

A STUDY OF THE SONG CYCLE
POEMS OF LOVE AND THE RAIN BY NED ROREM

by *6432*

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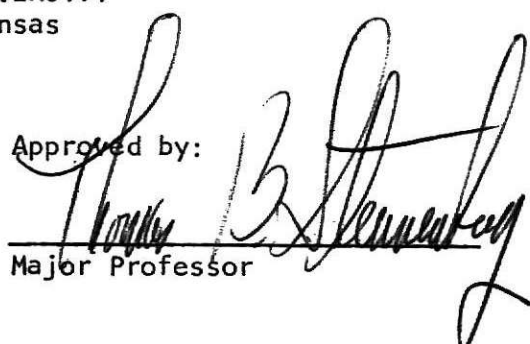
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

This paper will examine the song cycle Poems of Love and the Rain by Ned Rorem. Poems of Love and the Rain, commissioned by the Ford Foundation, was written c. 1964 on poems by several American authors chosen by the composer. As an introduction to the score, Rorem wrote a short prefix describing the cycle and stating the technical problem which he set for himself within the work. This set of composer's notes was used as a source of reference in this study.¹

This paper will examine poetic meter and how it was treated musically. This implies poetic climax and how it relates to musical climax as well as poetic pacing as related to musical tempo and rubato.

Dr. William R. Moses, Professor of English at Kansas State University, was consulted in regard to the scanning of the poetry used in this cycle. He also contributed many helpful insights into the areas of poetic climax and pacing within these particular poems.

Just as music may be analyzed in more than one way, authorities might scan poetry quite differently. This gives the composer of song the latitude for manipulating the basic rhythm of the poem without violating its overall rhythmic structure.

¹Ned Rorem, Poems of Love and the Rain. Composer's Notes. New York: Boosey and Hawkes, 1965.

The cycle Poems of Love and the Rain is an excellent score for studying this creative manipulation of poetry, for in this work Rorem sets seven of the poems to music twice. As stated in the composer's notes (referred to above) he operates under the principle "that if a poem is 'good' there is more than one way of musicalizing it."² He states that he deliberately sets each poem "in as contrasting a manner as possible (i.e., gentle then passionate, slow and violent, then fast and hysterical, etc." He further states that "although each of the poems is repeated twice, none of the music is repeated--although there is one recurring motive throughout."³

Throughout this study, ideas shall be drawn heavily from materials presented by Rorem in his book, Music from Inside Out.

General Plan of the Cycle

The overall plan of this particular song cycle is unique. This is because the technical problem which Rorem set for himself (that of setting each poem twice) was itself unique. Rorem describes the shape as being "pyrimidal". "The sequence works toward the Interlude, then backtracks--as in a mirror."⁴

The table of contents for Poems of Love and the Rain is reproduced below. Its very arrangement on the page gives a visual idea of the plan that Rorem states above.

²ibid.

³ibid.

⁴ibid.

POEMS OF LOVE AND THE RAIN⁵

A Song Cycle for Mezzo Soprano and Piano

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| 1. PROLOGUE: from <u>The Rain</u> | Donald Windham |
| 2. Stop All The Clocks, Cut Off The Telephone | W. H. Auden |
| 3. The Air Is The Only | Howard Moss |
| 4. Love's Stricken "Why" | Emily Dickinson |
| 5. The Apparition | Theodore Roethke |
| 6. Do I Love You | Jack Larson |
| 7. In The Rain- | E. E. Cummings |
| 8. Song For Lying In Bed | Kenneth Pitchford |
| 9. Interlude | Roethke |
| 10. Song For Lying In Bed (conclusion) | |
| 11. In The Rain- | |
| 12. Do I Love You (Part II) | |
| 13. The Apparition | |
| 14. Love's Stricken "Why" | |
| 15. The Air Is The Only | |
| 16. Stop All The Clocks, Cut Off The Telephone | |
| 17. EPILOGUE: from <u>The Rain</u> | |

⁵Ibid.

Biographical Sketch

Ned Rorem, one of America's foremost composers of song, was born in Richmond, Indiana on October 23, 1923.⁶ His early homelife was one of culture and opportunity. His father, a college professor, offered Rorem advantages of encouragement and education.

Between the years of 1940 and 1949 he studied at Northwestern University, Curtis Institute, the Berkshire Music Center, Tanglewood, and the Juilliard School of Music, where, in 1948, he received a Master of Music degree. His composition teachers have included Bernard Wagenaar, Aaron Copland, Virgil Thomson, and Arthur Honegger. While studying under Thomson, he made orchestrations in exchange for lessons, and received, in addition, a salary of twenty dollars a week.⁷

From 1949 to 1958 he lived, studied, and composed in France and Morocco, returning to New York in 1959. While in Paris, he was under the sponsorship of the Vicomtesse Marie Laure de Noailles, who was responsible for the performance of many of his compositions. It was through her influence that he was accepted into the elite musical circle of Paris.⁸

Rorem served for a time as Slee Professor of Music and Composer-in-Residence at the University of Buffalo. During this time

⁶Bennie Middaugh, "The Songs of Ned Rorem--Aspects of Musical Style." The NATS Bulletin, (May, 1968), p. 36.

⁷Ned Rorem, Current Biographies, vol. 22 (July, 1967), p. 198.

⁸Ned Rorem, The Paris Diary of Ned Rorem (New York, George Braziller, Inc., 1966), p. xiii.

he wrote and delivered a series of seven lectures on various phases of music which became the basis for his book, Music from Inside Out.⁹

He has been the recipient of many honors and awards which include the Gershwin Memorial Award, Lili Boulanger Award, Prix de Biarritz, Fulbright, and Guggenheim Fellowships, and three Ford Foundation Grants. Rorem has also served as Composer-in-Residence at the University of Utah.¹⁰

Rorem's Style

Although the scope of Ned Rorem's writing covers a range from opera to piano sonatas, his outstanding achievements have been in the writing of songs. Time magazine has referred to him as "...undoubtedly the best composer of art songs now living."¹¹ Rorem, however, regards this as a "false category".¹² Therefore, the limitations of this study to songs is acknowledged.

Today's listener seems to demand of the composer a new variety of techniques, new concepts, new experiments of sound. Rorem does not experiment for the sake of experimentation; his compositions exemplify a new and individual approach to old musical ideas and materials. In competition with other twentieth century composers, he excels in proving how an old form can be rejuvenated by a resourceful composer.

⁹Middaugh, op. cit., p. 36.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 36.

¹¹"Frozen Interplay," Time, 86 (Nov. 12, 1965), p. 83.

¹²Personal letter from Ned Rorem, Composer, to Virginia Buzan, Jan. 28, 1969.

Here is a traditionalist and, loosely speaking, even a classicist. While many of our composers are imitating a Hindemith or a Stravinsky, Ned Rorem has created a more personal style embodying modality in his melodic lines and a rich harmonic texture of a mildly dissonant nature.¹³

Rorem's music, like that of many American composers, reveals evidences of a neo-classic and neo-Baroque nature. He describes himself as a conservative, which he defines as being inclined "toward tonality, toward a harmonic texture, a neo-romantic style and a neo-classic form."¹⁴

His song style is oriented toward the elegance, wit, and clarity of the twentieth century French school, as exemplified by Satie, Ravel, and Poulenc. Along with this essentially neo-classic idiom, Rorem also often combines modal melodic resources, Baroque contrapuntal usages, and rhythmic and harmonic elements that are indigenous to American jazz and popular music.¹⁵

Rorem differs from nineteenth century composers of Leider by being more concerned with contrapuntal or linear considerations than with homophonic texture. His harmonic implications are felt in melody line rather than in chord structure.

Generally, his songs exhibit what can be considered a three-part linear or melodic texture, the right and left hand parts of the accompaniment constituting two of the voices, and the vocal part a third. (In Rorem's accompaniments, whether concerned with lines of parallel chords, arpeggiation, or single melodic lines, the two hands appear to move independently, while at the same time bearing an obvious relationship to each other and to the vocal line.¹⁶

The structural make-up of Rorem's songs is largely dependent upon the form of the text itself. His chosen texts represent a wide

¹³Garland Anderson, "The Music of Ned Rorem," Music Journal, 21 (April, 1963), p. 71.

¹⁴Ned Rorem, "Listening and Hearing," Music Journal, 21 (Dec., 1963), p. 42.

¹⁵Middaugh, op. cit., p. 36.

¹⁶Middaugh, op. cit., p. 36.

variety, thus resulting in the wide diversity of compositional elements which he incorporates into his style. He appears always to subjugate his musical resources to the poetic meters and inflections, and especially to their verbal meanings and derivative moods.

Definitions

Rorem's viewpoint is reflected in his definitions, some of which are quoted below:

Song: A lyric poem of moderate length set to music for single voice with piano.

Declamation: The effective rhetorical rendition of words with regard to correct emphasis of each word as it relates--sense-wise--to the others.

Prosody: The science or art of versification; the synchronizing of musical phases with the natural movement of speech.¹⁷

But since the texts are literary works, two supplemental definitions by William Leahy are added:

Poetry: The patterned form of verbal or written expression of ideas in concentrated, imaginative, and rhythmical terms.

Metrics: The pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables established in a line of poetry.¹⁸

¹⁷Ned Rorem, Music From Inside Out (New York, George Braziller, Inc., 1961), p. 38-40.

¹⁸William Leahy, Fundamentals of Poetry (Chicago, Kenneth Publishing Co., 1963), p. 5.

CHAPTER II

PROLOGUE

Collaboration of Poetry and Melody

The collaboration of poetry and melody, without losing the metrical declamation of the literature, is the problem for a composer of song. "A finished poem may be contemplated, studied, and re-read as the individual has more time to inspect it, whereas music's meaning (if any) must be caught on the run. Music exists...only in motion."¹⁹ The scheduling of time in a poem is quite different when it is set to music; during the course of its performance it cannot be restudied and re-examined.

