as a vocalist. The melody

⁵ Walters, Richard. *The Oratorio Anthology: Soprano*. Milwaukee, WI.: Hal Leonard, 1994.

sits mostly in the middle voice with a few ringing high notes, and travels frequently through the passaggio (vocal break), both of which can be tricky to maneuver without proper breath support. The melismatic passages are real moments to “show off” the singer’s voice. Moving smoothly and articulately through these passages is a pleasure to listen to and to sing. Overall, this piece is pleasure to perform.

CHAPTER II

ALFRED BACHELET

BIOGRAPHY

Alfred Bachelet was born in Paris, France in the year 1864. In the last years of the Romantic Era, Bachelet attended the Paris Conservatoire and studied music under Ernest Guiraud. He was an accomplished student, and upon his graduation in 1890, Bachelet, won the Grand Prix de Rome for his cantata *Cleopatra*. Shortly after his graduation, he took a position as chorus director at the Paris Opera, and later became principal conductor of the Opera in 1907.

Bachelet was a successful conductor and composer. He not only conducted at the Paris Opera, but later took over as director of the Conservatoire in Nancy in 1919. He was also awarded membership on the board of the Academy of Fine Arts in France. As a composer, Bachelet wrote three operas, symphonic works, orchestral tone poems, choral works, ballets, and chanson. Bachelet is considered by many to be a “key figure in French opera”.⁶ He was seriously devoted to composing opera. *Un jardin sur l’Oronte* was his most successful. He was writing opera at a most opportune time, when large-scale

⁶ Lewis, Dave. "Alfred Bachelet." AllMusic. Accessed February 2016.
<http://www.allmusic.com/artist/alfred-bachelet-mn0001204836/biography>.

compositions, grand orchestras, and beautiful melodies were prominent elements of musical style. His most internationally renowned song was written in 1897, “Chère nuit”, and is still one of his most beloved compositions. Bachelet died in 1944 in Nancy, France.

Chère Nuit

A piece dedicated “*To Madame Melba*”, this is the most well-known song composition of Alfred Bachelet. Nellie Melba was an Australian born singer who thrived on the “larger than life” career which she had chosen. Known for her impeccable technique, it is no wonder Bachelet chose to write this song for Ms. Melba.

Like other romantic composers before him, Bachelet chose a text about nature and love by Eugène Adenis. The music begins with a lyrical piano prelude in which there is a long melody line that is heard throughout the piece. Bachelet uses the music to help produce the emotion and to paint the pictures set in the text. The vocal line enters quietly, as the singer looks in awe at the beauty around them. As the sun sets behind the hill, the melody line descends with it; and then rises again with the description of the sun’s glorious rays. In romantic music, a lyrical and prominent melody line is important. Bachelet clearly displays his melody throughout this piece. The same line that is heard in the piano at the beginning returns with each statement of the title, “Chère Nuit”.

Yet another use of a key element of Romantic style expression, Bachelet uses a great amount of dynamic contrast and rhythmic direction in his music.

Most phrases are two measures long, and clearly marked with beginning dynamics. There are four sections to this piece. Each section begins with a *piano* dynamic marking, and slowly, each one builds to a height of *forte*. The sections differ in whether or not the singer comes back down to a softer dynamic or not. This build of dynamic gives the listener an aural picture of the intensity of excitement the character is feeling as she waits impatiently for night to fall so that she can feel the arms of her lover around her. It is as though the character is sweetly, gently guiding the night out; bursting forth with excitement to see her love; and then suddenly remembering to gently coax the night into existence. To further display the emotions found in this text, Bachelet gives clear instructions as to the freedom of tempo. At the top of the piece, Bachelet's first instruction is to begin *molto tranquillo*, very sweetly. Then, as the intensity builds near the end of the second stanza, he indicates a *poco animato*, little movement, then *ben misurato*, well measured, to be sure the high A5 can ring beautifully, a small *ritardando*, slowing; and lastly a *poco animato* which continues until the return of the second stanza and main melody line. This occurs in multiple places in the song and is typical of romantic style composition. It gives freedom and fluidity to the performers, and intensity to the emotions emitted by the music.

Chère Nuit

Voici l'heure bientôt.
 Derrière la colline
 Je vois le soleil qui décline
 Et cache ses rayon jaloux...
 J'entends chanter l'âme des choses
 Et le narcisses et les roses
 M'apportent des parfums plus doux!

Dearest Night

The hour will soon come,
 Behind the hill
 I see the sun setting
 and hiding its jealous rays...
 I hear the soul of things singing
 and the narcissi and the roses
 bring me perfume more sweet!

Chère nuit aux clartés sereines,
Toi qui ramènes
Le tendre amant,
Ah! descends et voile la terre
De ton mystère,
Calme et charmant.

