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A RECITAL

by

CAROLYN THAYER

B.S., Kansas State University, 1979

A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF MUSIC

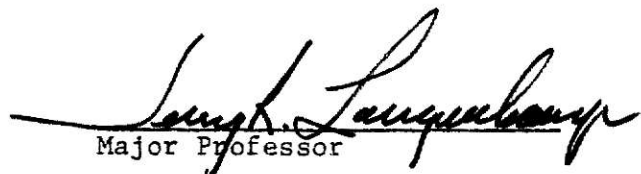
Department of Music

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

Manhattan, Kansas

1981

Approved by:


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Department of Music

Season 1980-81

presents

CAROLYN THAYER, Soprano
B.S., Kansas State University, 1979

assisted by

SUZANNE TORKELOSON, Piano and Organ

Wednesday, February 18, 1981

All Faiths Chapel

8:00 p.m.

presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Music

PROGRAM

"With verdure clad," *The Creation* *Joseph Haydn*
(1732-1809)

"Ich folge dir gleichfalls," *St. John Passion* *J.S. Bach*
Laurel Brunken, Flute (1685-1750)
Sheldon Lentz, Cello

Proses Lyriques *Claude Debussy*
De Rêve (1862-1918)
De Grève
De Fleurs
De Soir

INTERMISSION

Der Gärtner *Hugo Wolf*
Auf ein altes Bild (1860-1903)
Nixe Binsefuss

"Quel guardo il cavalier," *Don Pasquale* *Gaetano Donizetti*
(1797-1848)

Knoxville: Summer of 1915 *Samuel Barber*
(1910-1981)

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JOSEPH HAYDN: "WITH VERDURE CLAD," THE CREATION

The Creation was composed by Joseph Haydn in 1798, becoming his most significant vocal work. Even though it is not often performed in America, it remains one of the best known oratorios in the literature. It has enjoyed enormous success in Vienna and Germany, being performed annually almost without a break from 1798 to the present.

Haydn spent a good part of his life in the service of the Esterházy, acting as composer, teacher, and administrator of all the musical events taking place at the estate. Following the death of Prince Nicolaus in 1790, Haydn made his first trip to England in 1791, becoming familiar with the works of Handel. In 1794, Haydn made a second trip to England, becoming even more familiar with the works of Handel by attending the regular performances of his oratorios during Lent both at Covent Garden and Drury Lane. Through these two experiences, he became quite aware of the significance that Handel's works had on the nation as a whole, and was fully convinced that an oratorio was what he needed to give his name national and lasting fame, as that of Handel's. Many different types of oratorios were being written at that time in Austria and Germany, but it was the oratorio of Handel that really attracted him. It was the unorthodox construction, the massive choruses, and the strong feeling for nature that deeply impressed Haydn, and he decided to follow the model of this English oratorio rather than the German model.

While in England, Haydn acquired a libretto that was originally written for Handel, but rejected by him. The text, by Lidley, was compiled from the contents of the first chapter of Genesis and the seventh and eighth books of Milton's Paradise Lost. Haydn brought the English

libretto back to Vienna and had his friend, Baron van Swieten, translate it into German. Wherever possible, the sentimental paraphrases used at the time in German Oratorios were replaced by the powerful words of the Bible. The old narrator was replaced by three singers, the archangels Gabriel (soprano), Uriel (tenor), and Raphael (bass). These names were taken from books IV, V, and VII of Paradise Lost. Van Swieten also gave Haydn directions as to how to set the words to music. These instructions are contained in a manuscript of the libretto preserved in the library of Prince Esterházy. Haydn followed van Swieten's advice for the most part, which was quite beneficial to the composition.

The first printed edition of The Creation, published in 1800 by Haydn, was in both German and English, possibly being the first bilingual score ever. Van Swieten did the English version, which is the basis for most English editions, but it is not very good and not always intelligible.

Haydn worked very slowly and carefully on The Creation, making sketches and reworking. This is in contrast to his earlier works, many of which he wrote in a short time. Twenty-three pages of sketches are preserved in the National Library in Vienna.

The entire work of The Creation resembles Handel in style and form. Chorus and soloists are sometimes used together and sometimes alternate. The form of the arias changes from number to number, but it is always dependent on the text. The recitatives are often like accompanied ariosos, displaying Haydn's deep love of nature in their tone color.

The Creation is in three parts, the first two parts covering the first six days of Creation. Each day has its own internal organization, opening with a biblical narration, a middle section of descriptive or

lyrical commentary, and closing with a song of praise. The narrative is taken from Genesis, chapters one and two. Paradise Lost is the chief source for the descriptive and lyrical passages, and the songs of praise are often paraphrases of Psalms. Part III has no biblical narrative and the mood is entirely lyrical and idyllic. The basic key is C major. However, it ends in B flat, which symbolizes the fall from grace by Adam and Eve.