Rorem believes the end result should be a "wedding, so to speak, of words and music, in which neither ought to dominate the other. A third element of greater magnitude is indicated."²⁰

Literary Concept

The first number of the cycle is a prose sentence from the chapter "The Rain" in the book Emblems of Conduct by Donald Windham. The sentence, versified for music is this:

¹⁹Rorem, Music, p. 15.

²⁰Ibid., p. 16.

Everywhere, the impossible is happening:

Two things,

The rain and the landscape,

Are occupying the same place at the same time.

The literary concept of this sentence deals with the monotony of rain. By reading the prose as a separate literary unit, one can visualize a monotonous and blurred landscape, where the elements and the scenery become one long inactive counterpart to time. A talented composer of song will be able to create the same effect musically. This chapter will deal with how Rorem used poetic point of emphasis, melodic fragments, and scanning to create the same effect musically that Windham implies in the prose.

Poetic Point of Emphasis

A composer examines verses with an intention of determining what manner of music will coincide with what words in what section of the poem. He seeks highs and lows, and points of intensity toward which to direct emphasis. Most likely he will first decide upon the musical climax by looking for a group of words that sum up the poet's message.²¹

In the case of this poem, Rorem evidently chooses the phrase "two things" as the point toward which he must direct emphasis. This particular "point of intensity" is not (in the case of this verse) a dramatic result of a lengthy development, but merely the focal point of a short thought span. Rorem, with complete literary sensitivity, does not force the literary concept out of context by creating a strong

²¹ Ibid., p. 38.

dynamic feeling in upper voice register (as some poetic climaxes demand). He chooses, rather, to separate "two things" from the rest of the vocal line by rests. Thus it is isolated, so to speak, and this sets it apart and emphasizes it in an entirely different manner from the rest of the lyrics. In the text this phrase refers to the rain and the landscape. The melody at this point hovers around "B" with both words treated with equal stress and falling also on the note "B".



Two things—

Ex. 1. Prologue, m. 5-6
(pg. 2)



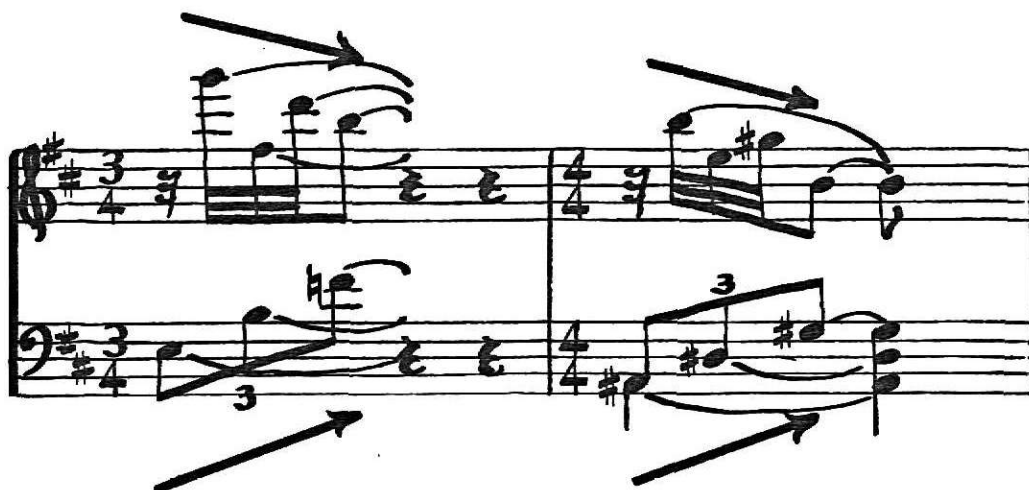
same place at the same time—

Ex. 2. Prologue, m. 9-10
(pg. 3)

More is said later about this melodic treatment of "two things".

The Use of Fragments

More continues to highlight the literary concept in several ways. Throughout the entire span, the accompaniment emphasizes repetitious fragments of varying harmonies in contrary motion from a wide plane to a more narrow one. The constant contraction of an expanded interval to a closer range gives an unconscious psychological blending in the listener's mind of two "things" merging into one.



Ex. 3. Prologue, m. 5-6 (pg. 2)

This blending is further implicated by extensive use of the piano pedal, which is intended to give a "blurred and limpid"²² effect, as he suggests in his "Composer's Notes".

Rorem again stresses the monotony of the poetic thesis by constant use of a three note melodic fragment. This motif is first introduced in the melodic line in union with the words "two things". It consists of a downward progression of C, B, and G#.



Two things—.

Ex. 4. Prologue, m. 5-6 (pg. 2)

²² Rorem, Poems, op. cit.

This fragment does not occur again melodically until the blending of the two things is realized in the words "same place at the same time," where it appears again two times. In this manner the poetic concept of merging



The same place at the same time.

Ex. 5. Prologue, m. 9-10 (pg. 3)

two things into one is carried out to an even stronger degree musically. The result is the "third element of greater magnitude"²³ of which Rorem speaks.

In addition to tying the two thoughts together melodically, the piano accompaniment plays an important part, also. The motif C, B, G# occurs also at various times in the accompaniment, which seems to echo or support the thesis of the melody line. It is interesting to note that



Ex. 6. Prologue, m. 7-8 (pg. 3)

²³Rorem, Music, p. 38.

when this fragment appears in the piano part, it comes entirely in the span between "two things" and "same place at the same time." This blending ties together even more firmly the union of the two concepts (both musical and literary).

The Use of Scanning

Another insight into the interpretation of "Prologue" can be gained by scanning the sentence (as if it were poetry) for its declamatory emphasis. From this process it is found that the statement, handled from a poetic viewpoint, has eight strong stresses in the entire "verse," with three secondary stresses. Six of the eight stresses occur on the strong beat of the measure, giving them the normal rhythmic accent. This is a common, but very tasteful and effective use of prosody.

Later they are handled differently. Both times Rorem chooses to emphasize the secondary stress (rather than the primary accent) as in "two things" and "same time" by placing "things" and "time" on the strong beat of the measure. By doing this, he has transferred what might be considered weaker stresses in the poetic declamation to a stronger stress musically. He justifies himself in the following manner:

A poem, after all, is not "real life"--a song even less so. In this distillation of life, distortions are conceivable when they serve an expressive gesture. If a composer is going to distort the metrical values of a poem he should have good reason for risking loss of verbal comprehension.²⁴

²⁴ Ibid., p. 49.

It can be assumed that his "good reason" for taking this liberty is to create variety and also to give a strong feeling of finality to this small fragment of words--for the words of the prologue become those of the epilogue.

The Problem of Brevity

The brevity of this bit of prose poses a problem for the composer in the blending of the literary and musical ideas. Much responsibility lies in this first song. So short a sentence must create the mood for the whole song cycle. Considering the brief span of the sentence, it is to Rorem's merit that he does not allow himself to fall into the trap of repeating words or phrases. What was stated once by Windham was also stated only once in the song.

Rorem has this to say in regard to duplicity of phrases:

Meretricious originality is to be avoided at all cost... music inclines to alter a poet's rhythmic subtlety, no matter the composer's will to prevent it. The sin of duplicating words at discretion is that it retards and cripples the motion intended in the verse.²⁵

The composer does, however, do several things to combat the problem of brevity. First of all, he instructs the singer to proceed "unbearably slow (♩ = 40 or less)."²⁶ This, in itself, lengthens the time span in which this particular thought exists.

Another way in which he handles the problem of length is by keeping the vocalist within a very narrow plane, using a range of only

²⁵ Ibid., p. 45.

²⁶ Rorem, Poems, p. 28.

a ninth. This device works very well, as there is not sufficient time to build to a powerful climax or exploit the range of the singer. Also, the context of the words does not call for such a buildup.

The theories stated above have attempted to illustrate how Rorem was able to achieve the "wedding" of melody and verse to produce a third and greater element. He shows in his creation a profound respect for the declamation and thesis of the poem by Donald Windham. Rorem is able to achieve the synchronization of musical phrases with the natural movement of speech, without relying on such trite devices as duplicating words, forcing unnatural climaxes, and without the filling in of excess material.

CHAPTER III

INTERLUDE

Climax of Song Cycle

Rorem states that "climaxes are indigenous to all the 'time arts' ..."²⁷

A composer examines verses with an intention of determining what manner of music will coincide with what words in what section of the poem. He seeks highs and lows, and points of intensity toward which to direct emphasis. Most likely he will first decide upon the musical climax by looking for a group of words that sum up the poet's message, hoping among them to find one with dramatic connotation, and also a vowel that will sound good on a low or high note. Use of a note in extreme vocal registers is the commonest method for producing effective climax in song.

....The climactic note (or phrase) of a song is one that is the result of accumulated tension; contrast is achieved by removing this note from the normal tessitura of speech. All music must contain climax. In song it appears when a vocal line arrives at the inevitable point toward which it has been moving. Since a composer feels safer in knowing where he's going, before he begins composition he calculates this point of crisis, insuring the direction of the road which will lead him - both forward and backward - to his overall form. This overall form is what gives contour to melody.²⁸

The éle'ment of aír was out of hand.

The rush of wínd ripped off the ténder leáves

And flúng them ín cōnfúsiōn ón the lánd.

We wáited fór the fírst ráin ín the eáves.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 16.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 46-47.

The chaos grew as hour by hour the light
 Decreased beneath an undivided sky.
 Our pupils widened with unnatural night,
 But still the road and dusty field kept dry.

The rain stayed in its cloud; full dark came near
 The wind lay motionless in the long grass.
 The veins within our hands betrayed our fear.
 What we had hoped for had not come to pass.

- Roethke, Interlude

Although Rorem is referring to the climactic points in an individual melody or song, these thoughts are expandable to include the overall shape of the entire cycle. Considering the group of songs as a unit, or merely one large composition, Rorem evidently chooses "Interlude" as the high point or climax of the cycle. He achieves this in four ways.

First, this poem is the only one of the eight which is sung but once. It represents the peak of the pyramid of poems. In his composer's notes (quoted on page 3) he referred to the order chosen for the seventeen songs as being 'pyramidal', working towards the Interlude, and then backtracking as in a mirror.