Mon bonheur renaît sous ton
aile,
Ô nuit plus belle,
Que les beaux jours.
Ah! lève-toi!
Pour faire encore
Briller l'aurore
De mes amours!
-poem by Eugene Adenis

Dear night with serene clarity,
You who bring back
the tender lover,
Ah! descend and veil the earth
with your mystery,
calm, and charm.

My happiness is reborn under your
wing
O night more beautiful
than beautiful days.
Ah! Arise!
To make again
Shine the dawn
of my loves!
-translation compiled by Madison King

PERFORMANCE ASPECTS

At first, this piece is daunting. However, the beauty of the romantic melody, the fullness of the accompaniment, and the emotion embedded in the music itself quickly draw in a true musician. The song has many similarities to an operatic aria. It contains long, legato lines that require significant breath and body support. The most enjoyable things to sing in this piece are the glorious, soft high notes. Bachelet took the emotions and imagery in the poem, and expertly embedded them into the melody and piano. While working on this song for two years, I continually learned and heard new things. It was a constantly growing piece physically, mentally, and emotionally.

CHAPTER III

LÉO DELIBES

BIOGRAPHY

In the small town of Saint Germain-du-Val, France, Léo Delibes, one of the most valuable 19th Century composers, was born. As a young man, Delibes studied at the Paris Conservatoire under Adolphe Adam. Mr. Adam was one of the most prolific composers of his day, and Delibes benefited greatly under his instruction. Adam was most influential upon Delibes's interest in ballet and opera. In 1853, Delibes became the accompanist at the Theatre Lyrique; and ten years later, 1863, he was given a most prestigious position as accompanist at the Paris Opera.

During his years as a highly regarded accompanist, Delibes did not forsake his passion for composition. In 1866, his first ballet score was in collaboration with Ludwig Minkus, *La Source*; and in 1870, he wrote his ballet *Coppelia*. Delibes was fond of dance music, especially ballet. Delibes took the composition of ballet to new heights. He was “the first to craft a full length score with the care and distinction already common among the best opera

composers”.⁷ Soon after these first ballets were a success, Delibes composed an opera comique, *Le Roi l’a dit*, in 1873. He became a well regarded composer, and professor of composition at the Conservatoire in Paris in 1881. 1883 marked the completion his most notable operatic work, an opera seria, *Lakmé*.

Delibes lived during a time of political upheaval when France was under the leadership of Napoleon III. During this time, relations with other nations were more often unfriendly; but this did not stifle Delibes interest in the exotic sounds from composers of other nationalities. He was passionate in his composition of light, graceful, dance-like music; and intrigued by exotic sounds. Also, the music in France was heavily influenced by other cultures despite the political instability. Many French composers were especially influenced by Spanish music. At the time that Delibes was composing his well known solo song, *Les Filles des Cadix*, Bizet was composing his opera, *Carmen*. Both of these compositions clearly display the exposure of these composers to the dance-like music of Spain. Delibes lived a short life to the age of fifty-five, yet died a well regarded composer and teacher in Paris, 1891.

Les Filles de Cadix

Cadiz, a small port town in South West Spain, has been a crossroad for many cultures. As a seeker of exotic, new, and beautiful sounds, it is no wonder Delibes chose this poem to set to music. His obvious passion for dance music

⁷ Reel, James. "Léo Delibes." AllMusic. Accessed February 2016.
<http://www.allmusic.com/artist/léo-delibes-mn0000079977/biography>.

drew him to write this song in the Bolero style. Alfred Musset, the poet responsible for this text, describes a flirtatious young woman and her friends as they attend a bullfight. They spend the evening dancing and soon meet a young Spanish Hidalgo. As the young man tries to impress the young woman, she quickly spurns his attentions and informs him that the women of Cadix do not listen to the flattery of men.

Most of Delibes's solo songs have not been well preserved with the exception of this piece. Delibes was known for his writing of melodies. The melodies of this piece are very prominent, important, and repeated with each stanza. The accompaniment is in three quarter time, which is standard for the Spanish bolero. The music sounds as though the singer should be dancing while singing. The first verse begins with a young woman going with her friends to the bullfight where they later dance the bolero to the sound of the castanets. She asks her friends around her, "Do you think my waist is slim and my skirt beautiful?". Then she exclaims how the women of Cadiz love to be complimented. The vocal line here gives the impression that she is light hearted and laughing. It moves down chromatically, switching registers (A5-B#4-G5-A#4 etc); and then repeats that pattern with added trills and ascending sixteenth notes. The second verse is a repetition of the same melody, but the text tells that the girl has met a bullfighter who attempts to win her affection. Then she laughs at him and tells him that his flattery will not work on a woman from Cadix.

This piece is an excellent representation of Delibes's interest in the exotic sounds of other cultures. Like his opera *Lakmé*, Delibes successfully captures

the sights and sounds of this different culture and delivers a wonderfully composed masterpiece that is a challenge and joy to sing.