"With verdure clad," sung by Gabriel in Part I, is probably the most famous single aria from The Creation. It shows Haydn's late pastoral style, revealing a love for the fields "in verdure clad." The meter is a gently rocking $\frac{6}{8}$, the time-honored meter for a pastorate, and is marked Andante ($\text{♩}=92$). The $\text{♩} \text{ ♪}$ rhythmic figure is predominant and gives added pulse throughout the aria. The melody is very simple and classical in style. There is just enough coloratura to enhance the melodic line and give the sense of the lightness of nature. The texture is totally homophonic, the accompaniment being purely reinforcement for the voice. The orchestration, for flutes, solo clarinet, bassoons, and horn, creates a thin, airy texture. Both the use of the horn and the $\frac{6}{8}$ meter conjure up the idea of hunting another link to nature.

Haydn has chosen a very simple form, A B A, to help capture the simplicity of nature. The A section begins in B flat major. By the end of the A section, the key has modulated to the dominant of F major. An interlude separating the two sections modulates to B flat minor, which is retained throughout the B section. With the return of the A section, the original key of B flat major returns also. Tonic, subdominant chords are predominant, also an element of simplicity. Very few coloristic chords appear, making the harmony totally functional.

"With verdure clad" is a beautiful representation of nature. Its simplicity and swaying rhythm combine to capture the essence of the fields, trees, flowers and all of nature itself.

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH: "ICH FOLGE DIR GLEICHFALLS," ST. JOHN PASSION

The Passion was a form that existed long before Bach's time. It had its roots in the early Christian Church, where the events of Passion-tide were marked in two different ways: the Passion play and a musical presentation of the Passion. The Passion play was a dramatic presentation of the story given in church in the Middle Ages with much elaboration, including costumes, music, and stage properties. The musical setting of the Passion dates back to the fifth century. The liturgy for Holy Week included plain-chant settings of the four Gospel accounts of the Passion which took the place of the normal Gospel reading in the framework of the Mass. St. Matthew's version was given on Palm Sunday, St. Mark's and St. Luke's on Tuesday and Wednesday of Holy Week, and St. John's on Good Friday. It was originally performed by one deacon, who distinguished the different parts by altering the pitch and inflection of his voice.

In the middle of the fifteenth century, attempts began to be made to elaborate on the Passion. The traditional plainsong was replaced by a freely-composed polyphonic version for three-voices. The roles of Christ and the Evangelist were presumably intended to be sung to a form of plainsong. This form of Passion had its beginning in England. The Englishman Richard Davy is the earliest identified Passion composer, and dates from the end of the fifteenth century. The choral versions of the crowd are grafted on to the traditional plainsong Passion tones which are used for the roles of the Evangelist and of Christ. This custom was followed by many Passion composers during the sixteenth century.¹

¹Basil Smallman, The Background of Passion Music (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1957, pp. 23-24.

The Motet Passion came into being at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The entire text is sung by an unaccompanied choir. Solo voices are not used, but reduced voice sections give a limited degree of characterization. The lack of dramatic realism in the Motet Passion led to its decay in the early seventeenth century.

It was the development of opera and its sacred counterpart, oratorio, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, which laid the groundwork for the Passion in the form it existed in at Bach's time. The plainsong narration of the ancient Dramatic Passion was replaced by the new recitative style, instrumental accompaniments were added, and lyrical movements in the form of arias, chorales, and orchestral symphonias were added. Bach, especially, incorporated the operatic structure in his passions. The recitative style, with organ continuo, is prominent in the roles of the Evangelist and Jesus, and contrasts with the numerous choruses and arias. The recitative assumes the role of telling the story, while the choruses and arias are merely reflection on the action.

The drama of the Passion is based on the four Gospel accounts of the last days of Christ's life. St. John and St. Matthew are by far the most favored of the four. Of these two, the St. Matthew account is perhaps the best. It is the only gospel to include the accounts of Judas's remorse and death, of the dream about Jesus which disturbed Pilate's wife and of the symbolic washing of the governor's hands. The St. John Passion does not even begin until the arrest of Jesus at Gethsemane, therefore omitting the scenes of the Last Supper and the Agony in the Garden. The St. Matthew Passion has a more balanced dramatic construction.

The structural differences between the two Gospels create a marked

contrast between the two great Bach Passions. Each is divided into two parts. In the St. Matthew Passion the break occurs after the arrest of Jesus at Gethsemane. The break occurs after Peter's denial in the St. John Passion. As a result, the first part is very short in the St. John version. It is weaker dramatically and offers very few lyrical movements, the first half containing only three solo arias and four congregational chorales. The greatness of the St. John Passion is seen in the vivid, visual realism of the dramatic presentation of the story.

The St. John Passion (BWV 245) was first performed on Good Friday, 1724. According to recent research, its origin may go back to the Weimar years.² Basically the construction is the same as the St. Matthew Passion. The main part of the text is Biblical, taken from St. John 18-19. Two passages are borrowed from St. Matthew, both for dramatic reasons.³ Bach also uses chorales for some choruses and free texts for the arias, which he wrote himself, based on B. H. Brockes's poems. The narration is done by the Evangelist, a tenor, accompanied by organ and bass instruments. Christ and the other individual characters are sung by soloists and the crowd is sung by chorus. The ariosos and arias express the reaction by that individual to the previous events.

"Ich folge dir gleichfalls" is a free text written by Bach himself, based on Brockes. Whereas Brockes has "Take me with you, here is Peter without a sword," Bach has "I follow thee also..." Brockes uses Peter's actual voice, but Bach's version is represented by a Christian follower, a soprano soloist. The aria follows the Evangelists recitative, "Simon Peter also followed Jesus, and so did another disciple." The aria is the voice of this other disciple, conveying her joy at following Jesus'

²Karl Geiringer, Johann Sebastian Bach (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 195.

