

EXTENDED PROGRAM NOTES ON A TENOR RECITAL

by

JON ERIC SECREST

//

B. M. Vocal Performance, Friends University, 1978

ACCOUNTING MATERIALS  
LOCATED IN AUDIO-VISUAL

---

A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF MUSIC

Department of Music

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
Manhattan, Kansas

1987

Approved by:

  
Major Professor

LD  
2668  
.R4  
MUSC  
1987  
S44  
C.2



A11209 546046

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Master's Recital Program . . . . .	1
Historical and Musical Analysis. . . . .	2
Texts and Translations . . . . .	30
Bibliography . . . . .	50
Abstract of the Master's Report. . . . .	52

JON ERIC SECREST, TENOR

Bachelor of Music, Friends University

Assisted by A. Edward Wolfe, Piano

Monday, November 17, 1986

All Faiths Chapel

8:00 p.m.

Malinconia, Ninfa gentile. . . . . Vincenzo Bellini  
Vanne, o rosa fortunate (1801-1835)  
Bella Nice, che d'amore

"Ich baue ganz auf deine Stärke" . . . . . W. A. Mozart  
from Die Entführung aus dem Serail (1756-1791)

Don Quichotte à Dulcinée . . . . . Maurice Ravel  
Chanson romanesque (1875-1937)  
Chanson épique  
Chanson à boire

Ich trage meine Minne, Op. 32, No. 1 . . Richard Strauss  
Heimliche Aufforderung, Op. 27, No. 3 (1864-1949)  
Traum durch die Dämmerung, Op. 29, No. 1  
"Di rigori armato"  
from Der Rosenkavalier

Songs of Travel . . . . . Ralph Vaughan Williams  
The Vagabond (1872-1958)  
Let Beauty Awake  
The Roadside Fire  
Youth and Love  
In Dreams  
The Infinite Shining Heavens  
Whither must I wander?  
Bright is the Ring of Words  
I have trod the Upward and the Downward Slope

Vincenzo Bellini (1801-1835)

Vincenzo Bellini, Italian opera composer, was born into a musical family. His father and grandfather were both composers, but Vincenzo would eventually become the most noteworthy of the musical Bellini family. He was born in Catania where his father and grandfather had both pursued musical vocations as organists and music teachers. Vincenzo's father recognized his musical abilities at an early age and began to teach him piano. As he grew, Vincenzo Bellini took an interest in composition and he penned his first work at the age of seven. Eventually he enrolled in the Naples Conservatory and pursued a career as a musician.

Bellini's greatest successes came in the operatic field. He is considered by scholars to be one of the most important opera composers of the 19th century. Bellini wrote eleven operas in all, of which La sonnambula, Norma, and I puritani are the most famous. As Bellini's fame spread throughout Italy his operas were performed regularly by companies in Milan, Venice, and at La Scala. He wrote and published the Sei ariette di camera in 1831, during the period in his

life that he was enjoying great success.<sup>1</sup>

The Sei ariette di camera are written for high voice and pianoforte. Their character is simpler and more straightforward than that of his operatic writing, while still showing the imitable style of Bellini. There is some question about the origin of the texts, and a few scholars have attributed them directly to Bellini.

"Malinconia, Ninfa gentile", is the first of the six songs. The poem speaks of the singer's dedication to the melancholy, gentle nymph. He vows to stay true to the nymph and to remain, satisfied, within the realm of fountains and hills, sanctuaries to the Gods.

The second song, "Vanne, o rosa fortunata", describes a parting of sweet sorrow. "Go, o fortunate rose, to rest in the bosom of Nice. There is destined to us an equal fate: There we must find death, you by envy and I by love."

"Bella Nice, che d'amore", continues with the theme of unrequited love as it quotes, "Please! remember how faithfully this heart always loved you. If I could have hoped so much, I may wish at once to die."

Bellini's vocal style requires superb legato

---

<sup>1</sup> Leslie Orrey, Bellini (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1969), p. 31.

(4)

allied with great florid agility.<sup>2</sup> These songs do require legato singing but are not florid by any means. The melodies are generally conjunct to assure legato, making them very singable compositions.

---

<sup>2</sup> Michael Kennedy, Bellini: The Oxford Dictionary of Music (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 66.

"Ich baue ganz auf deine Stärke"  
from  
The Abduction from the Seraglio

The Abduction from the Seraglio by W.A. Mozart (1756-1791) was commissioned by Emperor Joseph II of Austria. The Emperor instructed Mozart to write the opera in German rather than the popular Italian. Despite the intrusions and obstacles of court composer Salieri, who reportedly was envious of Mozart, the work had its premiere performance on July 16, 1782.

Most of Mozart's operas are in the traditions of Italian opera which was accepted in his day, and Mozart had a gift for characterization and dramatic development. These gifts together with his wit, noble feeling, and inexhaustible musical inventiveness, make him the single most respected operatic composer of the Classical period.<sup>3</sup>

Mozart wrote twenty operas, two of which were set to German, instead of Italian texts, laying the groundwork for the German opera style that would follow. The first of these two operas was indeed The Abduction from the Seraglio, which was the first German comic opera to be written by a great composer.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Milton Cross and David Ewen, New Encyclopedia of The Great Composers and Their Music, VI. II (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co. Inc., 1969), p. 661.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 661.