Nous venions de voir le taureau,
Trois garçon, trois fillettes,
Sur la pelouse il faisait beau
Et nous dansions un boléro
Au son des castagnettes.
'Dites-moi, ce matin,
Si j'ai bonne mine,
Vous me trouvez la taille fine?...
Les filles de Cadix aiment assez cela!
Ah! Ah!

Et nous dansions un boléro,
Un soir c'était dimanche
Vers nous s'en vint un hidalgo,
Cousu d'or,
la plume au chapeau,
Et le poing sur la hanche:
'Si tu veux de moi,
Brune au doux fourire,
Tu n'as qu'à le dire
Cette or est à toi.
Passez votre chemin, beau sire...
Les filles de Cadix n'entendent pas cela!
Ah! ah!

-poem by Louis Charles Alfred de Musset

We had just seen the bull,
Three boys, three girls,
On the lawn it was sunny
And we were dancing a bolero
At the sound of the castanets.
'Tell me, this morning,
If I look well,
Do you think my waist is slim?...
The girls of Cadiz tend to love that!
Ah! Ah!

And we were dancing a bolero,
One Sunday evening
A hidalgo came to us,
Dressed in gold,
with a feather on his hat,
And his fist on his hip:
'If you want,
This brown hair and sweet smile
You only have to say it
This gold is yours.
Go your way, fair sir...
The girls of Cadiz won't listen to that!
Ah! ah!

-translation by Bard Suverkrop, IPAsource.com

PERFORMANCE ASPECTS

Unlike any other piece on the program, this Bolero styled song is so much fun to perform. It requires a high level of energy. In performance, the singer can do a lot physically to show the character of the piece. This was a challenge to move outside of my comfort zone as a performer. The singer must also take into account the markings Delibes gives in the music. He clearly knew how he wanted the piece to be performed; and when the dynamics change or a trill is notated, it should be respected.

CHAPTER V

SERGEY RACHMANINOV

BIOGRAPHY

Sergey Rachmaninov (Sergei Rachmaninoff) was born in 1873 to a military family in Oneg, Russia. Although his father squandered the family fortune and left when Sergey was still very young, his mother and grandmother continually supported his pursuit of music. His cousin, a well known pianist at the time, realized his abilities; and encouraged the family to see that Sergey study with Vladimir Delyonsky in St. Petersburg . At the St. Petersburg Conservatory, Rachmaninov studied piano with Delyonsky and many other great teachers of that time. He later moved to Moscow as his talents became more apparent. There, he studied composition with Nikolay Zverev, as well as piano and harmony. In 1892, he graduated from the conservatory in Moscow, one year early. His graduation composition was an opera, *Aleko*, which was met with great enthusiasm by audiences. Due to his lack of finances after school, he began teaching piano and theory while he began his career as a composer

During his career as a composer, Rachmaninov was plagued by fear of inadequacy. Like many composers, he yearned for his audience and the performers to enjoy his music. Yet, his first symphony, *Symphony No. 1 in D*

Minor, when premiered, was a failure; and Rachmaninov went into a deep depression. He ceased composing for quite some time due to his embarrassment, and took a position as conductor of Moscow Private opera in 1897. After receiving aid from a notable therapist, he began composing again; and composed his *Piano Concerto No. 2*, which was greeted with much enthusiasm. The Piano concerto's success in concert boosted his confidence.

In 1905, during the Russian Revolution, Rachmaninov moved with his family to Dresden. He did not enjoy being directly involved with the revolution, and the move allowed more time for composition. In 1907, he composed his *Symphony No. 2 in E minor*; and in 1909 a symphonic poem, *Isle of the Dead*, and *Piano Concerto No. 3 in D minor*. The latter was written for his first premier in the United States with the New York Symphony. Rachmaninov spent some time in America after his piano concerto was a success. He spent time conducting in Chicago and Philadelphia, but declined a prestigious job in Boston. He returned to Russia in 1910. During the last thirty years of his life, Rachmaninov composed other renowned works such as *The Bells* in 1913-one of his few well-known choral pieces- and his last major work, *Symphonic Dances*, in 1940.

The beginning of the 20th century was a "Silver Age" for music, art, and literature in Russia. The arts were on the forefront of culture and were an important part of day-to-day life. However, in the aftermath of World War I and during the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, composers, and other artists alike, were forced to leave their homes. Rachmaninov traveled extensively around Europe

and the United States. He still called Russia his home, but did not frequent there in his last years. Rachmaninov spent his final months conducting around the United States. Then, he was diagnosed with cancer in 1943, and died shortly afterwards in Beverly Hills, California. Rachmaninov's symphonies and piano concertos are widely famous. His *Cello Sonata* is his most prominent chamber work. His three operas were poor and lacking in many key elements, and he wrote only a few choral pieces. His songs number over 80, all written between 1890 and 1917. Sergey Rachmaninov is known foremost as a pianist, as an enthusiastic composer, and a beloved conductor

He поў, красавица (Oh, never sing to me again)

Opus 4, the First Published Songs, was published in 1893 just after Rachmaninov graduated from Moscow Conservatory. This group of six songs was a great feat for a young composer, and it was successful. Each song is dedicated, whether outright or internally, to a friend or mentor of Rachmaninov, like Tchaikovsky and Anna Lokyzhenskaya. Most of these songs contain the influence of Russian folk music. Although not originally transcribed for piano, these songs have been written out for various instruments due to the excellence of Rachmaninov's melodic writing style.