³Paul Steinitz, Bach's Passions (London: Paul Elek, 1979), p. 23.

footsteps. This aria is an example of Bach's tendency to use an obligato instrument on arias, being scored for flute obligato, voice and continuo. Bach reflects the meaning of the words in the music by the use of canon. The beginning of the tune is treated in canon almost every time it occurs. The canon is between the basso continuo, voice and flute, in that order, but the continuo drops out after one measure and continues on with bass motion. This use of canon combined with the upward scale movement gives a clear picture of running after someone "with joyful footsteps."

The meter signature is $\frac{3}{8}$. There is sixteenth note motion almost throughout the entire aria. Where the voice is at rest the flute continues the motion and where the flute is at rest the voice continues the motion. The only spots that come to a complete rhythmic stop are at the final cadences. Bach also emphasizes the final cadence in each section by using the rhythmic device of hemiola. Both at the end of the first and middle sections, the last two measures before the final cadence shift from triple meter to a feeling of duple meter. This gives an even stronger sense of finality.

The melody of the aria is actually very functional in that it tends to outline the chordal structure. This melodic skeleton is then embellished with passing tones, appoggiaturas, trills, and turns which give the melodic line that running sensation. A characteristic of the melodic line is that of always going up, which creates a feeling of being uplifted.

The form and harmonic structure are also quite functional. The form is A B B A. The aria begins in the key of B flat. Towards the end of the A section, there is a modulation to F, with the final cadence in

F. The interlude remains in F, but immediately upon the voice entrance a modulation begins, ending with a final cadence in G minor. Again the interlude is in the established key, but another modulation begins with the entrance of the voice. This is a lengthier modulation, which goes through several tonalities before it rests in D minor. There is then an immediate return to B flat upon the return of the A section. The tonality stays in B flat for the rest of the aria. The harmonic scheme establishes two things. First of all it creates a major/minor/major system which is in direct relation with the form of A B B A. It is also interesting to note that the stable areas of tonality are in the interludes and the areas of movement are in the vocal line. This is another device used by Bach to give the sense of movement which is reflected from the text to the music.

"Ich folge dir gleichfalls" is the most cheerful piece in the entire St. John Passion. It is an excellent example of Bach's creative and expressive vocal writing.

I follow you also with joyful steps,
And leave you not, my life, my light.
Advance the course and cease not to.
Draw near me, to push, to request.

CLAUDE DEBUSSY: PROSES LYRIQUES

French art song of the late nineteenth century was a revitalized form of the chanson. Not since the years of the troubadors, trouvères, Machaut, Dufáy, and Jannequin during the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries had the French secular song been a thriving form of art. France had regained a place of honor in the world of secular song.

One of the leading composers of the late-nineteenth century French art song was Claude Debussy. He sought to translate into music the new beauties and freedoms the poets and painters of the time were seeking, which has led his music to be termed "impressionism." This term was originally used by painting critics, and was inspired by the painting by Claude Monet called Impression. The term then was also applied to paintings by Manet, Renoir, Degas, and others. To call Debussy's music "impressionistic" emphasizes the same elusive quality as seen in the paintings. Debussy disliked the term vehemently, saying: "I am trying to make something new -- realities, as it were! what imbeciles call 'impressionism.'"¹

Debussy's music is perhaps linked more closely with symbolism, which was a literary movement employed by Jean Moréas, Mallarmé, Verlaine, Rimbaud, Maeterlinck, and Debussy's closest friend and the poet of Chansons de Bilitis, Pierre Louÿs. These symbolist poets recommended subtle suggestion and vivid sensuous imagery. Debussy was the musical equivalent of this style, his rhythms being modeled after French speech and gesture.

Poetry fertilizes the art of Debussy, creating a new and revital-

¹William W. Austin, Music in the 20th Century (New York: W. W. Norton, 1966), p. 25.

ized form of the art song with the intimate union of the voice and piano. In all of Debussy's forty-three published songs, there is never a dull moment for the accompanist. New patterns are used, breaking away from the classic and romantic figures. The weight and richness of the fabric of tone give a wonderful foundation for the voice, as well as contributing its own illustration of the text. Its frequent busyness and independence tempt the pianist to drown the voice and upset the delicate equilibrium that Debussy planned.

Debussy was all-involved in melody. Once in Vienna, when some musicians were discussing the way Debussy had freed music, one speaker said that he had suppressed melody. But Debussy protested: "But all my music strives to be, is melody." His melody avoids routine accentuations and intervals, cadences occur infrequently, and it is quite often based on something other than the major or minor scale. Diatonic modes, pentatonic scales and the whole-tone scale, which emphasizes the tritone, are Debussy's favorite melodic devices.