Second, this is the only song of the group which is done without accompaniment. This in itself sets the song apart in a unique manner.

Third, the message of the poem seems to crystalize the message of the entire sequence, which, again, referring to the Composer's Notes, the message, in Rorem's words, is: "unrequited love against a backdrop

of constant rain." "Unrequited" seems to be the key word, for "Interlude" describes an intense feeling for rain, and the rain doesn't come. By using this particular poem, he carries out quite well his statement that "the climactic note (or phrase) of a song is one that is the result of accumulated tension,"²⁹

Fourth, by using a tessitura covering a wide range, Rorem makes this song climactic to the whole cycle. He uses both extremes of the mezzo range within the same phrase. For example, three different times he moves the melody from a low F# to a high G in one dramatic sweep.



Ex. 7. Interlude, m. 3-4 (pg. 28)

Free Adaptation of Metrical Regularity

"Interlude" is unique among the poems Rorem chooses for this cycle. All other poems used are either blank verse or free verse, while "Interlude" falls easily into three stanzas of four lines each and proceeds almost entirely into the motion of iambic pentameter.

One might assume that this poem, which confines itself to a definite pattern, would be set to music in a similar pattern. "...four

²⁹Rorem, Music, p. 46.

stanzas of poetry can be imitated by four 'stanzas' of identical music. The difference is in the words, which are not the same for each stanza.³⁰

Rorem states another alternative:

But a free adaptation is accomplished by ignoring given divisions of a poem and substituting others, or even fashioning a long non-repetitive melody which blends the stanzas into a single current.³¹

In his treatment of "Interlude", Rorem seems to subject a rigid form of verse to a free adaptation of melody. The composer's directions include "slow and very, very free: almost unmetered."³² Even though great liberties are taken by ignoring the given divisions of the poem, Rorem achieves effective prosody. He still maintains correct emphasis of words by working up the scale on each stressed syllable.



Ex. 8. Interlude, m. 1 (pg. 28)

The outcome seems proof of his statement that "whatever happens, the poem and music will always have a common superstructure."³³

Unity Achieved in Free Adaptation

It is interesting to note that although the song is unmetered, there is a feeling of five beats per measure (not counting the "pick-up")

³⁰*ibid.*, p. 46.

³¹*ibid.*, p. 46.

³²Rorem, *Poems*, *op. cit.* p. 28.

³³Rorem, *Poems*, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

beat). This adaptation lends itself quite naturally to the pentameter line. This feeling of five beats per measure continues until he begins to build a climax with the words "the chaos grew as hour by hour the light decreased beneath an undivided sky." These two lines are blurred into one continuous musical thought using a three note pattern repeated over and over.

Rorem achieves unity in his free unmetered melody by beginning each stanza of the poem with a similar upward progressing melody, thus more or less dividing the song into three sections.



Ex. 9. Interlude, m. 5-6 (pg. 28)

Melodic unity is also secured by the repetition of a phrase using the extreme range of the singer, which occurs once in each stanza (although at different places in each stanza).



Ex. 10. Interlude, m. 6 (pg. 28)

CHAPTER IV

STOP ALL THE CLOCKS

Poetic Pacing

One of the poet's chief delights is in the manipulation of his pace and its changes. He is deeply involved in the feeling of his motion. Since a poem is always about something felt, its motion is certainly part of what it is about, part of what it "means." Even more importantly, the motion is fundamental to how the poem means.³⁴

The poem, "Stop All the Clocks," by W. H. Auden is a particularly interesting one when regarded from the standpoint of poetic movement or pace. Poetic pacing is further described by John Ciardi in the following manner: "And since a poem has duration, it also has pace. One poem may obviously urge the voice at a faster pace than does another. Within the same poem, moreover, one part may urge itself much more rapidly than another."³⁵

"Stop All the Clocks" is a poem concerning the death of love. Its desperation is almost (consciously) ridiculous, and as a result it is a poem full of far-fetched commands. The first four lines of the piece begin with strong, imperative words such as stop, prevent, silence, and bring. With this type of word usage, one would assume the poetic pace to be neither fast nor slow, but to be even, firm, and without tenderness.

³⁴ John Ciardi, How Does a Poem Mean? (Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1959), p. 921.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 920.

Stop all the clocks, cut off the telephone,
 Prevent the dog from barking with a juicy bone,
 Silence the pianos and with muffled drum
 Bring out the coffin, let the mourners come.

The preceding lines, being the first ones of the poem, establish the movement and set the pace. Very little deviation is found in the speed. This is to be expected, as a movement pattern of some definite nature must first be confirmed before it can be changed and manipulated.

The second stanza, however, begins to pick up pace within the very first line.

Let aeroplanes circle moaning overhead
 Scribbling on the sky the message He is Dead,
 Put crepe bows around the white necks of the public doves,
 Let the traffic policemen wear black cotton gloves.

"The faster motion within a line is technically achieved by the addition of more unstressed syllables per line, and also by more unstressed syllables within a single word (such as ae-ro-planes)."³⁶

The first noticeable slowing of tempo occurs at the end of the second line with the phrase "the message He is Dead." The elimination of some unstressed syllables leave an almost iambic feeling which slows the pulse considerably.

³⁶Will Moses, interviewed by Virginia Buzan (Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas), 3:30 P. M. Oct. 24, 1968.

Even within an individual line, one phrase may clearly be indicated as moving more rapidly or more slowly than another. For just as music carries with it a notation that tells the musician at what rate and with what feeling to play a given passage, so every good piece of writing, and poetry in particular, carries within it a series of unmistakable notations that tell the good reader how any given passage should be read.³⁷

After a brief but definite decrease of speed, the poem moves again into a more intense pace with the use of a longer line--"Put crepe bows, etc." This, in itself, makes for a faster pace. The last line of the second stanza continues to carry this same flow of motion with anapest footage of two unstressed syllables per one stressed syllable.

He was my North, my South, my East and West,
 My working week and my Sunday rest,
 My noon, my midnight, my talk, my song;
 I thought that love would last forever: I was wrong.

In the first line of the third stanza, a completely unexpected manipulation of pacing occurs. The motion slows to an iambic feeling, but this time the stressed syllables are stronger because they are one syllable words--North, South, East, and West. The fact that they are one syllable words, separated only by one unaccented beat, makes them words to linger upon, thus slowing the tempo quite dramatically.

Lines two and three carry forth the same tempo feeling though with less impact than the first line. These two lines are interesting, however, in a very subtle way. They are scanned identically

³⁷Ciardi, op. cit., p. 927.

˘ / ˘ / ˘ ˘ / ˘ / and yet the third line has a slower feeling.
This is because the word "working" moves faster than "noon, my" which
is obviously two words and further slowed by punctuation.

Line four of this stanza slows again, less dramatically perhaps,
but nevertheless much slower than any of the preceding lines. The cause
of this retardation is, interestingly enough, the exact opposite of the
cause of slowing in line one. The reason in this instance is lack of
variation between the stressed and unstressed syllables, the very absence
of variation results in a vast slowing down of pace.

Stanza three, by way of recapitulation, seems to again reestablish
the rhythm and pace of the first section of the poem.

˘ / ˘ / ˘ ˘ / ˘ ˘ / ˘ / ˘ /
The stars are not wanted now; put out every one:
˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ /
Pack up the moon and dismantle the sun:
˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ /
Pour away the ocean and sweep up the woods:
˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ /
For nothing now can ever come to any good.

Like in the first stanza, it has little deviation of movement
in the first three lines. Also, like the first stanza, it is full of
commands such as "put out", "Pack up," and "Pour away". These three
lines create a feeling of unity to the poem by the same word usage, the
same metrical rhythm, and by the same pacing as was used in stanza one.

The last line, in a contrasting manner, is interesting because
of the small word "ever." If this word were eliminated, the motion of
the rhythm would be almost a "sing-song" motion. "The addition of the
word 'ever' deliberately lengthens the line with a prolonged and roughened

movement, thus giving additional emphasis to the last line."³⁸

Musical Pacing

The first note of this song is as musically commanding as Auden's impact with words seems to demand. It is dynamically marked triple forte with the added strength of accent marks. Placed in the beginning of upper register for mezzo-soprano, it also bears the force of intensity and height of pitch. Throughout the first stanza of this poem, Rorem continues the use of tessitura and dynamics to instill the vigor and force of the words. He adds still more power to the word "Bring" by placing it on a weak beat of the measure, thus anticipating the first strong count of the next measure. At the end of this stanza Rorem diminishes both range and intensity, and dwindles to an insignificant ending of a minor third. (Incidentally, this same minor third occurs many times throughout the entire cycle, both in obvious and subtle fashions. It seems to be a unifying motif signifying the hopelessness of the constant rain and the unfulfilled love.)

The beginning of the second stanza finds the poem picking up in tempo. Rorem complies by a change from 3/4 to 4/4 meter, by an increase in tempo (marked piu mosso), and by a softening of dynamics and a lowering of tessitura. The combination of speed and softness results in an urgency of tone quality, giving as much strength by its very change as the beginning loud, high, and commanding section attained. The rest of this stanza continues in the same manner with as many words as possible per measure.

³⁸Will Moses, interviewed by Virginia Buzan (Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas), 3:30 P. M. Oct. 24, 1968.

Stanza three, which the poet Auden slows with strong one-syllable words, is correspondingly treated by Rorem. He marks the score with meno mosso which indicates a lessening of motion. Even though the beginning of this section is a return to 3/4 meter, the rhythmic feeling is strongly in two for the duration of "North, South, East, and West." The pace continues much the same throughout the rest of this section, even though Rorem introduces the same musical thought in "my noon, my midnight," as he used in the urgent "let aeroplanes", etc.

The last stanza comes on with the full force that the exaggeration of the words seem to demand. The tessitura is high and the volume intense. Rorem tapers off once more with the same soft, yet urgent passage.