Oh, never sing to me again is song number four in this opus. The text, by Alexander Pushkin, has been set by more than forty other composers. However, Rachmaninov outshines them all. Originally set by Mikhail Glinka, it was called "Georgian Song". Yet another composer, Mily Balakirev attempted to set the text with oriental coloring also calling it "Georgian Song". Rachmaninov also used

oriental coloring in his adaptation of Pushkin's text. Examples of this 'oriental' style includes decorative melismas in both the voice and piano, the bass continuously "droning" on with half notes underneath the syncopated movement above, and the accompaniment as well as the vocal line is chromatic. These create a challenging piece for both singer and pianist.

Rachmaninov clearly shaped each section of the piece and divided them with piano interludes. During this time period, it was important that the music was written so that the text was even more clearly expressed. Rachmaninov uses this to his advantage as he creates a picture with the accompaniment. The first eight measures contain the main melodic content of the piece. A simple pedal note in the bass and a seemingly sad melody above made up of alternating eighth and sixteenth notes. The oriental melismatic material is prominent as well. The first and last stanzas are set quasi recitative as the character pleads to never hear the voice of their beloved again. With the transparent accompaniment underneath, the vocal line becomes more dramatic, showing the desperation of the character to forget the past. The second and third stanzas are set apart by piano interludes. Each stanza draws attention to a different emotion and each is set up by the accompaniment that precedes it. In the second stanza, the music becomes more alive with movement as the character sees visions of the past because of the "lovely maiden's" song. Momentarily, in the third stanza, the character has a single happy memory at the sight of his maiden, but quickly goes back to his lament upon hearing her voice again.

Не пой, красавица, при мне
Ты песен Грузии печальной:
Напоминают мне оне Другую жизнь и
берег дальней.

Увы, напоминают мне
Твои жестокие напевы
И степь, и ночь, и
при луне
Черты далёкой бедной
девы!..

Я призрак милый, роковой,
Тебя увидев, забываю;
Но ты поёшь, и предо мной
Его я вновь воображаю.
-поем by Alexander Pushkin

Do not sing for me, fair beauty
your sad songs of Georgia;
They remind me
of another life and distant shore.

Alas, they remind me,
your cruel melodies,
of the steppe at night-and in the
moonlight
the feature of a poor distant
maiden.

Seeing you, I forget
that dear, fateful vision;
but when you sing again
I imagine it before me again.
-translation compiled by Madison King

Эти летние ночи (These Summer Nights)

It seems that most of Rachmaninoff's songs were composed during a time of great financial need. However, despite the quickness at which some of his Opuses were composed, they contain a great amount of his best compositions. Opus 14 is one such example. Shortly after the death of his mentor, Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninoff fell into a period of depression in which he did not readily compose. Yet, due to his constant lack of financial stability, during the year 1896, he composed not only Opus 14 but other instrumental works. *These Summer Nights* is the fifth song of this opus. It is amazing that with such a difficult personal life, Rachmaninoff could compose such passionate, romantic pieces.

Rachmaninov was the first composer to set this text, by poet Daniil Rathaus, to music. He created a piece with a breathless, restless excitement that clearly identifies with the emotion of Rathaus' poetry. The longest song of Op. 14, it describes the feelings of two lovers as they longingly, and daringly, open their

hearts to each other under the illuminating moon on a summer's night.

Rachmaninov captures the intensity of passionate love with the forward motion with which the piece begins. This forward motion, as the lovers dive deeper into each others hearts, continues until its climax with a high B at the repetition of the opening phrase as the last phrase of the piece. Everything seems to stand still for those thirteen beats as the light of the moon illuminates the two embracing lovers.

Эти летние ночи прекрасные,
Ярким светом луны озарённые,
Порождают тревоги неясные,
Пробуждают порывы
влюблённые.

These beautiful summer nights,
illuminated by the bright light of the moon,
provoke vague fears
and awaken desires
of love.

Забывается скорбь необъятная,
Что даруется жизнью унылою,
И блаженства края благодатные
Раскрываются тайною силою...

The boundless sorrows
brought by sorrowful life are forgotten,
and a promised land of happiness
is revealed with mysterious power.