German comic opera found its parentage in the German Singspiel, a kind of musical variety show with dialogue which was popular in Austria and Germany during Mozart's day. Integral elements of Singspiel are retained in The Seraglio even though it established the new medium of the German comic opera. Both the German text and Mozart's music are outgrowths of Singspiel.<sup>5</sup>

Emperor Joseph II thought highly of the theatre and considered it an educational institution. After his abolition of private use of the imperial theatre, the Burgtheater was established on a national basis and evolved into the most distinguished of all German playhouses. He further abolished the court Italian opera and ballet and created a National-Singspiel, as a house for opera in German. Unfortunately, the German operas were little more than plays with songs and were performed generally by ordinary actors who were supposed to be able to sing. The music was mostly unacceptable and the singing mediocre, but the German Singspiel was very popular in Northern Germany.<sup>6</sup>

Mozart offered two of his early operas for performance at the theatre but both were rejected. He

---

<sup>5</sup> Milton Cross and David Ewen, New Encyclopedia of The great Composers and Their Music, VI, II (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co. Inc., 1969), p. 666.

<sup>6</sup> Edward J. Dent, Introductory Notes for the Libretto of The Abduction from the Seraglio (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 6.



then was commissioned to write a new work, with German text, and this was the birth of The Seraglio. For the libretto, he adapted a play by C.F. Bretzner which had already been put to music by André. Outside France librettos were under no copyright and were translated and adapted regularly. The play carried a popular theme of the day; the rescue of captives from Turkish slavery.<sup>7</sup>

The prevailing factor which influenced Mozart's work on this opera was his need to satisfy those whom the Emperor had secured to sing the roles, especially Madame Caterina Cavalieri, who was to sing the role of Constanza. She was a student with Salieri, who had great influence over the Emperor. Madame Cavalieri possessed a voice with exceptional range and agility.<sup>8</sup> In his tireless attempt to please her, Mozart developed vocal parts that could be termed acrobatic. This demanding vocal writing shows up in the arias for the remaining singers as well.

Mozart employs the use of "Turkish Music" in the opera also. He writes for piccolo, triangle, cymbals, and the big drum, enhancing the "oriental" atmosphere.

---

<sup>7</sup> Edward J. Dent, Introductory Notes for the Libretto of The Abduction from the Seraglio (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 7.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

The first performance (16 July 1782) was a great success, but this success was relatively short-lived. The difficulty of finding cast members who were capable of singing the opera eventually meant its demise.<sup>9</sup> Recently opera houses throughout America and Europe have dusted off The Seraglio score and inserted it into the repertoire. This rekindled interest has been spurred by the more advanced abilities of the modern singer. The opera is crammed with wonderful music which provides exceptional opportunities for those who consider themselves connoisseurs of vocalization.

Belmonte, a young Spanish nobleman, is searching for his betrothed Constanza, who was kidnapped by Turkish pirates and sold. Constanza, her English maid Blonda, and Belmonte's servant Pedrillo, have been bought by Pasha Selim and taken to his private residence in the country. The story of the opera centers around Belmonte's attempt to free Constanza from the clutches of Pasha Selim.

Belmonte has found out that the three are being held captive and he goes to the country house to free them. It is there that Belmonte learns of the Pasha's attempts to persuade Constanza to become his wife.

---

<sup>9</sup> Edward J. Dent, Introductory Notes for the Libretto of The Abduction from the Seraglio (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 10.

Belmonte has considerable trouble gaining access to the house until he runs into Pedrillo, his servant, who is working as a gardener. Pedrillo persuades Belmonte to represent himself as an architect, as the Pasha is extremely interested in building. Pedrillo then introduces Belmonte to the Pasha, and he is very impressed with him.

Later in the opera Pedrillo and Belmonte attempt to free the ladies by bringing ladders to the windows. They are discovered trying to escape and are brought before the Pasha, who then discovers that Belmonte is the son of a man who once was his bitter enemy. The Pasha orders their execution immediately. However, just as it looks most grim for our heroes, the Pasha has a change of heart and decides to free them. The opera ends with a quartet of gratitude, with the Pasha offering the advice that if women are not amenable either to cruelty or kindness it is only common sense to be well rid of them.

The aria, "Ich baue ganz", is arranged to be performed at the beginning of Act III. It is, however, often omitted in favor of the more popular arias for the tenor Belmonte. The omission of "Ich baue ganz" may be viewed as unfortunate, but the aria may be performed effectively in recital. It is important to remember,

after all, that the tenor can only sing so many vocally taxing arias in one opera.

The vocal range is extremely demanding with octave jumps occurring frequently throughout the piece. The tenor is required to vocalize not less than five high B flats and the tessitura remains rather high throughout. There are traditional cuts in this aria which make it somewhat less demanding, and these are usually observed.

"Ich baue ganz" has florid passages which require both agility and vocal elan, and the beauty of Mozart's melodic writing is evident. This piece is a true gem, and it has not been sung regularly, factors which make it an appealing recital aria.

Don Quichotte à Dulcinée

The Chansons de Don Quichotte à Dulcinée was Maurice Ravel's last completed work. Ravel wrote relatively few compositions in comparison with his contemporary Claude Debussy, but about half of his musical output is now a part of the standard repertory. While neither of these composers is considered to be prolific, the few songs that were composed by them are considered by many to be gems in the world of song literature.