Treatment of Poetic and Musical Climaxes

Pinpointing emotions (or becoming at all involved in the esthetics of music) is one thing an analyst tries very hard to avoid. This is not because emotions in music do not exist, but because they are the result of an intangible reaction that comes through the finished product alone, and not through its separate components (and of course, it is the separate components that the analyst deals with most frequently). Nevertheless, there are times when esthetics must be considered for an overall purpose.

Emotional response will be briefly regarded in the following discussion of *climaxes* of both the poem, and the poem with its musical counterpart. "Stop All the Clocks" is particularly interesting (both poetically and musically) because of the unusual way in which the climactic points are treated.

Let us first establish the meaning of the word climax. The New College Standard Dictionary defines it as "a progressive increase in force through a rhetorical or musical passage, culminating at the close."³⁹ Rorem says that the climactic note (or phrase) of a song is one that is the result of accumulated tension.

Such climaxes "are indigenous to all 'time arts'".⁴⁰ Rorem has various other hints as to how a composer views climax in his writing. "Most likely he (the composer) will first decide upon the musical climax by looking for a group of words that sum up the poet's message, hoping among them to find one with dramatic connotation, and also a vowel that will sound good on a low or high note."⁴¹

All music must contain climax. In song it appears when a vocal line arrives at the inevitable point toward which it has been moving. Since a composer feels safer in knowing where he's going, before he begins composition he calculates this point of crisis, insuring the direction of the road which will lead him--both forward and backward--to his overall form. This overall form is what gives contour to melody.⁴²

In studying Auden's poem, it is found that although there are four stanzas, there are three climactic points.

Stop all the clocks, cut off the telephone,
Prevent the dog from barking with a juicy bone.
Silence the pianos, and with muffled drum
Bring out the coffin, let the mourners come.

³⁹New College Standard Dictionary, The, Ed. by Charles Earle Funk, New York, Funk and Wagnall Co., 1947, p. 225.

⁴⁰Rorem, Music, p. 16.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 46.

⁴²Ibid., p. 47.

Let aeroplanes circle moaning overhead
 Scribbling on the sky the message He is Dead,
 Put crepe bows round the white necks of the public doves,
 Let the traffic policemen wear black cotton gloves.

He was my North, my South, my East, and West,
 My working week and my Sunday rest,
 My noon, my midnight, my talk, my song;
 I thought that love would last forever: I was wrong.

The stars are not wanted now; put out every one;
 Pack up the moon and dismantle the sun;
 Pour away the ocean and sweep up the woods:
 For nothing now can ever come to any good.

In each of these points of emphasis, or points of crisis, all words leading up to that point seem to come into focus with the culminating phrase. What is interesting to observe is that these are considered "inverse" climaxes. The climaxes in the case of this particular poem, are not the strongest phrases, but the weakest. They are merely flat statements following a series of almost desperate commands, or strongly exaggerated, emotionally charged statements.

"Contrasting still more is the end statement of each section, which is flat and very different from the other hyperboles. Its very change inversely makes for climax. It is weak, but strong by contrast, or strong through its very weakness."⁴³

Music, also, often achieves climax by inverse contrast. The release of tension after accumulative buildup, can sometimes occur solely through the use of contrast. "The climactic note (or phrase) of a song is one that is the result of accumulated tension; contrast is achieved by removing this note from the normal tessitura of speech."⁴⁴

⁴³Dr. William R. Moses, interviewed by Virginia Buzan, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas, 3:30 P.M., Oct. 24, 1968.

⁴⁴Rorem, Music, p. 47.

In Rorem's setting of "Stop All the Clocks" the bulk of the composition is in high tessitura, loud, and full of intensity and forceful vocalization. It stands to reason that a climax in a song of this nature would also have to be an inverse one, since singing still louder and higher and more forcefully would only be offensive to the listener as well as to the performer. Rorem handles the climax by taking it out of the normal tessitura of the song (which, itself, is unnatural and overdone) and placing it in the middle register with mezzo forte to mezzo piano dynamic markings. Melodically, it dwindles to an insignificant minor third, which leaves the listener emotionally in confused bewilderment.

In other words, Rorem, like Auden, achieves climax through weakness after much strength--softness after intensely forceful projection. This type of crisis can arouse just as much strong emotion in the listener as the conventional loud, high climax, for as Ciardi says, "silence, too, is communication when placed in context."⁴⁵

Treatment of Poetic Concept and Style

The concept and style of "Stop All the Clocks" is one of strong emphasis and extreme exaggeration. The whole poem seems to emit a violent and emotional reaction to the death of love in the form of hyperboles. This form of writing is defined by Zillman as "simple⁴⁶ exaggeration for emphasis or for some special poetic effect."

⁴⁵Ciardi, op. cit., p. 1004.

⁴⁶Lawrence Zillman, The Art and Craft of Poetry, (New York, Macmillan Co., 1966), p. 115.

The strong commands found throughout the poem are unrealistic; for example, "Pack up the moon and dismantle the sun," are certainly considered unconventional and completely unrealistic demands.

The main body of each section of this poem is made up of exaggerations--unconventional responses to death. The climaxes, or the smaller portion of each section, make up the realistic, or conventional response to death, and by their very contrast become the strong phrases with the most impact.

Rorem exaggerates also. Matching the poetic style and concept with artistic affluency, the main body of the song is unrealistic by way of exaggerated pitch, volume, and intensity, while the smaller unit of climax is much more realistic musically, as was described earlier. In other words, Rorem manages to convey a style of musical hyperboles that Auden achieves poetically.

CHAPTER V

DUAL SETTINGS

The Problem

As mentioned earlier, Rorem set for himself the task of setting a given poem in two contrasting manners. He operated on the theory that if a poem is good enough to be set to music, it is good enough to be placed in various contrasting settings. In his composer's notes he has this to say: "I selected poems by American authors and set each one to music twice, in as contrasting a manner as possible (i.e., gentle then passionate, slow and violent, then fast and hysterical, etc.)."⁴⁷

Rorem approaches the task of setting words to music with conscientious concern, always trying to keep the artistic ideas of the poet intact. He refers to song writing as a collaboration and therefore an impure expression. This implies concession, "but concession is, after all, a part of adaptability which in itself is learning. In this sense the self-imposed limitation of the medium is a severe test of technique."⁴⁸

Doubly hard, then, would be the task for a conscientious composer when he sets out to find the given characteristics of a poem (i.e., to find its melodic rise-and-fall, its tempo indication, etc.), and then to proceed to set it in an opposite manner. It would seem that the danger would lie in first letting the instincts guide the course of procedure,

⁴⁷Rorem, Poems, op. cit.

⁴⁸Rorem, Music, op. cit., p. 43.

and then tampering with those first natural impulses by maneuvering the poem into a second setting, merely to display technique.

Rorem's high regard for the art of poetic declamation saves him from this pitfall. He shows his concern for the poetry itself in his statement that "all words of a song from lyric poetry are ideally understood in a continuing stream; making them comprehensible is the composer's (and ultimately the singer's) chief task."⁴⁹ In order to maintain his own creative individuality (or perhaps to give himself elbow room) he lays down a rule that a sung poem should be comprehensible if declamation and prosody are correct, the tessitura plausible, melodic rise-and-fall natural, and tempo incidation comfortable, and then "breaks" that rule by saying that "Excessive concern with these devices will sometimes produce a song so finicky that purely musical values are inhibited. Indifference to word values, using verse solely as an excuse to make music, may result in a song devoid of literary sense."⁵⁰

In poetry, as in music, there are as many different ways of looking at or dealing with a work of art as there are individuals. A poem may be scanned or interpreted in more than one way, just as the analysis of a piece of music is a flexible business, depending upon the one who does the analyzing. With this in mind, reference to the prosody and rhythm of these poems will be based almost entirely upon the poetic analysis of Dr. William R. Moses of the Kansas State University Department of English (mentioned earlier), with brief references to Rorem's own

⁴⁹Rorem, Music, op. cit., p. 39.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 40.

ideas concerning poetry and song-writing in general. This chapter will deal, then, with the manner in which Rorem deals with the dual setting of certain poems.

Stop All The Clocks

Since the setting of Prologue and Epilogue are almost identical (except for a lowered key signature) comparison will begin with Auden's "Stop All the Clocks". In the two different settings of this poem, Rorem keeps a very similar declamation in both songs. His word emphasis is very much like that of Dr. Moses, except that in both songs Rorem chooses to emphasize more words per line.

The first setting uses the strong beat of the measure for stressing the important words. This is, of course, by far the most common means of achieving prosody. In the second setting, however, the time signature in the first five measures is consecutively 7/8, 8/8, 4/8, 6/8, and 7/8. This erratic pulsation combined with a "wildly fast and angry" tempo tends to displace strong, even pulsations as found in regular beats per measure. To keep the declamation of the poem intact, Rorem emphasizes words (other than those on the first beat of the measure) in an individual manner. In several instances, he uses a sudden jerk upwards in pitch, as on the words "clocks" (found on the sixth beat of a seven beat measure) or as on the word "telephone". He also emphasizes with dynamics, as on the word "barking", and by elongating the word "juicy" (found on the third beat of a seven beat measure), thus giving it two beats after six consecutive one-beat pulses.

It is interesting to note that melodically the third verse of this poem has been set almost identically in both instances. The contrast through this section is acquired entirely through speed and rhythmic accents.

The Air Is The Only

There is also a very strong melodic kinship between the two settings of "The Air Is The Only", a poem by Howard Moss. Here again, the declamation is almost identical (both being quite compatible with Moses' analysis). The main difference is that the unstressed syllables are allowed equal time in the second setting, while they are allowed only half the time as the stressed ones in the first song. This is because of the difference between simple and compound rhythms.



Ex. 11. The Air Is The Only (#1), m. 1-3 (pg. 10)



Ex. 12. The Air Is The Only (#2), m. 1-3 (pg. 41)

Once again the rate of tempo is important. One is marked allegretto grazioso while the other proceeds quite calmly.