И открыли друг другу
невластные
Над собою сердцамы
влюблённые,
В эти летние ночи прекрасные,
светом ярким луны озарённые.
-poem by Daniil M. Rathaus

And we open up to one another,
powerless,
our hearts helplessly
in love,
On these beautiful summer nights,
illuminated by the bright light of the moon.
-translation complied by Madison King

Здесь хорошо (Here it is so fine)

Rachmaninov wrote this set of songs, Twelve Romances Opus 21, in the span of two weeks after his engagement so that he could pay for his honeymoon. Even still, it contains two of his most well known pieces. Shortly after the failure of his *Symphony No.1 in D minor* (1897), his finances weighed heavily on his mind. So, this project, as well as a few others, allowed him to bring his

composition skills back to life in order to provide for his new family. *Here it is so fine* is the seventh song in this Opus. It contains much passion, romance, and lyricism, all qualities at which Rachmaninoff excelled.

Although many criticized his choice of literature, Rachmaninoff was attracted, like many others, to the lyric qualities in the poetry of G. Galina, or Countess Glafira Mamoshina as was her true identity. He set at least three of Galina's poems to music. The first words of the poem originally read "How fine it is", but Rachmaninoff changed the wording to "Here it is so fine". It "anchors the moment in the here and now".⁸ An example of Galina's lyrical writing skill takes place at the end of each phrase. In the second stanza, each line ends with an [a] sound.

Rachmaninoff must also have been drawn to the intense imagery Galina set forth in the text of this poem. He very specifically uses his composition abilities to capture the pictures in the text with his music. The text begins by looking out over a vast land with a river, large meadows, and the expansive sky filled with clouds. Rachmaninoff uses triplets in the right hand and the long rhythms of half notes in the bass to give the picture of the character gazing out over the broad world before her. The harmony moves downwards as though the singer looks from the sky to the earth. Also, the texture is just thin enough to give the impression that the singer is surely alone, still, quiet, and at peace. Yet, in the second stanza, the singer sees that in quiet nature can be found God and her dreams. The musical texture becomes thicker with faster rhythms as she feels

⁸ Sylvester, Richard D.. *Rachmaninoff's Complete Songs*. Bloomington, IN, US: Indiana University Press, 2014. Accessed April 10, 2016. ProQuest ebrary.

God and love in the nature around her. Then, Rachmaninoff suddenly gives the singer a pianissimo high B flat and A, in the last phrase, as she pictures her dream, love, standing here in this fine place.

| | |
|--|---|
| Здесь хорошо... Взгляни, вдали Огнём горит река; Цветным ковром луга легли, Белеют облака. | Here it is so fine... Look, in the distance the river burns like fire, the meadows are a carpet of color, white clouds shine over head. |
| Здесь нет людей... Здесь тишина... Здесь только Бог да я. Цветы, да старая сосна, Да ты, мечта моя! -poem by Gafira A. Galina | Here, there are no people... it is tranquility, Here are only God and I, flowers, and the old pine, and you, my dream! -translation compiled by Madison King |

PERFORMANCE ASPECTS

These pieces are just a small sample of the compositional genius of Rachmaninov. The songs are large; they require a great amount of stamina. The second piece is the fastest with respect to tempo. This rush of music aptly expresses the emotions of passion and fear in the hearts of two lovers. The melody moves from the singer's lower range, in the beginning, to the climax of a high B natural. The singer must be careful to support in the lower range, but not allow the heaviness of the chest voice to move up into the higher range.

The third piece presents its challenges in the quiet stillness it contains. However, its beauty is within that stillness. Rachmaninov was an excellent melodist. He used the emotions and images in the poetry and placed them in the

music. This piece with its difficult, yet emotionally charged, pianissimo high notes shows off Rachmaninov's and the singers skills as musicians. Another skill the singer must have is to lead. With a sparser accompaniment, the singer must lead the piece along; knowing where each phrase should be placed dynamically and rhythmically.

The first piece, I believe, requires the most emotion and stamina as performer. After singing the other two pieces, it is difficult to maintain the high level of physical and mental stamina. The most challenging section is the ending repetition of material. Rachmaninov brings the singer up into a high chromatic descent beginning on A5. The singer must be mindful of their support in this section. As in all these songs, the singer must know their own voice. One high pianissimo is not the same as another's. In this music, the musician must sing with their own voice in a way that is supported, healthy, and comfortable. Then they will be able to make beautiful music with these enriching songs.

CHAPTER IV

ALBAN MARIE JOHANNES BERG

BIOGRAPHY

Alban Berg was born in Vienna, Austria in 1885. As a child, he had an interest in literature and music. As a young man, Berg was a passionate and dedicated composer. During Berg's lifetime, music was prevalent in the home of middle class families. Initially, he was interested in a career in literature, but music was an important part of his family's life. During his childhood, he took piano lessons from an aunt. His family was supportive of Berg's talents as a musician, and encouraged him in his early endeavors. Although he was without formal instruction, he wrote over one hundred compositions before he was eighteen years old. Unfortunately, many of them remain unpublished.