Ravel is not well known for his song writing, rather he is most famous for his symphonic work entitled Bolero. All of his writing was heavily influenced by the poetry of the modern French poets that were his contemporaries. Poetic and pictorial ideas are developed skillfully in his music, regardless of the medium.

Maurice Ravel attended the Paris Conservatory for nearly fifteen years. His major teacher while at the conservatory was Gabriel Fauré. Ravel is reported to have been an excellent student, and Fauré was sensitive to the frustration his student felt as he studied the conventional styles of composition.

Debussy greatly influenced Ravel's writing with

the elements of Impressionism. Because of this influence, comparisons between the two composers are inevitable, with Debussy being the more productive as a song writer, and in other areas as well. Both composers experimented with textures, timbre, and harmonies that were considered unconventional by their predecessors.

In 1932, Ravel was approached by a group of film makers and asked to compose the musical score for a film based on Cervantes' novel Don Quixote. Ravel was extremely interested in the project because he had previously been entertaining the idea of writing an opera on Don Quixote.

The film was to star Feodor Chaliapin, famous Russian baritone of the day. In addition, poet Paul Morand, whose reputation was international at this time, was asked to submit the script for the film. The producers believed the combination of the three, with their international reputations, would generate support for the film.

Simultaneously, however, the film company also asked Manuel de Falla, Marcel Delannoy, Darius Milhaud, and Jacques Ibert to work on songs for the film. Ravel was unaware of this, and as was his custom, he was late

with his score. The deal collapsed, and Ibert was chosen to compose the music.

The singer Chaliapin reportedly did not like the songs Ravel had written, claiming they lacked strength and wouldn't have shown his vocal ability. Some experts believe Chaliapin would have completely overpowered the dignified Ravel pieces anyway. Ravel is known to have sued the film company, but apparently nothing came of it.

Regardless of the controversy that surrounded the writing of Don Quichotte à Dulcinée, Ravel has contributed a delightful work to the singer's repertoire. The songs were composed for baritone and orchestra, with a transposition available for tenor voice.

Don Quixote sings the songs showing respect for Dulcinea. The songs are unaffected, filled with the spirit of the Spanish and Basque land and culture which had been the breath of life to Ravel. They are indeed simple in nature, and should be very dignified in their presentation. This simplicity can be deceiving for the performer, and he should be aware that although the performance itself should appear to be simple, the chansons require agility and facility of the voice.

"Chanson romanesque", describes the varied feats

that Quixote is prepared to attempt in order to please his mistress Dulcinea. The rhythm is that of a Spanish quajira dance, and alternates from 6/8 to 3/4. This alternating rhythm requires the performer's strict attention and causes problems on entrances of the voice. Pierre Bernac suggests that the indicated tempo  $\downarrow = 208$  is on the slow side, and  $\downarrow = 76/80$  in the 6/8 makes the rhythm more characteristic and the song easier to handle. This suggested tempo should not pose a problem articulating the language and does give an appealing flow to the song. Rhythmic precision is extremely important and a necessary factor in the performance of "Chanson romanesque". The accompaniment is reminiscent of the strumming of a guitar, and provides an enjoyable character to the song.

In the second of the three songs, entitled "Chanson épique", the knight Quixote prays to St. Michael and Saint George, asking for blessings on his sword and his lady Dulcinea. Legato line and an evenly paced rhythm are successful performing techniques that should be implemented in this chanson. The rhythmic setting is that of a Basque zortziko in 5/4 meter. This is a fervent prayer, requiring a humble approach in interpretation, without any sweetness in the voice.



Ravel dedicated this piece to Martial Singher, the well-known Basque baritone, while they were working to prepare the chansons for recording. "Chanson épique" builds to a stunning climax after starting with a low tessitura that enhances the reverence of the prayer.

Ravel ends the cycle with a boisterous drinking song entitled, "Chanson à boire". Quixote is a little tipsy as he sings of the joy of life. The result is a very spirited song in rhythm of an Aragonese jota dance. The performance of the drinking song should be very rapid, and the singer should avoid implications of vulgarity. There are opportunities for actual laughter, and a strategically placed hiccup in the piano part. The vocal line lends itself to some rather bombastic accents and the tessitura lies quite high throughout. This chanson is one of the most extrovert pages Ravel ever penned.

The Spanish idiom seems to be where Maurice Ravel felt the most comfortable and is truly where he had great success. Don Quichotte à Dulcinée is clearly in that idiom and is a very successful work because of it. Norman Demuth says of Ravel's final composition, "Ravel sang himself into silence in his own inimitable fashion."