The influence that the poets had on Debussy's music is extraordinary. The catalogue of his works show a predominance of works with text: songs, cantatas, choruses, and dramatic works.² This influence is further seen in the large number of untexted pieces with descriptive titles; some are names of poems or lines from poems, and others contain literary references.³ Debussy did a substantial amount of writing on his own. Around 1892, he wrote four poems, which he took to Henri de Régnier for his opinion. Régnier was impressed enough to recommend the poems to Francis Vièle-Griffin, who published the first two, "De rêve" and "De grève," in his journal in December of 1892. Debussy set these

² See Appendix A in Arthur B. Wenk, Claude Debussy and the Poets (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976), pp. 279-288.

³ See Claude Debussy and the Poets, pp. 4-5.

poems to music in 1893, under the title Proses Lyriques. Two of the songs, "De fleurs" and "De soirs," were performed in 1894 by Debussy's fiancée, Therese Rogers, with Debussy accompanying.

The Proses Lyriques are especially significant as a document of the composer's psychological evolution. They reveal both his literary and musical allegiances during this period and his efforts to achieve a synthesis of words and sounds in a single creative endeavor. The poems were written in the style of the symbolist poets, especially Mallarmé, Baudelaire, R  gnier, and Jules Laforgue. The poems contain a preoccupation with inner feelings, corruption, and morbidity, and emphasize personal experience and nostalgia for a better world now lost. The musical settings suggest the end of a line. The melodies lack direction or deliberately avoid a natural climax. The harmonies are based on a rich piling of triad upon triad and the tonality is weakened through chromaticism, the whole-tone scale, and avoidance of strong progressions.

De R  ve

The night has the sweetness of woman
and the old trees under the golden moon
are dreaming!
To her who has just passed with head bepearled,
now heartbroken, for ever heartbroken,
they did not know how to give her a sign...
All! they have passed:
the Frail Ones, the Foolish Ones,
casting their laughter to the thin grass,
and to the fondling breezes the bewitching caress
of hips in the fullness of their beauty.
Alas! of all this, nothing is left but a pale tremor....
The old trees under the golden moon
are weeping their beautiful golden leaves!
None will again dedicate to them the pride of the golden helmets
now tarnished, tarnished for ever.
The knights are dead
on the way to the Grail!
The night has the sweetness of woman,
hands seem to caress the souls,
hands so foolish, so frail,
in the days when the swords sang for them!

Strange sighs rise under the trees.
My sour you are gripped by a dream of olden times!

"De Rêve" is the first of the four songs. The poem appears as an unbroken line of thought, whose main points of articulation are the recurrences of the first two lines of the poem, heard later in the poem in reverse order. The end has been reached in this poem; there is no future, only a past. Life in the present has no substance; it seems only to be part of an ancient dream of tarnished helmets and broken-hearted women. The principal theme conveys a feeling of purposelessness through the absence of either a clearly defined goal or a unifying tonal center. The piano begins with an arpeggiated augmented chord, already suggesting a whole-tone orientation. The opening vocal line is characteristic of Debussy, with little motion and repeated notes. The vocal line is interrupted throughout the song with beautifully expressive piano interludes. At the Andantino, triplets are heard against regular eighth notes, a favorite rhythmic device of Debussy's. The vocal line becomes highly chromatic on "Maintenant navrée, à jamais navrée" and then soars to an arch-like ascending and descending phrase. The piano interlude is again three against two, which carries into the next vocal entrance. Whole tone scales are heard in both piano and vocal lines at the words "aux brises froleuses la caresse charmeuse." The piano returns to the arpeggiated, augmented triads, followed by the repetition of the second line of the verse in the voice. This time, the melody plunges into a new section with a crescendo and an accelerando. This section is much weightier with full, sonorous chords, but dies back down as quickly as it grew. The key changes to C major at the Plus lent, with a restricted vocal line hinting at the message of gloom. Once again the opening bars are repeated, this time with the same text and exactly the same notes. A

final surge follows, resulting in the climax of the song as the highest note in the vocal line is reached. From here on, there is a gradual fading out, as the dreams fade away. The song finally resolves to F# major, after moving through many various keys. The piano fades away on the horn theme, heard several times previously, based on triadic harmonies and perfect intervals, and evoking the days of knighthood.

De Grève

Over the sea twilight falls,
frayed white silk.
The waves like little mad things
chatter, little girls coming out of school,
amid the rustling of their dresses,
iridescent green silk!
The clouds, grave travellers,
hold counsel about the next storm,
and it is a background really too solemn
for this English water-colour.
The waves, the little waves,
no longer know where to go,
for here is the annoying downpour,
rustling of flying skirts,
panic-stricken green silk.
But the moon, compassionate towards all!
comes to pacify this grey conflict.
And slowly caresses his little friends
who offer themselves like loving lips to this warm, white kiss.
Then, nothing more....
Only the belated bells of the floating churches!
Angelus of the waves,
calmed white silk!