Another way that Rorem obtained distinction between the two songs was to place the climax in different areas of the poem. The first song has for its accompaniment a light, delicate, flexible character. Along with a lyrical and effervescent vocal line, words like "breath," "air," and "singing flesh" catch in the listener's mind and work towards an effective climax on the word "blood." The whole effect in the mind of the performer then, should be one of exhilaration and "singing blood."

The second setting of "The Air Is The Only" sets a much more deliberate pace because of the slowly paced compound rhythm, the more unaccented beats per measure proceeding at a slow tempo seeming to give this effect. It begins to work solidly and slowly upward, both in tessitura and in upward progressing harmonies with thickened sonority, to finally climax on the entire phrase "dead and alive." Consequently, the entire song takes longer, the thought process of the poem is lengthened, and the climax is more profound--quite a contrast to the airy, delicate, "singing blood" of the first one.

Love's Stricken "Why"

In Emily Dickinson's short, effective, "Love's Stricken 'Why'", both declamation and rate of tempo have been preserved in the second song. This song, when it first appears, is only six measures in length, and spans only eight measures the second time. Contrast is acquired primarily in two ways: by the intensity coupled with tessitura handling, and by the extremely varied piano accompaniment. Though a brief look at

the score will easily show the variation of volume and tessitura, the piano part is of special interest. In song number one, the piano begins with a short double motive working in contrary motion:



Ex. 13. Love's Stricken "Why", m. 1 (pg. 40)

This double motive is repeated with an added voice. It is then lengthened in the left hand, repeated in the original form in the right hand, then lengthened even more in the left hand. Superimposed over the augmentation in the left hand, the upper voice begins its growth in length. The bass returns to its second length, and finally both voices come again together, this time on a soft, expanded plane with full chordal voicing. This song, because of its slow horizontal growth and development in the piano accompaniment, could stand alone as a perfect example of miniature writing.

In the second setting of this short song, the piano part proceeds in an entirely vertical fashion, heavily accented and intense in volume and intensity. Tessitura for the singer is higher and more forceful, and, coming after the confused loss of love in the preceding song, it forms a tortured and searing question. This number, unlike the first

one, would not stand alone out of context, but acts in its entirety as a second or extended climax to the song which comes immediately before.

The Apparition

After speaking at length of correlating the aspects of word and song, Ned Rorem has the following remarks to make:

There are nevertheless valid unorthodoxies. For instance: a song-writer might have the music play against the words, just as a choreographer has his dancers move against the beat. Dancers can move with extraordinary effect in animated precision to a sustained music with an indefinite meter. The meaning of their motion is nonetheless an evocation of the music, just as in song the meaning of notes is born of words. Although music has a more primal appeal than poetry and is thereby inclined to take over a song, a composer cannot deny that it is the particular expressivity of the given words that provokes the musical mood.⁵¹

If any of Rorem's songs in this cycle are (in his words) "unorthodox," it would have to be the first rendition of "The Apparition" by Theodore Roethke. The relationship between voice and piano is not duet-like in nature, but a virtual battle. First the piano states agitated anger, scarcely giving the singer the courtesy of an opening pitch. The voice line answers with its own equally aggressive statement. The piano comes back with its same theme, slightly extended; the voice, not to be outdone, equally extends its same motive (this time ending high, loud, and long). Then for a brief time they try to work together, joining on the plaintive minor motive which is heard again and again throughout the entire cycle. Their compatibility is shortlived, however, for this time the vocal line returns to its original statement. This procedure envelopes the entire song, and at the end, both restate their theme with renewed vigor. This time the piano theme, slightly modified,

⁵¹ Rorem, Music From Inside Out, p. 45.

is marked triple forte with heavy accents, while the voice maintains a fortissimo for six beats on fifth line F.

When "The Apparition" reappears in its second setting, no such battle occurs, but a complete unity of thought exists between voice and piano. The bass line of the piano graciously duplicates the exact melodic line of the voice, a phenomena which rarely happens in this group of songs. The first two lines of the poem is stated in a long, smooth musical line which is accepting rather than rebellious. The next two lines, almost identical in musical context, are repeated a fourth higher, with a thickened but similar piano sonority. Once again, lines five and six are elevated yet another fourth, beginning similarly, but breaking apart in the climax with a melodic content reminiscent of the first setting. Only at this point does the piano cease to reinforce the melody. The voice diminishes to the unifying minor third, which the piano echoes again three times, as if to voice a complete and final agreement.

Do I Love You

Throughout the cycle the one thing which Rorem does not do in any sense whatever is to distort the declamation or overall accented rhythmic flow of the poem. He has made slight variations of individual words for special effects, but the overall form he has very conscientiously preserved. In the first setting of "Do I Love You" by Jack Larson, the stressed words are in agreement with the scanning presented earlier. We find that in the first line of the poem, the stresses fall on the words

"Do", "love", "more", and "day". These four words are found directly on each of the four beats of the measure taken at an andantino tempo, which allows time for the effective stress on these words. He has not manipulated the declamation set by the poet, but enhanced it musically. The accompaniment in this number begins as a steady, contemplative, repetitious eighth-note pattern, which is kept intact through a thickened texture approaching and sustaining the climactic "Through you" and again through the ending, which is very similar in thought and context with the first line.

Rorem's second setting of Larson's poem is a joyous tarantella. In progressing through the music almost twice as fast, Rorem proceeds through the words at only half the pace. This technique results in not only emphasizing the four stressed words, but three additional ones, every word in the line except the article "the". The original four stressed words are now found on the primary and secondary pulses of the measure, rather than each slow beat. Contrast has been achieved and declamation preserved. This is the only poem in the cycle upon which this technique of double timing has been employed.

in the rain

E. E. Cummings' poem "in the rain", from a literary standpoint, could depict the indefiniteness of rain, or the indefiniteness of darkness, two completely different connotations of uncertainty. In his first setting, Rorem chooses to emphasize the rain. The entire piano accompaniment is composed entirely of trills, or of arpeggios (seven per beat).

The voice is instructed to proceed in a delicate and muted fashion. The whole atmosphere is one of lightness and movement.

In the second setting, expressing darkness, the piano score is blurred and atonal. There follows a recitative of quite a speculative nature. The rhythmic pulsation is hesitant rather than the steady drone of rain as presented in the first number.

Song For Lying In Bed During a Night Rain

"Song For Lying In Bed During a Night Rain" by Kenneth Pitchford is a poem which begins with a series of four tortured questions dealing with the "unrequited love" of which Rorem speaks in his Composer's Notes. It consists of five stanzas of four lines each.

In the case of this particular poem, Rorem chooses to set only the first four stanzas to melody the first time. In this setting, which moves at a fast tense pace, he seems to present a crisis which demands the climax of "Interlude" which is described in Chapter III. Rorem uses the questioning, uncertain nature of the poem as a basis for an erratic melody, which moves in a brutal fashion across wide leaps of difficult intervals.

Rhythmically, the song never relaxes into a steady pulse. Written in 6/8, one sometimes feels three quarter note pulses, then suddenly two dotted quarter pulses. The piano may suddenly have six eighth notes against three quarters, which is used against two dotted quarters in the voice. To this use of cross rhythm Rorem also adds syncopation and anticipation of the beat.



Ex. 14. Song For Lying in Bed During a Night Rain
m. 38-39 (pg. 23)

This build-up of tension is followed by "Interlude", which describes the longing for the rain which does not come.

When "Song For Lying in Bed" returns, Rorem then presents the last stanza as a conclusion, which is again a series of questions. This time, however, the questions are stated in a mood of resignation. A slowing of tempo helps to create this feeling, and although the melody still contains wide leaps and dissonant intervals, the rhythmic pulse has stabilized into a steady 3/4 feeling.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study has attempted to examine poetic meter and how it was treated musically, implying poetic climax versus musical climax, and poetic pacing versus musical tempo. It has attempted to expose various viewpoints of the composer of Poems of Love and the Rain, and to show how these viewpoints relate to his song writing.

The first conclusion to be drawn from an overall viewpoint of this song cycle is one of musical unity. Rorem has achieved musical unity by the use of a melodic motif which occurs throughout the song cycle. This little figure consists of a minor second approaching sometimes from above, and sometimes from below, with a drop to a minor third.



Ex. 15. Prologue, m. 5-6 (pg. 2)



Ex. 16. The Air Is The Only, m. 21 (pg. 11)

In spite of the extreme variety of the dual settings of the poetry, this one recurring motif serves to give a relationship from one song to the next.

The second conclusion is one of literary unity. Rorem achieved this second type of unity from his choice of texts. Referring once again to the Composer's Notes, Rorem states that his choice of poems deals principally "with unrequited love against a backdrop of constant rain....The cycle tells no story per se; it seeks rather to sustain a uniform mood with as much variety as the terms of this mood permit--with an occasional flash of light through the black cloud."⁵²

In examining an extended literary work (such as a short story, a play, or a novel) we find that the basic form takes the following literary procedures:⁵³

I. RISING ACTION

- A. Exposition (background, sets the scene, mood, etc.)
- B. Rising action scenes (each scene with its own climactic action leading to a bigger climax)
- C. Crisis--demands a climax
- D. Climax (technical) after which a turn of events or a turn of direction always follows

II. FALLING ACTION

- A. Scenes, each with their own climaxes leading to another major climax
- B. Crisis

⁵²Rorem, Poems, op. cit.

⁵³Thrall and Hubbard Literary Handbook, Doubleday, Doran and Co., Inc., 1936, p. 315-316.