Richard Strauss (1864-1949)

The lieder of Richard Strauss are generally perceived as being dramatic in nature. He conceives his ideas in expansive strokes and uses dissonance with considerable strength. The songs of declamation by Strauss show the influence of Wagner, while the songs of a more lyrical nature may be likened to the writing of Robert Schumann. However, these lyrical pieces are far less sensitive than those by Schumann. On the whole, Strauss's musical personality was simpler and more forthright than that of his contemporaries Mahler and Wolf.<sup>10</sup>

Although Strauss is not considered a song man by many, he wrote around one hundred forty lieder, the majority of which were composed prior to the turn of the century. His songs generally evolved out of a combination of a poem and an already existing musical idea. Strauss said of his song writing, "If I happen on a poem which approximately corresponds with the musical idea that came to me, the new opus is ready in a moment. But if, as unfortunately happens very often, I do not find the right poem, I nevertheless yield to the creative impulse and set to music any random poem

---

<sup>10</sup> Denis Stevens, A History of Song (New York: W.W. Norton and Co. Inc., 1960), p. 260.

that happens to be at all suitable for a musical setting. This process is slow, the result is artificial, the melody has a viscid flow, and I have to draw on all my command of technical resources in order to achieve something that will stand the test of strict self-criticism."<sup>11</sup>

Even though the bulk of Strauss's lieder writing occurred between 1899 and 1901, he did write collections in both his early and late years. Op. 10, his first group of lieder, includes the famous pieces "Zueignung" and "Allerseelen". Strauss was only eighteen when he composed this collection and these songs are considered to be among his best. There were six different collections written between 1899 and 1901, totaling thirty-one single compositions in all. Some scholars claim that Strauss became more conservative in his later years and they view his later writing as being overdone and heavy-handed.<sup>12</sup>

Musically, Strauss wrote broad, flowing lines, suave, full of glittering sensuous charm.<sup>13</sup> His natural mode was symphonic, and this characteristic permeates his song writing. The melodic line is often erratic

---

11 James J. Hall, The Art Song (Norman Oklahoma: The University of Oklahoma Press, 1953), pp. 123-124.

12 Ibid., p. 125.

13 Ibid., p. 125.

with skips and leaps that are awkward for inexperienced vocalists. The range of his pieces is excessive in some instances, requiring the singer to be both agile and flexible. The melodies are diatonic with some being more florid and Italianate than others.

The accompaniment seems to be the principal agent in the expression of the moods behind the text.<sup>14</sup> Accompaniments are scored elaborately with thick harmonies, rapid modulations, arpeggios, and use of chromaticism. Despite the bustle and assertiveness of the accompaniment, the singer usually feels that it is more helpful than distracting and the voice shines through. Eight of his one hundred forty songs were composed for voice with orchestral accompaniment.

"Ich trage meine Minne", Op. 32, No. 1, comes from the middle period of Strauss's lieder writing. Its text is by Karl Henckell, a poet whose texts Strauss often chose to set. "Ruhe, meine Seele", "Ich schwebe", and the resilient "Kling", are other Henckell texts chosen by Strauss during his middle period of song writing. Op. 32 was dedicated to 'My Beloved Wife' - Pauline was pregnant. Two of the poems are by Henckell (nos. 1 and 4), one by Detlef von Liliencron

---

<sup>14</sup> James J. Hall, The Art Song (Norman Oklahoma: The University of Oklahoma Press, 1953), p. 125.

(no. 2), and two by unknown authors (nos. 3 and 5). "Ich trage meine Minne" is the first song of the set and it has become quite famous. "Sehnsucht" and "Liebeshymnus" are not as well known, and the remaining two, "O süsßer Mai" and "Himmelsboten zu Liebchens Himmelsbett", are rarely heard.<sup>15</sup>

"Ich trage meine Minne" falls into the category of 'serious' Strauss song. It is a heartfelt outpouring of emotion and yet there is an incredible simplicity in its melody. The accompaniment doubles the vocal line in many instances and is not distracting at all. Strauss chose to set Henckell's poem in an ABA form, repeating the first stanza of text, and using the same melody.

Op. 27 contains "Heimliche Aufforderung", another of Richard Strauss's most beloved songs. He chose John Henry Mackay's text of romantic intrigue and set it with an expansive vocal line over the heavily arpeggiated accompaniment. Op. 27 is probably Strauss's most often performed group of songs. "Ruhe, meine Seele", "Cäcilie", and "Morgen", are the other three lieder in the set. Strauss dedicated this opus to Pauline on their wedding day, 10 September 1894.

---

<sup>15</sup> Alan Jefferson, The Life of Richard Strauss (Newton Abbot, Great Britain: David and Charles Ltd., 1973), p. 70.

"Heimliche Aufforderung" is representative of Strauss's dramatic writing and shows the influences Wagner had on him. The vocal line is declamatory in nature and can destroy the vocalist with its weight if care is not exercised. The assertiveness of the accompaniment can become a factor in the heavy interpretation of this piece also. If, however, singer and accompanist stay buoyant in their approach, a graceful flow of music will be the result.

Strauss paints the landscape of the poet Bierbaum in delicate, softly trembling colors, in "Traum durch die Dämmerung". Legend has it that one afternoon, while Strauss was composing "Traum durch die Dämmerung", Pauline came into the room and announced that she wished to be taken for a walk. "I am composing", said her husband mildly. "Well, I give you twenty minutes to finish whatever you are doing and come out", she said. In exactly twenty minutes Strauss was ready to go out for a walk and "Traum durch die Dämmerung" was down on paper.<sup>16</sup> It is difficult to comprehend the creative genius that it took to accomplish such a feat.