"De Grève" is also written in unrhymed lines and uses imagery continuously; clouds seen as "grave voyagers," waves "chattering like school girls" and "offering themselves like loving lips to the moon's caress." Repetition is the structural device in this poem, as it was in "De Rêve," in this case one metaphor for the sea, silk, used in four different lines. Like most musical interpretations of the sea, the piano part is quite busy, full of rapid tremolo figures, surging arpeggios, and rushing scales. The first half of the song is much more frenzied as the storm

builds up and erupts. The stormy figurations in the piano are balanced by single-note, or almost single-note melodic lines. The piano's long, rumbling introduction clearly establishes the key of D major. The tonality of D major is also clearly defined at the end of the piece, making "De Grève" the most tonal of the four songs. The vocal line is quite restricted in the first section, becoming more active and chromatic as the sea is churned up. Trills in the piano usher in the big storm, where the vocal line becomes somewhat frenzied. The rising interval under "envolées" and affolée" are even more effective after following repeated notes, creating the climax of the song. It is interesting to note that the piano part is entirely in treble clef in this section, somewhat contrary to what one would think of for a storm. The remainder of the song is a gradual calming of the waters. The tessitura falls, the dynamic level drops to pianissimo and the rhythm slows, all creating the tranquil effect of the calm following the storm. At the end, the church bells tolling the Angelus are heard in the accompaniment, a single note, the supertonic, which is emphasized by being a non-chord tone. The last few lines of the vocal line barely move, creating the same mesmerizing effect as the calm ocean.

De Fleurs

In the tedium so desolately green of the hothouse of grief,
the flowers entwine my heart with their wicked stems.
Ah! when will return around my head
the dear hands so tenderly disentwining?
The big violet irises
wickedly ravished your eyes
while seeming to reflect them,
they, who were the water of the dream into which my dreams plunged
so sweetly enclosed in their colour;
and the lilies, white fountains of fragrant pistils,
have lost their white grace
and are no more than poor sick thing without sun!
Sun! friend of evil flowers,
killer of dreams! Killer of illusions!
This consecrated bread of wretched souls!

Come! Come! Redeeming hands!
Break the window-panes of malefice,
my soul dies of too much sun!
Mirages! the joy of my eyes will not flower again
and my hands are weary of praying,
my eyes are wary of weeping!
Eternally this maddening sound of the black petals of tedium
falling drop by drop on my head
in the green of the hothouse of grief!

The third song in Proses Lyriques, "De Fleurs," also relies heavily on imagery: boredom is desolately verdant, it is the greenhouse of sorrow. This elaborate floral imagery reflects Debussy's preoccupation with the aesthetic theories of the Art Nouveau movement. The opening chords are slow and sad, alternating between major and minor triads. These chords anticipate the vocal line, with each chord harmonizing one melody note. The inactive vocal line, with many repeated notes, contributes to the monotony and boredom of the hothouse of grief. An unexpected rise in the vocal line under "se tendrement," is immediately followed by a fall back down, balanced by rising chords in the accompaniment. The next section is characterized by the triplet figure in the accompaniment while the vocal line stays in duple. A gradual accelerando begins here, with the increased motion in the piano adding to the sense of moving forward. The climax of this section is reached, following a gradual crescendo, on "sans soleil," with the sustained high A-flat making a great impact. The mood changes at this climax, but the triplet figure remains constant as the song continues its forward movement. The ultimate climax occurs after a further increase in tempo and crescendo on the word "Venez." The key changes again, as well as the piano figuration, which now consists of the chordal pattern of the opening, transposed from C to B, and made more turbulent by the rushing scale patterns between the chords. A rapid diminuendo brings the dynamic level back

down to piano and the piano becomes more gentle, the entire final section dying away. The vocal line remains heavy and colorless on a monotone or severely restricted line. The chords of the opening bars are heard at the very end, creating an air of hopelessness and despair.

De Soir

Sunday in the towns,
Sunday in the hearts!
Sunday for the little girls
singing with immature voices
persistent rounds where good Towers
will last only for a few days!
Sunday, the stations are frenzied!
Everyone sets off for the suburbs of adventure
Saying good-bye with distracted gestures!
Sunday, the trains go quickly,
devoured by insatiable tunnels;
and the good signals of the tracks
interchange with a single eye
purely mechanical impressions.
Sunday, in the blue of my dreams,
where my sad thoughts of abortive fireworks
will no longer cease to mourn
for old Sundays long departed.
And the night, with velvet steps,
sends the beautiful, tired sky to sleep,
and it is Sunday in the avenues of stars;
the Virgin, gold upon silver,
lets the flowers of sleep fall!
Quickly, the little angels, overtake the swallows
to put you to bed, blessed by absolution!
Take pity on the towns,
take pity on the hearts,
You, Virgin gold upon silver!

The fourth song, "De Soir," deals more with Sunday (Dimanche) than Evening (Soir). Debussy perhaps chose this title to keep the four titles of the Proses Lyriques symmetrical, each with a two syllable name. The music immediately conveys the aura of Sunday, with its church bell figuration in the first six bars of the piano. The vocal melody is joyous, with two intervals of a fifth, both on the word "Dimanche." The song is divided into two parts, each half having its own dominant motive based

on the pentatonic scale. The motive in the first half is derived from the tune of a favorite French children's game and is heard in the piano on the text "Dimanche chez les petites filles chantant d'une voix informée." The exuberance of the church bells returns, supported by octaves and filler notes in the accompaniment. The dynamics of this section rock back and forth between piano and forte, ending with a diminuendo, which leads into the second half. The dominant motive for this half is a bell motive. The interval on "Dimanche" is reduced to a fourth, with the remainder of the melody in this section on a monotone, while the bell motive repeats. Debussy transforms the motive into a lullaby as the night is put to sleep, changing from duple meter to a rocking triplet figure in the piano. The tempo quickens momentarily at "Vite, les petites anges," as tremolos support the single-note vocal line. The chords die away into an unaccompanied, recitative-like vocal line. The postlude ends with the ringing of distant bells.