In 1904, Berg was introduced to one of the most influential people in his life, Arnold Schoenberg. Schoenberg took Berg as his student, and heavily influenced the beginning of Berg's career. He helped shape "Berg's artistic personality"⁹. Other esteemed composers who helped to shape Berg into a boundary pushing, tonality stretching, passionate composer; and whom had a large influence on his earliest published works, were Joseph Mahler and Richard

⁹ Reich, Willi. "Alban Berg." Encyclopedia Britannica Online. Accessed September 2015. <http://www.britannica.com/biography/Alban-Berg>.

Wagner. In 1907, Berg's first public performance as a composer was his *Piano Sonata* where the influence of his mentors was incredibly obvious. The publication of the sonata in 1908 marked the moment in which Berg began his separation from tonality. In 1911, he married and settled with his new bride in Vienna and devoted himself to his music. Berg rarely traveled outside of Vienna, and never left Austria. After he made his home in Vienna, his musical output increased.

In 1912, his first non-student work, *Five Orchestral Songs*, was published. This composition marked the beginning of his less traditionally styled music. Many of his friends and mentors encouraged him to stretch the boundaries of the traditional styles. One notable boundary that Berg and his contemporaries began to stretch was that of tonality. However, as Berg would learn, not all of Austria was ready for such a change. Berg was not popular in his culture. His music often brought about an uproar from his audiences, and many other composers like him were excluded from public performances. However, abroad, Berg was a representative of Austrian composers and their new non-traditional techniques. As a part of the Second or 20th Century Viennese School, Berg, along with Schoenberg and Webern, blended the old with the new. His most central techniques included chromatic expression barely within the bounds of traditional tonality, atonal form, and 12 note structuring of tonal music. His opera, *Lulu*, is an example of a work based entirely on a twelve note system. Interestingly, this opera was not completed until 1979, after Berg's death.

In 1921, Berg attempted his first opera. Due to World War II, its completion was delayed. Dedicated to Joseph Mahler's widow, Alma, *Wozzeck* did not premier until 1925. 1933 marked the Nazi seizure of power in Austria. Although he was not a Jew like some of his friends, Berg still lost most of his funds and work as a result of the political upheaval. During the next several years, Alban Berg moved to composing chamber music and became a well known composition teacher. He, like his teachers before him, encouraged his students to create their own music and stretch the limits of traditional styles.

Berg became ill shortly after he began work on his second opera, *Lulu*, which was finished after his death by Friedrich Cerba. His final work was a requiem for the daughter of Alma Mahler, *Violin Concerto*. Fully charged with emotion, this also became his requiem as his last complete work. Alban Berg died in Vienna in 1935.

SIEBEN FRÜHE LIEDER (SEVEN EARLY SONGS)

Composed between 1905 and 1908 during his instruction under Arnold Schoenberg, these are some of Berg's earliest vocal compositions. They pose a large contrast from his later works. These pieces are characterized with Romantic expression, a lyrical vocal line, and more stable tonality. At the encouragement of his teachers and colleagues, he had begun to stretch the limits of tonality for expressive purposes, which these pieces clearly exhibit. *Sieben frühe lieder* was not published until 1928 when Berg also orchestrated them.

Nacht

Nacht is the most tonally unstable piece in the set, but still is more tonal than his later atonal compositions. Berg begins with a three sharp key signature, but immediately gives an accidental to all but one note in the first measure. The vocal line is also full of accidentals, creating odd and unexpected intervals. Despite the untraditional sound of the music, Berg clearly follows the pattern of the poem by Carl Hauptman. For each new stanza of poetry, Berg begins a new musical section. Berg also specifically describes the pictures in the poem through the music. The very first note on E natural is marked *piano* as though the note itself is the clouds which are silently drifting through the night over the mountains and valleys. The second stanza describes a “broad land of wonder”, and Berg firmly marks the new section and text with a *forte* and an A major chord in the accompaniment. Within each section, there are other areas of word painting of which Berg took advantage. When the text concerns the lonely breeze wafting by through the dark trees, Berg instructs the singer to sing *mezza voce* (with half the voice) and *etwas langsamer* (a little slower). The accompaniment is playing *pianissimo*, with a faster harmonic rhythm, and higher than the vocal line depicting the movement of the breeze. Although this early piece shows the beginnings of his shift to breaking with tonality, the points of tonal clarity are clear in the way Berg set this poem. This piece shows the synthesis of the old and new

styles which were important to the compositional style of that time, and it reveals Berg's passion and dedication to his music.

Nacht

Dämmern Wolken über Nacht und
Tal,
Nebel schweben,
Wasser rauschen sacht.
Nun entschleiert
sichs mit einemmal.
O gib acht! Gib acht!