Musically, Strauss could not have been more

---

16 Alan Jefferson, The Life of Richard Strauss (Newton Abbot, Great Britain: David and Charles Ltd., 1973), p. 63.

careful in his setting of this text. The repeated rhythmic pattern in the accompaniment gives the illusion of a "walking" tempo. This pattern is broken only three times in the song, while it serves to enhance the vocal part throughout. The tessitura of this piece is low and aids in a calm, tranquil feeling for the singer. Extreme legato is required by the vocalist, spinning the melody to its climax and back again. "Traum durch die Dämmerung" is truly a gorgeous composition, and it shows that Strauss could be extremely effective in his text setting.

In Der Rosenkavalier, Op. 59, completed two years after Elektra, Strauss sought a radical change of mood and pace. He wanted to write a comic opera in the vein of Mozart, which though gay and lighthearted would succeed in traversing the gamut of emotions, from sentimentality to burlesque, and from wistfulness to satire. Hugo von Hofmannsthal satisfied Strauss's ambition by providing one of the finest librettos in all opera. The opera was completed in 1910 and given its first performance in 1911.

The plot of Der Rosenkavalier is somewhat complex and centers around the aristocracy in the court of Prince Werdenberg in Vienna. "Di rigori armato" is

performed by "The Singer", who is an Italian tenor hired to entertain the Princess of the court. Neither the character of "The Singer" nor this beautiful aria he sings is important to the opera as a whole, but the piece is a fine example of Strauss's operatic writing.

The "cast of characters" calls for a high tenor to sing this role. Indeed the tessitura does lie well above the norm, making the aria quite difficult. Fortunately the piece is brief and only requires a short concentrated effort on the singer's part. Strauss keeps the accompaniment simple to enhance the vocal line, which is a striking melody, Italianate in sound.



The Songs of Travel

The Songs of Travel by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) are probably his most popular and widely performed recital pieces. Vaughan Williams' reputation rests firmly on his series of nine symphonies and on his choral works, but he was a capable and talented song writer as well.<sup>17</sup> Vaughan Williams wrote in a manner which displays the influences of English folk music and its characteristics.

Ralph Vaughan Williams was particularly attracted to fine, noble verse. He sought to reveal the musical meaning of the text and to make that text come to life. This is especially true in the melodies of this song cycle. They sweep and flow freely, fitting the poems of Robert Louis Stevenson like a glove. Vaughan Williams chose to set nine poems of the forty-six total in Stevenson's collection: nos. 1, 3, 4, 6, 9, 11, 15, 17, 23.<sup>18</sup>

The first performance of The Songs of Travel was at Bechstein Hall, London, on December 2, 1904, by Walter Creighton, baritone, with Hamilton Harty, pianoforte. The songs were performed in the following

---

<sup>17</sup> James J. Hall, The Art Song (Norman Oklahoma: The University of Oklahoma Press, 1953), p. 247.

<sup>18</sup> A.E.F. Dickinson, Vaughan Williams (London: Faber and Faber, 1963), p. 151.

order:

1. The Vagabond, Allegro moderato. C modal minor.
2. Let Beauty Awake, Moderato. F sharp minor.
3. The Roadside Fire, Allegretto. D flat major.
4. Youth and Love, Andante sostenuto. G major.
5. In Dreams, Andantino. C modal minor.
6. The Infinite Shining Heavens, Andante sostenuto.  
D modal minor.
7. Whither must I Wander?, Andante. C minor.
8. Bright is the Ring of Words, Moderato risoluto.  
D major.

The history of the publication of these songs is rather complicated. Although Vaughan Williams intended for the songs to be performed as a cycle, heavy pressure from the publishers forced him to separate them for publication. Two books of songs were originally issued. The first in 1905 contained songs 1, 8, and 3, and the second, published two years later, songs 2, 4, 5, and 6. "Whither must I Wander?", song 7, appeared separately in 1912, although it was the first to be composed. The epilogue, "I have Trod the Upward and the Downward Slope", was discovered after the composer's death by Mrs. Vaughan Williams. This short song gives the work unity thematically by using material from preceding songs. The cycle was published in 1960 in the order we

know now and outlines a journey of the spirit similar to Schubert's Die Winterreise.

Three songs of the complete cycle, nos. 1, 3, and 8 were orchestrated by Vaughan Williams in 1905, the remainder by Roy Douglas in 1961-1962. Instrumentation includes: 2 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, percussion (side drum, triangle), harp, and strings. Although the cycle was originally written for baritone voice, a transposition is available and works well in the tenor voice.

Vaughan Williams opens the cycle with a magnificent strophic marching song, "The Vagabond", in which the hero of the cycle rejoices in the open air, prepared to pass up wealth, hope, love, and accept fate in whatever form it might come to him. "The Vagabond" is by far the most popular and widely performed of the songs. A.E.F. Dickinson describes the piece as having, "never been credited with folksy contacts, in spite of the pentatonic surface of its salient 1-3-5-7-5-4-5 curve. Its bold and calculated ramblings of key, with an unconventional texture of fixated basses in random succession, keep the main strophe fresh and securely

constructed, and apt for the proud, moody wanderer."<sup>19</sup> "The Vagabond" is a marvelously singable piece that lifts the spirit of the one who interprets it and those that hear him.