The Proses Lyriques belong to a world that was coming to an end. Throughout the poems, elements of literary decadence appear. The results of these experiments may be less than satisfying from a literary standpoint than from a musical viewpoint. However, they fulfilled their purpose, that being Debussy's attempt to express his innermost fantasies, not only through music, but through poetry as well. Debussy's bold experiments led to even bolder experimentation by a more mature Debussy, as well as other French composers of the early twentieth century.

HUGO WOLF: MÖRIKE LIEDER

When Hugo Wolf published his volume of songs on poems by Eduard Mörike in 1888, the title page did not read "Fifty-three Songs by Hugo Wolf, words by Mörike," but "Poems by Eduard Mörike, for voice and piano, set to music by Hugo Wolf." This, in itself, sums up Wolf's relationship to his poets. He always stood at the service of the poet, contributing the resources of his art to illuminate the words and recreate the emotions that had inspired them. Wolf himself said, "Poetry is the true source of my music." He always concentrated on one poet at a time, familiarizing himself with all the quirks of rhythm and structure. He would read the poem first and study it as poetry. He often reread the poem before retiring at night and would awake in the morning with the music in his head and quickly write it down, seldom rescoring his work. He has become one of the most successful of all composers to illustrate the range and intensity of the poet's inspiration.

Eduard Mörike (1804-1875), a Swabian poet, was much admired by composers even before Wolf. In 1885, fifty musical settings of "Das verlassene Mägdlein" were in existence, sixteen settings of "Er ist's," twenty-one of "Agnes," thirteen of "Verborgenheit," nine of "Jägerlied," and eight of "Lebe wohl." Schumann set nine poems by Mörike, of which five are solo songs, and Brahms and Franz each have several settings. None of these composers recaptured Mörike's expression as did Wolf. His name has been linked with Mörike, as Schubert's is with Wilhelm Müller, the difference being that Mörike was a great poet in his own right, while Müller's verses are only kept alive through music.

Mörike, a protestant pastor with leanings toward Catholicism, had

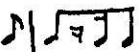
tasted both the happiness and bitterness of love in his lifetime. He responded to the moods of nature and was blessed with an observant eye and a sense of humor. All this is reflected in his poetry, sometimes with overpowering emotional intensity and often with sensual grace. Wolf's music mirrors every characteristic of the poet's art.

Wolf was self-taught. In examining the lieder of Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms, he felt that they did not do the poet justice, resulting in too much emphasis on the music. Wagner was Wolf's idol. Many characteristics of Wolf's writing stem directly from Wagner. The melodic line, more broken and less conventional, is unified by repeated short motives. The vocal line is more declamatory in nature, a result of Wolf's attempt to reproduce Wagner's music dramatic style of declamation into the art song. The syllabic style of matching one syllable with one tone was most natural for Wolf. More subtle stresses in the poetic line are reflected in the length of the notes. There are very few meter changes, the most common instance being found in a final vocal cadence, where one measure of $\frac{2}{4}$ is inserted into $\frac{4}{4}$. Duple meter is predominant, especially $\frac{4}{4}$. He also uses bold harmonies and many accidentals. The accompaniment is frequently independent from the vocal line, consisting of several melodic strands. It underlines the mood and develops the atmosphere suggested by the text. All of this gives increased weight, both tonally and emotionally, to the instrument.

Der Gärtner

On her favourite mount
as white as snow,
the fairest princess
rides through the avenue.
The path where her steed
so delightfully prances,

the sand that I strewed,
they sparkle like gold.
Little pink hat,
bobbing up, bobbing down,
Oh, throw a feather
secretly down!
If you, in return, want
a flower from me,
for one, take a thousand,
for one, take all!

"Der Gärtner" is among the slighter of the Mörike songs, though it is one of the more frequently heard. The song's light gaiety is irresistible, concealing great depth of feeling in its graceful rhythms. The predominant motive, heard in the piano, is that of the prancing horse of the princess, who rides down the adoring gardner's path. This is a rhythmic motive, , which continues throughout the entire song. Above this, the vocal line is quite smooth and flowing, contrasting drastically with the piano. The simplicity of the harmony contributes to the simple atmosphere being created. The key is D major, with very little chromaticism. The piano introduction and interludes extend the dominant, resolving to the tonic at the entrance of the voice. Wolf has treated each musical element with the utmost simplicity, in order to capture the light hearted emotion expressed in Mörike's poem.

Auf ein altes Bild

In a green landscape's summer flowers,
by cool water, reeds and rushes,
see how the innocent little boy
plays freely on the Virgin's lap!
And there, in the wood, blissfully,
already the trunk of the cross is growing!