- C. Dramatic climax
- D. Dénouement--final outcome following the dramatic
(or emotional climax)⁵⁴

Taking this same basic outline for a literary work, we find that the song cycle fits this pattern in the following manner:

I. RISING ACTION

- A. Exposition---"Prologue"
- B. Rising action---Songs 2-7
- C. Crisis---Song For Lying in Bed During A Night Rain
- D. Climax---Interlude

II. FALLING ACTION

- A. Scenes---Songs 10-13
- B. Crisis---Love's Stricken "Why"
- C. Dramatic (or emotional climax)---The Air Is The Only
- D. Dénouement---Songs 16-17

A third conclusion which might be drawn from an overall viewpoint, is declamation (although manipulated) is not violated. Rorem changes the poetic climaxes, at times changes the poetic pacing, and certainly changes mood and intensity with his dual settings of the poems, but he does not alter the basic design of the poem in regard to the rhythmic flow of its declamation. If he does not preserve declamation through the rhythmic pulsation of the measure, then he preserves it in other ways, such as unexpected melodic leap, or off-beat accents.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 120.

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A P P E N D I X

29 October 68

Dear Miss Buzan -

How very pleased I am that you will be performing "Poems Of Love And The Rain" on your Masters recital. I'd be glad to look at your analysis, and to make any suggestions, if I have any. However, as composers always like to remark: there's nothing I can say about the music that the music itself doesn't say better. Meanwhile, I'll be performing the same piece myself - as you'll see from the enclosed brochure - with Beverly Wolff in December. If by some chance you find yourself in New York then, do try to come.


Your dismay at my diaries is understandable: each of us, I suppose, has a dark side to his nature, but mostly we don't make it known publicly as I have, for better or worse. These diaries were written by someone a good deal younger than I am now, and represent (or so I imagine) a self-portrait of an artist as a young man.

I've just published a new book titled MUSIC AND PEOPLE. It's a good deal more objective and "professional" than the other books, and I'd like you to read it, if only as an antidote.

Thankyou for your poems. All of them are convincing; parts of some of them are commendable. I shall keep them, certainly.

And I shall keep also the satisfying fact in mind that the Rain Cycle (which are among my favorite songs --- I mean my favorites by myself) are being studied and sung so many hundred miles away.

Sincerely -

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ned Rorem". The signature is written in dark ink and is underlined with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke.

28 January 69

Dear Mrs. Buzan - Thanks for your much-more-than-competent investigation of the two sections from POEMS OF LOVE AND THE RAIN. I learned a great deal, and feel honored. I only hope you'll complete your analysis of the whole work: my only criticism is the general feeling of incompleteness which you yourself must feel. But your tone is fresh and rare.

Other than an occasional grammatical slip (unimportant) or an amusing locution (my father as "indulgent"), as well as the phrase "art song" which I do not like (it's a false category I think -- I've explained this elsewhere*), there ^{are} ~~are~~ a few factual errors: → See Newsweek 23 Dec. 68

Page 3: it was with Thomson (note spelling: no P) and not under Honegger that I made orchestrations in exchange for lessons (though not room and board!)

The correct title of my second book is MUSIC FROM INSIDE OUT (no THE).

Satie, not Sati.

2 P. 7 Perhaps I appear, though I try not to subjugate musical resources to poetic meters.

Donald Windham's "verse" is actually a prose sentence from a short story called THE RAIN. No one would know this unless they know this! Now you know! I hadn't realized I had done "two things" in the piano part. But I have, haven't I?

P. 21 At the end of the quoted poem, put: -Rosthke, Interlude. (It's unpublished, incidentally)...

P. 22 Change opening of paragraph to: "First of all, this poem is the only one of the eight which is sung but once."

For your title, please use my full name: it's customary with living composers.

Beverly Wolff and I have just recorded the cycle for DESTO. It will be out in early autumn. I think it's in all ways superior to the other version. Again thanks. Do let me see how you continue. And ask for advice whenever you wish.

Sincerely -



PROLOGUE (also EPILOGUE) from The Rain
by Donald Windham

Everywhere the impossible is happening
Two things
The Rain and the landscape
Are occupying the same place at the same time.

STOP ALL THE CLOCKS
by W. H. Auden

Stop all the clocks, cut off the telephone,
Prevent the dog from barking with a juicy bone,
Silence the pianos and with muffled drum
Bring out the coffin, let the mourners come.

Let aeroplanes circle moaning overhead
Scribbling on the sky the message "He is Dead,"
Put crepe bows round the white necks of the public doves,
Let the traffic policemen wear black cotton gloves.

He was my North, my South, my East and West,
My working week and my Sunday rest,
My noon, my midnight, my talk, my song;
I thought that love would last forever: I was wrong.

The stars are not wanted now; put out every one;
Pack up the moon and dismantle the sun;
Pour away the ocean and sweep up the woods:
For nothing now can ever come to any good.

THE AIR IS THE ONLY
by Howard Moss

The air is the only lonely bearer
Of the one breath of Love's wayfarer.
The sea's too wet to forgive.
Forget its salty ranges: Change, changes.
But sing flesh, sinew and bone,
And mostly blood,
The fine wood in which we live
The dead and alive,
The hollow vein and love's rain.

LOVE'S STRICKEN "WHY"
by Emily Dickinson

Love's stricken "why"
Is all that love can speak
Built of but just a syllable
The hugest hearts that break.

THE APPARITION
by Theodore Roethke

My pillow won't tell me where he is gone,
The softfooted one who passed by alone.
Who took my heart, whole, with a tilt of his eye,
And with it my soul, and it like to die.
I twist, and I turn, my breath but a sigh.
Dare I grieve? Dare I mourn:
He walks by, He walks by.

DO I LOVE YOU (part I)

by Jack Larson

Do I love you more than a day?
 Days used to be faint hours to endure.
 Now, through our love, I feel each hour
 On this spinned world about the sun.
 Embodied time, I live creation. Through you.
 And I love you more than a day.

(part II)

Do I love you more than the air?
 Air used to seem just nothingness.
 Through our love, now it seems no less
 than God's air airing your life's breath;
 Too rich for space; too dear for death. Through you.
 And I love you more than the air.

in the rain

by e. e. cummings

in the rain darkness, the sunset being sheathed
 i sit and think of you
 the holy city which is your face
 your little cheeks the streets of smiles
 your eyes half thrush half angel
 and your drowsy lips where float flowers of kiss
 and there is the sweet shy pirouette your hair
 and then your dance song soul.
 rarely beloved a single star is uttered
 as i think of you

SONG FOR LYING IN BED DURING A NIGHT RAIN
by Kenneth Pitchford

How can I wash the lightning away that shines on your closed eyes?
How can I tell the thunder to lie as calm as your hand?
How can I know two sounds as dry as your voice before love and after?
How can I fear what I have never seen in your face?

Street noises ascend from the city beneath us as the rain falls
Sounds that merge and blur through my gabled window
to reflect the danger all my asphalt nightmares proffer
Without the slow pulse beside me of your sleep.

But who are these bleeding strangers, naked as shadow,
Who stalk at our bedside, calling your name?
When I look their faces are terrible as lightning
Exposing an instant the white harvest of your breast.

Why do they curse our handclasp, as though we hoarded
What fills their hunger, what falls like rain from their wounds?
Why do you lie unmoved as mounds of fruit and take their kisses
As so much wetness to redden the white of your face?

(conclusion)

How can the rain wash away such stains as your lips wear?
How can I tell their scars to grow smooth as your skin?
How can I know two sounds as dry as your voice before fear and after?
How can I love what I have never seen in your face?

INTERLUDE

by Roethke

The element of air was out of hand,
 The rush of wind ripped off the tender leaves
 And flung them in confusion on the land,
 We waited for the first rain in the eaves.

The chaos grew as hour by hour the light
 Decreased beneath an undivided sky.
 Our pupils widened with unnatural night,
 But still the road and dusty field kept dry.

The rain stayed in its cloud; full dark came near;
 The wind lay motionless in the long grass.
 The veins within our hands betrayed our fear.
 What we had hoped for had not come to pass.

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Composer's Notes

Regina Sarfaty's voice and physique were constantly in my mind as I worked. She is a brooding and beautiful, and her voice resembles herself — rich and dark, dramatic and anguished. Hence my choice of poems which deal principally with unrequited love against a backdrop of constant rain . . . The cycle tells no story *per se*; it seeks rather to sustain a uniform mood with as much variety as the terms of this mood permit — with an occasional flash of light through the black cloud.

The technical problem I set for myself is, so far as I know, unprecedented, going on the principle that if a poem is 'good' there is more than one way of musicalizing it.

(In the past, when more than one composer has set the same poem to music — Debussy, Hahn, and Faure, for instance, with the verses of Verlaine — they each approached it in more or less the *same way*.)

I selected poems by several American authors and set each one to music *twice*, in as contrasting a manner as possible (i.e. gentle then passionate, slow and violent, then fast and hysterical, etc.).

To these poems I added an interlude whose words are sung but once, and a Prologue and Epilogue which are nearly identical — except that the Epilogue is $\frac{1}{2}$ -tone lower . . . Therefore, although each of the poems is repeated twice, none of the music is repeated — although there is one recurring motive throughout. And the order chosen for these seventeen songs is 'pyramidal': the sequence works toward the Interlude, then backtracks — as in a mirror.

N.R.

This cycle was first performed at the Wisconsin Union Theater in Madison on April 12, 1964. Regina Sarfaty was the soloist with the composer at the piano. They presented the New York premiere on April 9, 1965 at the Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium of the Metropolitan Museum.