"Let Beauty Awake", a two-verse strophic song, indicates that hopes of love amid the beauties of nature are entertained by the hero of the cycle. This song has beauty, charm, and is an example of Vaughan Williams' infallible setting of text. There is magic in the phrase "And the stars are bright in the west":<sup>20</sup>



"The Roadside Fire" is considered by many to be one of the great English ballad-art songs. The hero's imagination runs wild as he envisions his love, gives her the gifts of his own natural awareness, and shares with her his love of the open road. The song is a bar

<sup>19</sup> A.E.F. Dickinson, Vaughan Williams (London: Faber and Faber, 1963), p. 151.

<sup>20</sup> Michael Kennedy, The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 80.

form (A, A, B): two strophes are succeeded by an "after-song", with a recovery of the initial impulse at the last moment.<sup>21</sup> The song is somewhat marred by a rather awkward accompaniment where more delicate patterns of movement in the piano part might have been more appropriate.

There is a touching radiance in "Youth and Love", the first of three through-composed songs, in which the traveller denies himself earthly pleasure in pursuit of a "nobler fate". Here the accompaniment is delicate, gently hovering like drifting leaves on an autumn breeze.<sup>22</sup> The high piano octaves give a brilliant exciting feel to the piece, and embedded in this accompaniment are quotations from "The Vagabond" and "The Roadside Fire" which are unifying factors in the cycle.

A truly melancholy sound is represented in the song "In Dreams". Considered to be the weakest song in the group, it is poor melodically and its minor key setting nearly brings the progress of the song cycle to a resounding halt.

Fortunately, "The Infinite Shining Heavens" makes

21 A.E.F. Dickinson, Vaughan Williams (London: Faber and Faber, 1963), p. 152.

22 James Day, Vaughan Williams (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1961), p. 89.

the way back into the flow of the group. Its setting is likened to that of "Silent Noon", another of Vaughan Williams' quality songs. The text of this song focuses back on the hero's love of the outdoors, and depicts a roof of shining stars as his only shelter. There is opportunity for stunning pianissimo singing in this selection which in many cases makes it a favorite for the listener.

Two more strophic songs follow. Driven by cold, hunger, and loneliness in "Whither must I Wander?", he is consoled by the promise of Spring. "Whither must I Wander?", with its semi-modal cadences, was the first piece composed in the cycle and has lived through the years due to a good tune. It does, however, present some problems for the singer in its repeated ascending phrases.

"Probably the strongest song in The Songs of Travel is entitled "Bright is the Ring of Words". Vaughan Williams is displayed as an extrovert in this setting. It begins as a strong, outdoor song and modulates midway into that moving tenderness which is to be found throughout Vaughan Williams' music and especially when he is setting words which refer to music or its performers. "After the singer is dead, and the maker buried. . ."; one can now hear this phrase, so simply

and beautifully set, without emotional reference to the composer himself and those singers, long dead, who first sang these splendid English songs.<sup>23</sup> The opening melody hints the "Sine Nomine" hymn tune phrase which graces the valiant hymn setting, "For all the Saints", also by Vaughan Williams.

The epilogue, "I have Trod the Upward and the Downward Slope" provides a degree of unity for the completed cycle. It begins with a quotation from "The Vagabond", quotes "Whither must I Wander?" during its course and in the coda quotes "Bright is the Ring of Words". The bass figure at the end enables us to see the figure of our hero clearly in our minds eye as he marches off down the road.

The Songs of Travel is a major achievement of Vaughan Williams' early years and remains as a standard part of the vocal repertoire. Its peculiar combination of sturdiness and lyricism make the work an appealing inclusion for recitals.

---

<sup>23</sup> Michael Kennedy, The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 81.

Malinconia, Ninfa gentile

Melancholy, gentle nymph,  
My life I consecrate to you;  
Your pleasures he whoever deems as despicable,  
to true pleasure is not born.  
Fountains and hills sanctuaries to the Gods;  
I will finally listen to myself, satisfied I will live,  
Never that fountain of my desires,  
Never will I cross that mountain, cross,  
never, never, with my desires will I go beyond,  
no, no, never.



Vanne, o rosa fortunata

Go, o fortunate rose, to rest in the bosom of Nice  
and everyone will be obliged to envy your destiny.  
O, if in you I could also be transformed a single moment;  
This heart could have no fairer contentment than to sigh  
with longing.  
But you bow your head scornfully, Beautiful rose turned  
pale,  
Your brown discolored by disdain and by sorrow.  
Beautiful rose, there is destined to us both an equal  
fate:  
There we must find death, You by envy and I by love.

Bella Nice, che d'amore

Beautiful Nice, you that by love awaken trembling and  
desire,

Beautiful Nice, my heart's sweet hope and only sigh,  
Alas! There will come not so far away, perhaps for me  
that day is already here,

That death's cruel hand my thread of life will cut off.  
When in the lap of the fatal nest, heavy, alas! miserable  
I will be,

Please! remember how faithfully this heart always  
loved you.

Over my silent ashes if you scatter there a flower,  
Beautiful Nice, less grievous for me may be the horror  
of the grave.

I do not implore you that with weeping you might come  
to bathe my urn,

Ah! If I could have hoped so much, I may wish at  
once to die.

Ich baue ganz auf deine Stärke

I build entirely upon your strength,  
Trust, o love, your power,  
Ah, what works were not already done  
You brought about,  
What to all the world seems unlikely,  
Will be through love united.