Contrasting with "Der Gärtner" is "Auf ein altes Bild," a tender meditation over an old picture of the Christ-child playing happily on his mother's knee. The scene is a summer landscape, with everything shimmering in green before the eyes. The chorale-like melody is in F# minor and

quite tonal. The melody stresses the dominant with its continuous oscillations around C#. The first full cadence occurs halfway through the song, and is followed immediately with an abrupt modulation to B minor, where the same pattern continues. At the thought that the stem of the cross is perhaps growing in the woods, a momentary stab of pain is felt by the use of a diminished seventh chord. As abruptly as before, the key returns to F# minor, the final cadence resolving to an F# major triad, giving a glimmer of hope to the present situation. The main harmonic pattern is an alternation between the minor dominant triad and the minor subdominant seventh on every beat, creating a rather subdued, mystical effect.

Nixe Binsefuss

The daughter of Aquarius
dances on the ice in the full moonshine,
she sings and laughs without shyness
well past the fishers house.
"I am the virgin mermaid,
and my fish must guard well,
my fish which are in the chest,
they have cold fasting;
from Bohemian glass my chest is,
I count them there every time.
Say, fisherman? say, old mischeivous man,
the Winter is not in your mind?
Come with your nets!
Which I will surely tear!
Your maiden indeed is devout and good,
Her sweetheart a brave hunter.
Around her I hang the wedding boquet,
a little wreath from the house,
and a pike, of hard silver,
he descended from King Arthur,
a fairy goldsmith's masterpiece,
who has it, it brings to him good luck,
he scales it every year
which makes five hundred pennies in cash.
Farewell, my child! Farewell for today!
The morning cock cries in the village."

Nixe Binsefuss is one of a group of songs regarded as a tribute

to Carl Loewe, whose ballads and songs aroused Wolf's most passionate enthusiasm. This song is an excellent example of Wolf's declamatory style. The entire text is set syllabically, with the length of the notes indicating where the more important stresses lie in the poetic line. The tessitura lies predominantly high for both voice and piano. Both hands of the piano line are in treble cleff throughout the song, producing a light, tinkling effect symbolic of the mermaid's dancing and singing. Nixe Binsefuss is highly chromatic, especially in the piano line, which consists of ascending chromatic runs alternating between hands. The key center is A minor, but due to the chromaticism, a solid tonal center is not heard. The song begins in $\frac{3}{8}$, with a light-hearted, lilting melody. The meter changes to $\frac{2}{4}$ when the mermaid begins to speak. The melodic line of this section is very fragmented, consisting of various short repeated motives. Each motive has a limited range, usually centering around one pitch and oscillating to the surrounding pitches. Following a fortissimo melodic fragment in the piano and a grand ritard, the meter returns to $\frac{3}{8}$ for the reaminder of the song. The closing section is very clearly modeled after Loewe. When the cock crows, the voice dies away in a long diminuendo from pianissimo, the same device used by Loewe in "The Erlking" when the voice of the Erlking dies away in the same fashion. Even though this song is not often hears, it is one of the most characteristic representatives of Wolf's style.

The Mörike lieder were a landmark in establishing the song as mucical recitation. The richest living sources of German song are found in the period between Goethe and Mörike. Ernest Newman's great enthusiasm for Wolf, has caused him to challenge all musicians with the Mörike

lieder, "which in their tonality are beyond any other fifty-three of one man's songs in the quality, and variety of the life they touch."¹

¹James Hurst Hall, The Art Song (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1953), p. 113.

To write exclusively for the Paris Opéra in the nineteenth century was only a dream for most opera composers of the time. However, Gaetano Donizetti was an exception. For almost ten years his correspondence makes reference to proposals, contracts, librettos, rehearsals, and postponements all with the Paris Opéra. In view of this fact, it is surprising that all of the operas written for the Opéra, La Favorite is the only one that enjoys limited success today. While writing for the Opéra, he also busied himself with other smaller projects for operas in other cities and smaller theaters in Paris. Two of these operas, Donizetti considered to be quite insignificant. They were La fille du régiment, composed for the Opéra-Comique in 1839, and Don Pasquale, first performed at the Theatre-Italien in 1843. These two operas, especially Don Pasquale, are thought today to be two of his finest, most characteristic works.

Perhaps the reason for Donizetti's feelings about La fille du régiment and Don Pasquale stems from the fact that in the 1840's opera buffa was a dying art. In fact, Don Pasquale marked the end of opera buffa. All opera composers had begun to avoid it. Verdi avoided comic opera after the failure of Un giorno di regno in 1840. Bellini wrote no comic operas. Donizetti had not written one since L'elisir d'amore, ten years earlier. Comic opera in this era was quite different from the wit and pace of the traditional comic style. Public taste had changed with the growth of opera semiseria.¹ However, parts of Don Pasquale

¹ La Sonnambula by Bellini was one of the more famous opera semiseria at the time.

are quite closely linked to the style of the traditional opera buffa.