Commissioned by the Ford Foundation

December-January 1962-63

New York City

Duration: around 28 minutes

(The "pause" suggestions between numbers are optional)

POEMS OF LOVE AND THE RAIN

A Song Cycle for Mezzo Soprano and Piano

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| 1. PROLOGUE: from <i>The Rain</i> | Donald Windham |
| 2. Stop All The Clocks, Cut Off The Telephone | W. H. Auden |
| 3. The Air Is The Only | Howard Moss |
| 4. Love's Stricken "Why" | Emily Dickinson |
| 5. The Apparition | Theodore Roethke |
| 6. Do I Love You | Jack Larso |
| 7. In The Rain- | E. E. Cummings |
| 8. Song For Lying In Bed During A Night Rain | Kenneth Pitchford |
| 9. Interlude | Roethke |
| 10. Song For Lying In Bed During A Night Rain (conclusion) | |
| 11. In The Rain- | |
| 12. Do I Love You (Part II) | |
| 13. The Apparition | |
| 14. Love's Stricken "Why" | |
| 15. The Air Is The Only | |
| 16. Stop All The Clocks, Cut Off The Telephone | |
| 7. EPILOGUE: from <i>The Rain</i> | |

to Regina Sarfaty

Poems Of Love And The Rain

by Ned Rorem

1. Prologue: from "The Rain" *

Donald Windham

Unbearably slow ($\text{♩} = 40$ or less)

p (soft, but with intense projection)

Voice

Ev-ery - where, - the im -

Piano

ppp (bathed in pedal)

blurred and limpid

8

L.V.

mp

pos - si - ble is hap - pen - ing: two things, _____

p *espr.*

From the chapter "The Rain" in the book EMBLEMS OF CONDUCT Poem © Copyright 1964 by Charles Scribner's Sons.

the rain _____ and the land - scape, are oc-cu-py-ing the

mp

same _____ place at the same_ time.

p *pp*

getting louder and much faster

p *mf* *f* *molto*

8ve bassa *(attacca)*

2. Stop All The Clocks

W. H. Auden

Lento appassionato (♩ = 69) (*Rather Bluesy*)

Vocal Line:

Stop all the clocks, — cut off the tel - e - phone,

Pre - vent the dog from bark - ing — with a juic - y bone, —

Si - lence the — pia - nos and - with muf - fled drum Bring -

Piano Accompaniment:

The piano accompaniment consists of a right hand and a left hand. The right hand features a melodic line with various ornaments and a left hand with a steady bass line. Dynamic markings include *fff*, *ff*, *f*, *mf*, and *mp*.

dim.

— out the cof-fin, let the mourn - ers come.

Più mosso (♩ = 80)

mp mp

— Let ae-ro-planes cir-cle_ moan-ing o-ver-head_

mf

Scrib-bling on the sky _____ the mes-sage He is Dead,— Put

cresc.

mf sub.

crêpe bows round the white necks of the pub-lic doves, Let the traf-fic po-lice-men wear

dim. *mf* *mp*

mp ³

black cot - ton gloves. _____

p *molto* *f* *mf*

Meno mosso (♩ = 72)

mp molto espr. *mf* *f* *mf*

He was my North, my South, — my East and West, My work-ing

p *mf* *f*

p extremely tender

week and my Sun-day rest, My noon,— my mid-night, my talk,— my—

mf *mp* *pp espr.*

mp *f*

song;— I thought that love would last ——— for - ev - er:

mp *mf* *f*

mf *mp*

I was wrong.—

mf *mp* *molto*

Tempo I (♩ = 66)

ff

The stars_ are not want-ed now; put out ev - ery -

ff

one: Pack up _____ the _____ moon _____ and dis -

mf

ff

f

man-tle the sun; _____ pour - a - way the o - cean

mp cresc.

mf

mp

mf

ILLEGIBLE

**THE FOLLOWING
DOCUMENT (S) IS
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TO THE
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THE ORIGINAL
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ILLEGIBLE

and sweep up the woods: for

f *mf*

f *dim. molto*

noth - ing now can ev - er come to an - y good.

p (non arpegg.) *molto*

p *f* *ff* *f* *mf* *mp*

3. The Air Is The Only

Howard Moss

Allegretto grazioso (♩ = 126)

p

The air is the on-ly Lone-ly bear-er Of the one breath Of

p

mp

Love's way-far-er. The sea's too wet To for - give. For -

get Its salt - y rang - es:— Change ——— chang - es.

mp

mf

But sing — flesh, — Sin — ew and bone, — And — most — ly

f blood, — *dim.* The fine — wood In

mf which we live — The — dead and a — live, — *p* The

hol — low — vein And love's — rain. —

p *dim.* *pp*

Medium pause

4. Love's Stricken "Why"

Emily Dickinson

Lento (♩ = c. 76)

p

Love's strick-en "why" Is all that love can speak—

p

s

poco rit.

Built of but just a syl-la-ble The hu-gest hearts that break. —

poco cresc.

poco rit.

pp

Short pause

29 April 1947 (2 A.M.) Revised 26 Dec. 1962

5. The Apparition

Theodore Roethke

Allegro agitato (♩ = 134)

ff marcato

My pil - low won't tell me

The first system of the musical score for 'The Apparition' by Theodore Roethke. It features a vocal line in 4/4 time and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with a whole rest, followed by the lyrics 'My pil - low won't tell me'. The piano accompaniment starts with a forte (ff) dynamic and includes an 8-measure rest in the right hand. The tempo is marked 'Allegro agitato' with a quarter note equal to 134 beats per minute. The mood is 'ff marcato'.

Where he is gone, _____ The

The second system of the musical score. The vocal line continues with 'Where he is gone,' followed by a long horizontal line and the word 'The'. The piano accompaniment continues with a forte (ff) dynamic and includes an 8-measure rest in the right hand. The tempo remains 'Allegro agitato'.

soft-foot-ed one Who passed by a - lone. _____ Who

The third system of the musical score. The vocal line continues with 'soft-foot-ed one Who passed by a - lone.' followed by a long horizontal line and the word 'Who'. The piano accompaniment continues with a forte (ff) dynamic and includes an 8-measure rest in the right hand. The tempo remains 'Allegro agitato'.

took — my heart, — whole, — With a *f sub.*

p sub., legato (restless)

tilt of his eye, — And with it my soul, And it like to

ff

die. — I twist, — and I

fff *f* *mp* *p*

turn, — My breath — but a sigh. — Dare I

ff

grieve? — Dare I mourn? — He walks by, — He walks

ff

by. —

fff con tutta forza *mf* *f* *ff* *fff*

Short pause

6. Do I Love You

(part I)

Jack Larson

Andantino tranquillo (♩ = 56) *p simply*

Do I love you more than a day?

pp gently
(legato)

Days used to be faint hours to en-dure. Now, —

p *mp*

— through our love, I feel each hour on this spinned world a-bout the

p *mp cresc.*

mf sun. _____ *mp* Em - bod - ied time, _____

mf *mp cresc.*

— I live cre - a - tion. Through you. _____

f *poco rit.* *mf*

p a tempo And I love you more than a day. _____

p a tempo *rall.* *pp*

7. in the rain

e.e. cummings

Allegro (delicate and muted) ♩ = 148

p

in the rain—dark-ness, the sun-set be-ing sheathed i

p sempre

sit and think of you— the ho-ly cit - y which is your face your

lit-tle cheeks the streets of smiles— your eyes half thrush half -

Poem © Copyright 1925, 1953 by E. E. Cummings. Reprinted from his volume
 POEMS © Copyright 1923-1954 by permission of Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.

an - gel and your drow - sy lips where float

flowers_ of kiss___

and there is the sweet shy_pir-ou-ette your hair and then your dance-song-soul.

mp *mf*

rare - ly be - lov - ed a sin - gle star is

f

ut - tered as i

think - of you

mf *p*

Medium pause

8. Song For Lying In Bed During A Night Rain

Kenneth Pitchford

Marcatissimo (♩. = c. 112) *brutally*

The piano introduction consists of three measures. The first measure features a treble clef with a 6/8 time signature and a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The melody is a descending eighth-note scale: B-flat4, A4, G4, F4, E-flat4, D4. The bass clef part is a descending eighth-note scale: B-flat3, A3, G3, F3, E-flat3, D3. The second measure continues the descending scales. The third measure is a whole rest in the treble and a half rest in the bass. Dynamics include *ff* *ruvido sempre* and *sf*.

The first line of the song features a vocal melody in the treble clef and piano accompaniment in the bass clef. The vocal melody is a descending eighth-note scale: B-flat4, A4, G4, F4, E-flat4, D4. The piano accompaniment is a descending eighth-note scale: B-flat3, A3, G3, F3, E-flat3, D3. The lyrics are: "How can I wash the light-ning a - way that shines on your". Dynamics include *f* and *mp*. The piano part has a *8ve bassa* marking.

The second line of the song features a vocal melody in the treble clef and piano accompaniment in the bass clef. The vocal melody is a descending eighth-note scale: B-flat4, A4, G4, F4, E-flat4, D4. The piano accompaniment is a descending eighth-note scale: B-flat3, A3, G3, F3, E-flat3, D3. The lyrics are: "closed eyes? How can I tell the thun-der to". Dynamics include *f* and *mp sub.*. The piano part has a *8* marking.

lie as — calm — as — your — hand? How —

— can I know — two sounds — as — dry as your

voice be - fore love and af - ter? How

— can I fear — what — I have nev - er seen in your face.

mp legato

Street nois - es as - cend from the cit - y be - neath us

pp sub., legato

as the rain falls

p

mf

-sounds that merge and blur

mp

through my ga - bled win - dow to re -

mf

flect the dan - ger all my as - phalt

cresc.

night - mares prof - fer with - out the slow

mp (whispered)

pp

pulse be - side me of your sleep.

But who are these bleed - ing strang - ers, nak - ed as

ff

ppp

sf

sf

sf

sf

8

shad - ow, who stalk at our bed - side, call -

- ing your name? When I

look — their fac - es are ter - ri - ble as light - ning ex -

pos-ing an in-stant the white har-vest of your breast. Why —

do they curse our hand-clasp, as though we

hoard-ed what fills their hun-ger, what falls like

rain from their wounds? Why do you

lie un-moved as mounds of fruit and take their

mf

kiss - es as so much — wet - ness

mf

f sub.

f

to — red - den — the — white —

fff

ff

of your face?

ff sempre

sfz

Very long pause

9. Interlude

Theodore Roethke

Slow and very, very free: almost unmetered.