Chanson romanesque

Were you to tell me that the earth  
Offended you with so much turning,  
Speedily would I dispatch Panza:  
You should see it motionless and silent.  
Were you to tell me that you are weary  
Of the sky toomuch adorned with stars,  
Destroying the divine order,  
With one blow I would sweep them from the night.  
Were you to tell me that space  
Thus made empty does not please you at all,  
God-like knight, lance in hand,  
I would stud the passing wind with stars.  
But were you to tell me that my blood  
Belongs more to myself than to you, my Lady,  
I would pace beneath the reproach  
And I would die, blessing you.  
O Dulcinea.

Chanson épique

Good Saint Michael, who gives me liberty  
To see my lady and to hear her,  
Good Saint Michael, who deigns to choose me  
To please her and to defend her,  
Good Saint Michael, I pray you descend  
With Saint George upon the altar  
Of the Madonna of the blue mantle.  
With a ray from heaven bless my sword  
And its equal in purity, and its equal in piety,  
As in modesty and chastity, my Lady.  
O great Saint George and Saint Michael,  
The angel who watches over my vigil,  
My gentle Lady so much resembling  
You, Madonna of the blue mantle! Amen.

Chanson à boire

A fig for the bastard, illustrious Lady,  
Who to shame me in your sweet eyes,  
Says that love and old wine  
Will bring misery to my heart, my soul!  
I drink to joy! Joy is the one aim  
To which I go straight. . . when I have drunk!  
A fig for the jealous fool, dark-haired mistress,  
Who whines, who weeps and makes a vow  
Ever to be this pallid lover  
Who waters the wine of his intoxication!  
I drink to joy! Joy is the one aim  
To which I go straight. . . when I have drunk!

Ich trage meine Minne

I carry my love, mute with rapture,  
In my heart and my mind wherever I go.  
Yes, our encounter, dearest one,  
Cheers through all the days allotted to me.  
Though skies are grim, and jet-black as the night,  
Brightly shines my love's sun-like splendour.  
And though deceitful is the sinful world, and it  
grieves me,  
Its wretchedness will be blinded by your snow-like  
innocence.  
I carry my love, mute with rapture,  
In my heart and my mind wherever I go.  
Yes, our encounter, dearest one,  
Cheers through all the days allotted to me.

Heimliche Aufforderung

Come, lift the sparkling glass to your lip,  
And drink at the joyous feast to your heart's content.  
And, as you lift it, throw me a secret glance;  
Then I will smile and then drink as silently as you . . .  
And quietly, as I do, examine the crowd about us  
Of intoxicated drinkers; do not look down upon them.  
No, lift the sparkling cup filled with wine,  
and let them enjoy their noisy feast.  
But after you've gaily dined, and quenched this thirst,  
Then leave the festive scene of riotous merrymakers,  
And stroll into the garden towards the rosebushes;  
There will I await you after the old custom,  
And will recline against your breast, ere you know it,  
And drink your kisses, as in days of yore,  
And entwine in your hair the splendor of a rose;  
Oh, come, you wondrous, longed-for night!



Traum durch die Dämmerung

Wide meadows in the gray of twilight;  
The sun has set, the stars appear,  
Now I go, making my way to the most beautiful woman,  
Far, through the meadows in the gray of twilight,  
Deep into the bushes of jasmine,  
Through the gray twilight of love's land,  
I go, slowly, without haste;  
I am being drawn by a soft, velvet band,  
Through the gray twilight of love's land,  
Into the gentle blue light.

Di rigori armato

Armed with severities my breast against love rebelled,  
But I was conquered in a flash in looking at two  
pretty beams.

Ah! How can I resist the star of fire, heart of ice,  
Star of fire.

The Vagabond

Give to me the life I love, let the lave go by me,  
Give the jolly heaven above, and the by-way nigh me,  
Bed in the bush with stars to see, bread I dip in the  
river,

There's the life for a man like me, There's the life  
forever.

Let the blow fall soon or late, let what will be  
o'er me;

Give the face of earth around, and the road before me.  
Wealth I seek not, hope nor love, nor a friend to  
know me;

All I seek, the heaven above, and the road below me.  
Or let autumn fall on me where afield I linger,  
Silencing the bird on tree, biting the blue finger.  
White as meal the frosty field, warm the fireside  
haven.

Not to autumn will I yield, not to winter even!  
Let the blow fall soon or late, let what will be  
o'er me;

Give the face of earth around, and the road before me.  
Wealth I ask not, hope nor love, nor a friend to  
know me;

All I ask the heaven above, and the road below me.

Let Beauty Awake

Let beauty awake in the morn from beautiful dreams,  
beauty awake from rest!

Let beauty awake for beauty's sake in the hour when  
the birds awake in the brake and the stars are  
bright in the west!

Let beauty awake in the eve from the slumber of day,  
awake in the crimson eve!

In the day's dusk end when the shades ascend, let  
her wake to the kiss of a tender friend, to render  
again and receive!

The Roadside Fire

I will make you brooches and toys for your delight,  
Of birdsong at morning and starshine at night.  
I will make a palace fit for you and me,  
Of green days in forests, and blue days at sea.  
I will make my kitchen and you shall keep your room,  
Where white flows the river and bright blows the broom;  
And you shall wash your linen, and keep your body white  
In rainfall at morning and dewfall at night.  
And this shall be for music when no one else is near,  
The fine song for singing, the rare song to hear!  
That only I remember, that only you admire,  
Of the broad road that stretches and the roadside fire.