Weites Wunderland ist aufgetan.
Silbern ragen Berge traumhaft
groß,
stille Pfade silberlicht talan aus
verborgnem schoß,
und die hehre Welt so traumhaft rein.

Stummer Buchenbaum am Wege steht
schattenschwarz,
ein Hauch vom fernen Hain
einsam leise weht.

Und aus tiefen Grundes Dusterheit
blinken Lichter auf in stummer Nacht.
Trinke Seele! Trinke Einsamkeit!
O gib acht! Gib acht!
-Carl Hauptman

Night

Darkened clouds above the night and
valley,
the mists float above,
rushing water like smoke.
Now, all at once
unveils itself.
Oh watch, pay heed!

A broad wonderland has opened up.
Silver mountains rise up dreamlike
and great,
Still paths silverlit leads to the valley from a
hidden place,
and the noble world so dreamily pure.

A silent beech tree stands by the path black
with shadows,
a breath from a distant, lonely grave
wafts quietly by.

And out of the depths of the dark valley
blink lights in the silent night.
Drink my soul! Drink in solitude!
Oh watch, pay heed!
-translation compiled by Madison King

Schilflied

Composed around the same time as *Nacht*, this piece is more moderate in its extensions of tonality. There is a more distinct melodic line, whereas in *Nacht*, an easily discernible melody is hard to find. There is still moderate use of accidentals. Berg gives a key signature with four flats and begins clearly in F minor. However, the sense of tonality is quickly diminished. Unexpectedly, in the

final three bars of music, the voice ends on F4 with F minor in the accompaniment; but Berg decides to write in an A natural to end to piece in F major. This last minute change to major mode makes sense with the emotion set in the text. The character is listening to the sounds of nature around him and hears the sound of his love's voice as it sinks into the pond. The F minor with the last note of the melody expresses the character's sadness in the loss of his love's voice, but the switch to F major shows that the character has experienced both gladness and sadness. He has heard her lovely voice, but it was also taken from him.

Schilflied

Auf geheimen Waldespfade
schleich ich gern im Abendschein
an das öde Schilfgestadem
Mädchen, und gedenke dein.

Wenn sich dann der Busch verdüstert,
rauscht das Rohr geheimnisvoll;
und es klaget, und es flüstert,
daß ich weinen soll.

Und ich mein, ich höre wehen
leise deiner Stimme Klang
und im Weiher untergehen
deinen lieblichen Gesang.

-Nikolaus Lenau

Reed Song

On a secret forest path
I like to creep in evening light
I go to the barren banks
My maiden, and think of you.

As the bushes grow dark,
the reeds hiss mysteriously;
and lament, and whisper,
and I have to weep.

and I, I hear wafting
the quiet sound of your voice
and in the pond it sinks
your lovely song.

-translation compiled by Madison King

Das Nachtigall

The earliest composition of these three pieces, *Das Nachtigall*, is the most traditional sounding. The melody line is direct with long sweeping movements and few accidentals. It is the most tonally stable. In each of the three pieces the

accompaniment is constantly moving, and *Das Nachtigall* is not an exception. During the A section, the accompaniment is a constantly moving eighth note arpeggiation. Even in the slightly slower B section, there is constant articulation of the accompaniment. Yet, the melody line soars over the rush of music specifically expressing the graceful movement and song of the nightingale; and the fluid opening of the rose buds. This piece is the blatant expression of Berg's style of composing beautiful lyric vocal lines above a more complex, expressive accompaniment.

Die Nachtigall

Das macht, es hat die Nachtigall
die ganze Nacht gesungen;
da sind von ihrem süßen Schall,
da sind in Hall und Widerhall,
die Rosen aufgesprungen.

Sie war doch sonst ein wildes Blut,
nun geht sie tief in Sinnen,
trägt in der Hand den Sommerhut
und duldet still der Sonne Glut
und weiß nicht was beginnen.

-Theodor Storm

The Nightingale

It happened because the nightingale
sang all night long;
From her sweet call,
to the echo and re-echo,
the roses have sprung up.

She was a wild blossom,
now she walks in deep thought,
She carries in her hand a Summer hat
and endures quietly the Sun's heat
and did not know where to begin.

-translation compiled by Madison King

PERFORMANCE ASPECTS

It can be daunting when first looking at early music of the twentieth century. Personally, I was terrified. However, after months of rehearsing I and my accompanist grew to love this set of songs the most. True independence of the singer is necessary. In the first two pieces especially, the accompaniment is not helpful to the singer at all. In the first pieces, many hours of practice at the piano to get each atonal interval is required. The last two pieces are more tonally stable which make them easier to sing.