Subdued yet broad, smooth yet breathless

Voice alone

p *mf* *poco accel.*

The el - e - ment of air was out of hand. The rush of wind ripped

poco rit. *a tempo* *f* *mf*

off the ten - der leaves And flung them in con - fu - sion on the land. We

poco rit. *p* *p cresc.* *strict tempo, rather square*

wait - ed for the first rain in the eaves. The cha - os grew as hour by

mp *mf* *espr.*

hour the light De - creased be - neath an un - di - vid - ed sky. Our pu - pils

f *p* *poco accel.*

wid - ened with un - nat - u - ral night, But still the road and

allarg. *f* *a tempo* *(breve) pp* *p*

dust - y field kept dry. The rain stayed in its cloud; full dark came near; The

mp sliding: cold and white *rubato, cresc. molto*

wind lay motion - less in the long - grass. The veins with - in our hands be -

ff *dull and resigned* *mp sub.* *p*

trayed our fear. What we had hoped for had not come to pass.

Lento

ppp

simile

p poco accel.

poco rit.

Presto

molto accel. e cresc.

8ve bassa...

Lento

fff pesante (con tutta forza)

rit. e dim. molto

mf

attacca

The musical score is written for piano and consists of several systems. The first system is marked 'Lento' and 'ppp', featuring a treble clef with a 7-measure phrase and a bass clef with a 3-measure phrase. The second system continues the 'Lento' tempo, with a treble clef and a bass clef, including a 'p poco accel.' marking. The third system is marked 'Presto' and 'molto accel. e cresc.', featuring a treble clef with a 7-measure phrase and a bass clef with a 3-measure phrase. The fourth system is marked 'Lento' and 'fff pesante (con tutta forza)', featuring a treble clef with a 7-measure phrase and a bass clef with a 3-measure phrase. The fifth system is marked 'rit. e dim. molto' and 'mf', featuring a treble clef with a 7-measure phrase and a bass clef with a 3-measure phrase. The piece concludes with an 'attacca' marking.

10. Song For Lying In Bed During A Night Rain

(Conclusion)

Kenneth Pitchford

Andante (♩ = 66)

p

How can the rain wash a - way — such stains as your

p legatissimo

(in a river of pedal)

mp

port.

lips wear? How can I tell — their scars to grow

mp

cresc.

smooth — as your skin? — How can I know — two

cant.

cresc.

mf

f *mf dim.*

sounds — as dry as your voice be - fore fear — and

p

af - ter? How can I love what I have

nev - er seen in your face?

p *dim.* *pp* *morendo*

Medium pause

11. in the rain

e.e. cummings

Not slow, very free

(♩ = from 50 to 90, being fastest when voice is alone).

mp *accel.* *f* *rall.*

in the rain—dark-ness, the sun-set be-ing sheathed i

pp *L.V.*

mp *p* *accel. e cresc.*

sit and think of you the ho-ly cit-y which is your

(L.V.) *pp* *L.V.*

dim. e rall.

face your lit-tle cheeks the streets of

pp

smiles your eyes half-thrush half - an-gel and your

p *mp*

mp *mf*

drow - sy lips where float flowers of

mf legato

mp

kiss and there is the sweet shy pir - ou - ette your

mp

hair and then your dance song

intense
mf *f* *mf* *mp*

soul. — rare-ly be-lov-ed a sin-gle star is ut-tered,

intense *f* *mf* *p*

Musical score for the song "I Think of You" (Ich denke an dich) by Franz Schubert. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment.

Vocal Line:

- Lyrics: "and _____ i think of you _____"
- Performance markings: *p* (piano), *rit. poco* (ritardando a little), *ppp* (pianissimo).

Piano Accompaniment:

- Left hand: Features a melodic line with a *mf* (mezzo-forte) marking and a *p* (piano) marking. It includes a quintuplet (marked "5") and a *rit. poco* section.
- Right hand: Features a melodic line with a *ppp* (pianissimo) marking and a *rit. poco* section.

31 Dec. 1962

Short pause

12. Do I Love You (part II)

Jack Larson

Joyous (♩. = 126)

p

Do I love — you more than the air? —

ppp con molto pedale e sempre una corda

Air used to seem — just noth - - - ing-ness.

Through our love, — now it seems no — less than

God's air air - ing your life's breath; —

Too rich for space;— too dear for death. —

Through — you. —

(Solo)
mp cant. *mf*

And I love — you, more than the air. —

p *pp* *morendo*

13. The Apparition

Theodore Roethke

Smoothly (♩ = c. 80)

p

My pil - low won't tell me

(♩ = c. 80)

pp sempre

p cant.

Where he has gone, The soft - foot - ed one Who

passed by a - lone. Who

p *mp* *mp*

mp

took my heart,— whole,— With a tilt of his eye, —

p *mp*

mf *cresc.*

And with it, my— soul,— And it like to die. I

mf *mp*

twist,— and I turn,— My— breath but a sigh.—

cresc.

f più agitato *dim.*

Dare I grieve? Dare I mourn? He walks by.

mf più agitato *f* *mf*

p *mp più tranquillo*

He walks by.

p *espr.* *mp* *più tranquillo*

pp *rit. poco* *ppp*

8

14. Love's Stricken "Why"

Emily Dickinson

Intense (♩ = c. 58)

Love's strick - en — “why” Is all that love can speak —

Built — of just a syl - la - ble — The hu - gest hearts that break —

Long pause

15. The Air Is The Only

41

Howard Moss

Calmly (♩ = 112)

mp
The air is the on - ly Lone - ly bear - er Of

mf *p*

the one - breath - Of Love's way - far - er. The sea's - too wet To for - give.

mp espr.
cresc. poco *mark alto*

mp *mf*
For - get - Its salt - y rang - es: - Change -

mark sopr.
mf dim. *p* *mp* *mf dim.*

mp cresc. *mf* *f*

chang - es. — But sing — flesh, — Sin - ew and bone, And most - ly blood, —

melt! *mp cresc.* *mf*

The fine — wood — In which we hive — The

f *piu f*

ff (*mf sub. < ff*)

dead and a - live, — The hol - low vein — And

ff *dim.* *mf dim. sempre*

love's — rain. —

p

p *mp sub. dolce* *pp*

mark tenor

16. Stop All The Clocks

W. H. Auden

Wildly fast and angry (♩ = 144)

mf

Stop all the clocks, cut off the tel - e - phone, Pre - vent the

mf non legato

gve bassa

f

dog from bark - ing with a juic - y bone,

mf

mp

Si - lence the pia - nos and with muf - fled drum Bring out the

mp

g

Poem © Copyright 1945 by W. H. Auden.

cof - fin, let_ the mourn - ers come.

Let aer-o-planes cir-cle moan - - ing o - ver-head

Scrib-ling on the sky.the mes-sage He_ is Dead.

mp

Put crêpe bows round the white necks of the pub - lic doves, Let the traf-fic po-lice-men

p legato

cresc.

wear black cot-ton gloves. He was my North, my South, my

mp *mf*

f *mf* *mp*

East and West, My work - ing week and my Sun-day rest, My

f *ff*

noon, my mid-night, my— talk,— my— song;— I thought that

p sub., legato *mf*

love would last — for - ev - er: I — was wrong.

ff *mf*

The stars are not — want-ed now; - put out ev-ery one.

mp

mf

Pack up the moon and dis-man - tle the sun; _____

mf

mf

Pour a-way the o-cean and sweep up the

dim. *p>* *cresc.*

woods: _____

ff

For noth-ing now can ev - er come

molto *ff*

Più mosso (accel.)
mf sub.

to an - y good. _____

molto fff *sfz*

17. Epilogue: from "The Rain"*

Donald Windham

As at the beginning (or even slower)

Every-where, the im - pos - si - ble is hap - pen - ing:

two things, — the rain and the land - scape, are oc - cu - py - ing the

same place at the same time.

pp blurred L.V.

mp

mp clear p L.V.

pp

pppp lunga

8ve bassa.....:

23 Dec. 1962

* From the chapter "The Rain" in the book EMBLEMS OF CONDUCT Poem © Copyright 1964 by Charles Scribner's Sons.

A STUDY OF THE SONG CYCLE
POEMS OF LOVE AND THE RAIN BY NED ROREM

by

VIRGINIA RUTH BUZAN

B. S., Kansas State University, 1962

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Department of Music

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1971

This paper examines the song cycle Poems of Love and the Rain, by Ned Rorem. Poems of Love and the Rain, commissioned by the Ford Foundation, was written c. 1964 on poems by several American authors chosen by the composer.

The poetic meter and how it was treated musically is examined. Poetic climax and how it relates to musical climax, as well as poetic pacing (as related to musical tempo) is studied.

A brief biographical sketch is presented, as well as various general aspects of Rorem's writing style as it relates to song writing.

Chapter II deals with the literary concept of "Prologue," a prose sentence by Donald Windham, and how this concept is handled musically. Areas such as poetic point of emphasis, the use of fragments, the use of scanning, and the problem of brevity are discussed.

Chapter III reviews "Interlude", a poem by Theodore Roethke, as a technical climax to the cycle. This poem is also examined from the standpoint of how its metrical regularity is given a free adaptation musically.

In Chapter IV poetic pacing is discussed in relationship to musical tempo. For this study the poem "Stop All The Clocks" by W. H. Auden is used. Also observed is the treatment of poetic and musical climaxes, and poetic concepts and style.

Rorem sets each poem two different ways. This dual setting of the poems is examined in Chapter V.

The first conclusion to be drawn from an overall viewpoint of this song cycle is that it contains musical unity. Rorem has achieved musical unity by the use of a melodic motif which occurs

throughout the song cycle. Examples may be found in the written context of the report.

Unity is also attained through literary context. Rorem develops this second type of unity from his choice of texts. In inspecting the cycle as a literary work, it is discovered that the basic form takes the design of any extended literary work of quality.

A third conclusion which might be drawn from an overall viewpoint is one of declamatory constancy. Regardless of rhythmic manipulation, the declamation is not violated. The poetic climaxes are changed, as are the poetic pacings, changes of moods, and the intensities within the dual settings of the poems.

The viewpoint of the composer is constantly exposed throughout the report by frequent references to his book, Music From Inside Out, which he originally wrote as a series of lectures. In general, both the esthetic and the technical principles found in Rorem's songs are quite in line with those which he states in his essays.