Youth and Love

To the heart of youth the world is a highway side.  
Passing forever, he fares; and on either hand,  
Deep in the gardens golden pavillions hide,  
Nestle in orchard bloom, and far on the level land  
Call him with lighted lamp in the eventide.  
Thick as stars at night when the moon is down  
Pleasures assail him. He to his nobler fate fares;  
And but waves a hand as he passes on,  
Cries but a wayside word to her at the garden gate,  
Sings but a boyish stave and his face is gone, is gone.

In Dreams

In dreams unhappy, I behold you stand as here-to-fore:  
The unremembered tokens in your hand avail no more.  
No more the morning glow, no more the grace,  
enshrines, endears. Cold beats the light of time  
Upon your face and shows your tears.  
He came and went. Perchance you wept and then forgot.  
Ah me! But he that left you with a smile . . .  
Forgets you not.

The Infinite Shining Heavens

The infinite shining heavens rose, and I saw in the night  
Uncountable angel stars showering sorrow and light.

I saw them distant as heaven, dumb and shining and dead,  
And the idle stars of the night were dearer to me  
than bread.

Night after night in my sorrow the stars looked over  
the sea,

Till lo! I looked in the dusk and a star had come down  
to me.



Whither Must I Wander?

Home no more home to me, whither must I wander?  
Hunger my driver, I go where I must.  
Cold blows the winter will over hill and heather:  
Thick drives the rain and my roof is in the dust.  
Loved of wise men was the shade of my roof tree,  
The true word of welcome was spoken in the door:  
Dear days of old with the faces in the firelight;  
Kind folks of old, you come again no more.  
Home was home then, my dear, full of kindly faces,  
Home was home then, my dear, happy for the child.  
Fire and the windows bright glittered on the moorland;  
Song, tuneful song, built a palace in the wild.  
Now when day dawns on the brow of the moorland,  
Lone stands the house and the chimneystone is cold.  
Lone let it stand now the friends are all departed,  
The kind hearts, the true hearts, that loved the place  
of old.  
Spring shall come, come again, calling up the moor-fowl,  
Spring shall bring the sun and rain, bring the bees  
and flowers;  
Red shall the heather bloom over hill and valley,  
Soft flow the stream through the even flowing hours.  
Fair the day shine as it shone on my childhood;  
Fair shine the day on the house with open door.  
Birds come and cry there and twitter in the chimney,  
But I go forever and come again no more.

Bright is The Ring Of Words

Bright is the ring of words when the right man rings  
them.

Fair the fall of songs when the singer sings them.

Still they are carolled and said, on wings they are  
carried

After the singer is dead and the maker buried,

Low as the singer lies in the field of heather,

Songs of his fashion bring the swains together.

And when the west is red with the sunset embers,

The lover lingers and sings, and the maid remembers.

I Have Trod The Upward And The Downward Slope

I have trod the upward and the downward slope;  
I have endured and done in days before;  
I have longed all, and bid farewell to hope;  
And I have lived and loved, and closed the door.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Cross, Milton and David Ewen. New Encyclopedia of The Great Composers and Their Music, VI. II. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co. Inc., 1969.
- Day, James. Vaughan Williams. London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1961.
- Dent, Edward J. Introductory Notes for the Libretto of The Abduction from the Seraglio. London: Oxford University Press, 1952.
- Dickinson, A.E.F. Vaughan Williams. London: Faber and Faber, 1963.
- Hall, James J. The Art Song. Norman, Oklahoma: The University of Oklahoma Press, 1953.
- Jefferson, Alan. The Life of Richard Strauss. Newton Abbot, Great Britain: David and Charles Ltd., 1973.
- Kennedy, Michael. Bellini: The Oxford Dictionary of Music. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Kennedy, Michael. The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams. London: Oxford University Press, 1964.
- Orrey, Leslie. Bellini. London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1969.
- Stevens, Denis. A History of Song. Revised Edition. New York: W.W. Norton and Co. Inc., 1960.

(51)

EXTENDED PROGRAM NOTES ON A TENOR RECITAL

by

JON ERIC SECREST

Bachelor of Music, Friends University, 1978

---

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree

MASTER OF MUSIC

Department of Music

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
Manhattan, Kansas

1987

EXTENDED PROGRAM NOTES ON A TENOR RECITAL

The paper consists of extended program notes on selected composers and their works, representing a cross-section of styles and periods. Each section deals with some pedagogical, historical, and musical aspects of the songs, arias, or groups of songs. Translations of the songs in foreign languages as well as the English texts have been included in appendix form. The composer and repertoire discussed in this paper are: "Malinconia, Ninfa gentile", "Vanne, o rosa fortunata", and "Bella Nice, che d'amore", from the collection Sei ariette di camera by Vincenzo Bellini, "Ich baue ganz auf deine Stärke" from The Abduction from the Seraglio by W.A. Mozart, Don Quichotte à Dulcinée by Maurice Ravel, "Ich trage meine Minne", "Heimliche Aufforderung", "Traum durch die Dämmerung", and "Di rigori armato" from Der Rosenkavalier, all by Richard Strauss, and The Songs of Travel by Ralph Vaughan Williams.