CHAPTER VI

JOHN KANDER

BIOGRAPHY

John Kander was born in Kansas City, Missouri in 1927. As a child, his passion for music was supported by his equally as musical family. Kander began his musical study at age six with the piano. When he was a young man, Kander studied at both Oberlin College and Columbia University. In his early career, he worked as an accompanist, dance music arranger, and conductor. From 1955 to 1957-58, he worked as the choral director and conductor of Rhode Island Warwick Musical Theatre. In New York, Kander continued to work as a conductor for various new works, and revivals of older theatre works like *Conversation Piece*. A well-known dance arranger, he was given the task to work out the arrangements for *Gypsy* (1960). Kander made his own Broadway debut in 1962 with the short-lived production, *A Family Affair*.

In 1964, Kander met his partner, expert lyricist, Fred Ebb. Ebb became a permanent part of Kander's career, and the duo made great strides together in the fields of music. Their first collaboration, a song, *My Coloring Book*, met great success; and caught the attention of Harold Prince. Prince later contracted them to create the show that solidified their careers, *Flora, the Red Menace*. Prince

again hired Kander and Ebb to collaborate in 1966 for their great success, *Cabaret*. Over the next several years, Kander and Ebb collaborated on several more compositions including *Chicago*, in 1975. Over the next two decades, the creative duo successfully collaborated in another growing area of entertainment, the cinema; and, after a short break, a handful more successful musicals. In 1977, they worked on the film, *New York, New York*. Their last musical works included *Woman of the Year* and *Kiss of the Spider Woman*.

A LETTER FROM SULLIVAN BALLOU

Kander was a part of the most prestigious collaborating duo in Broadway history. However, he has also spent time composing his own pieces of music. He has composed a few beautiful art songs that touch to the very center of the human heart. One such song is the *Letter from Sullivan Ballou*, which was composed in 1994.

During the Civil War, in July of 1861, Major Sullivan Ballou penned his last letter to his young wife, Sarah. Full of unmistakable love for his family, Sullivan was impelled to write these words so that his family would know how greatly he cared for them. One week later, at the Battle of Bull Run, Major Sullivan Ballou was killed. He left this letter with his personal belongings. Ballou knew that it would be sent home with them if he perished in battle. It was sent to his wife weeks after his death. Kander composed this simple, yet emotionally charged piece for the illustrious soprano, Renée Fleming.

My very dear Sarah: The indications are very strong that we shall move in a few days — perhaps tomorrow. Lest I should not be able to write again, I feel impelled to write a few lines that may fall upon your eye when I am no more.

I have no misgivings about or lack of confidence in the cause in which I am engaged, and my courage does not halt or falter. I know how strongly American civilization now leans on the triumph of the government and how great a debt we owe to those who went before us through the blood and suffering of the revolution. And I am willing, perfectly willing to lay down all my joys in this life to help maintain this government and to pay that debt . . .

Sarah, my love for you is deathless. It seems to bind me with mighty cables that nothing but omnipotence could break; and yet my love of country comes over me like a strong wind and bears me un-resistibly on with all these chains to the battlefield.

The mem'ries of the blissful moments I have spent with you come creeping over me, and I feel most gratified to God and to you that I have enjoyed them so long. And hard it is for me to give them up and burn to ashes the hopes of future years when, God willing, we might still have lived and loved together, and seen our sons grown up to honorable manhood around us.

I have, I know, but a few and small claims upon divine providence, but something whispers to me, perhaps it is the wafted prayer of my little Edgar, that I shall return to my loved ones unharmed.

If I do not, my dear Sarah, never forget how much I love you, and when my last breath escapes me on the battlefield, it will whisper your name. Forgive my faults and the many pains I have caused you. How thoughtless and foolish I have oftentimes been! How gladly would I wash out with my tears ev'ry little spot upon your happiness . . .

But, oh, Sarah! If the dead can come back to this earth and flit unseen around those they loved, I shall always be near you; in the gladdest days and in the darkest nights, always, always.

And if there be a soft breeze upon your cheek, it shall be my breath, as the cool air fans your throbbing temple, it shall be my spirit passing by.

Sarah, do not mourn me dead; think I am gone and wait for thee, for we shall meet again...

PERFORMANCE ASPECTS

Knowing that his piece is intended for such a renowned singer like Ms. Fleming, I took care to make this piece everything it was created to be. Clear diction is difficult in English. Careful attention to diphthongs, and beginning and ending consonants is crucial. It is not hard to perform this piece with the emotion that it requires because of its intense subject matter, but it takes a good amount of preparation to clearly convey the story the singer decides to tell. The performer must decide from which perspective to take the piece. It can be performed from the perspective of Mr. Ballou as he painstakingly wrote his final letter to the love of his life. The performer could also perform in the perspective of his wife, Sarah, as she tearfully reads the final words of love and encouragement from her husband. The text, melody and voice all work together perfectly to convey the sadness, love, and passion that filled the hearts of Sullivan and Sarah Ballou.

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