Don Pasquale was composed very quickly. Donizetti made reference to ten days in one letter and eleven days in another. This, of course, was only the vocal lines, so the singers could begin learning their parts. It was orchestrated later. Part of the reason for this speed is that some of the melodies are borrowed from earlier works. But the main reason is stated by Donizetti himself when he wrote to his friend Antonio Dolci in Bergamo: "When a subject is pleasing, the heart speaks, the head races forward, and the hand writes..."²

The premiere of Don Pasquale in 1843 marked the climax of Donizetti's life as a composer. Verdi was becoming known in Italy, but Donizetti remained the most famous of living opera composers there. The success of Don Pasquale was a surprise to those who had produced it. During rehearsals, almost everyone thought that it would be a flop. Donizetti was the only one who showed the slightest hope for its success. At the final dress rehearsal Vatel, the assistant company manager, said to Dormoy, the company manager: "That text and that music would be good at best, for tumblers."³ But it was quite the contrary. Following the first performance, Étienne-Jean Déclécluze wrote in the Journal des débats: "From Bellini's I Puritani on, no opera composed expressly for the Theatre-Italien has had a more clamorous success. Four of five numbers repeated, callings-out of the singers, callings-out of the Maestro -- in sum, one of those ovations which are given prodigiously by the dozen in Italy to even the most mediocre little composers, but which in Paris

²Gaetano Donizetti, Don Pasquale, Angel SBLX - 3871, Notes by Philip Gossett.

³Herbert Weinstock, Donizetti (New York: Panthem Books, 1963), p. 194.

are reserved for the truly great."⁴

Don Pasquale is an opera buffa in three acts. The libretto was a joint effort by Donizetti and Giovanni Ruffini. It is the first important Italian opera buffa without recitative accompanied by harpsichord; the orchestra plays throughout. Therefore, the recitative often crosses easily from rapid declamation to more expressive passages.


The story of Don Pasquale is a delightful one. Don Pasquale, an old bachelor, is angry because his nephew, Ernesto, will not marry the woman picked out for him because he is in love with the fascinating widow, Norina. Don Pasquale's physician, Dr. Malatesta, suggests the bachelor take revenge by marrying himself, and suggests a beautiful girl who he says is his sister. Pasquale does this, not knowing that the sister is actually Norina, and the whole thing is a plot to trick Pasquale into consenting to Ernesto's marriage to Norina. The wedding is carried out and Norina, in disguise, proceeds to make life miserable for Pasquale. She purposefully lets him find out about a rendezvous with Ernesto late one evening. Pasquale and Malatesta go to the spot where the two are to meet. Pasquale is enraged. Malatesta reveals the plot and the mock marriage. Pasquale is so glad to be let out of his bargain that he blesses the two lovers and all ends happily.

"Quel guardo il cavaliere" takes place in the second scene of Act I. Norina is sitting in her house reading a book about courtly love. She laughs, tosses the book aside, and proceeds with the aria, "So anch'io la virtu magica." The translation is as follows:

⁴Weinstock, Donizetti, p. 194.

That look transfixed the knight,
 he bent the knee and said: I am your knight.
 And there was such a taste of paradise in that look
 that the knight, Richard, completely by love conquered
 swore that he would never think of another.
 I, too, know the magic power of a look at the right time and place,
 I, too, know how hearts burn with a slow fire;
 of a brief little smile I also know the effect,
 of a deceitful tear, of a sudden faintness.
 I know the thousand ways of loving deceptions,
 the caresses and the skills easy to entice a heart.
 I also know the magic power to inspire love,
 I know the effect, ah, yes, to inspire love.
 I have a whimsical mind; I am alert, vivacious;
 it pleases me to scintillate, it pleases me to banter,
 If I become angry, I rarely remain that way,
 but I turn wrath quickly into laughter.
 I have a whimsical mind, but a very fine heart.

The aria is in two very contrasting sections, which was the standard form of the time. The first section, where Norina is reading the book, is very lyrical and flowing. It is in an easy $\frac{6}{8}$, marked Andante. The rhythm is very straightforward and easy. The melody is almost totally conjunct, characterized by a stepwise ascending line which falls immediately back down to the beginning note either by skip or by the addition of an ornamenting run. The texture is thin, with the piano playing an arpeggiated accompanimental figure. This contributes to a very simple harmonic structure. It is in the key of G major throughout the section. With the laughing at the end of this section, the key quickly modulates to B flat major to begin the second section. This modulation is achieved through the use of a secondary half diminished seventh chord and a secondary dominant, both of the flattened three chord in G major. This modulation of a third was quite common in operatic writing of the time.

The second part is a marked contrast from the first part. It is in $\frac{2}{4}$. The tempo marking is Allegretto. The quick dotted rhythm ()

is the characteristic rhythmic element. The melody becomes very disjunct, characterized by quick, wide leaps down and back up and the grace note appoggiatura. This section is divided into smaller sections. The first ends on a flourish with descending runs, moving to a more lyrical section, characterized by triplets. It is much more conjunct than the first section. A sustained trill in the voice brings back the first section, repeated exactly as it was heard the first time. A variation of the second section follows, extending into a series of runs. This leads directly into a coda, based on the dotted rhythm of the first section, which ends the aria. Thus the form of this section is A B A B¹ coda. The accompaniment throughout the aria is chordal and quite thin. Basically, the tonality of B flat remains constant throughout, with only two or three spots where it strays momentarily, but no other tonality is firmly established.

The aria is an excellent representation of Norina's character. It shows the contrast from her sweet, loving, romantic nature, to her mischievous, witty, and spontaneous nature. The aria gives the listeners their first impression of Norina, and it serves to make the audience fall in love with her immediately.

SAMUEL BARBER: KNOXVILLE: SUMMER OF 1915

American music of the twentieth century is fascinating to musicians in its variety. American composers, who have composed for every type of idiom known to serious music, have often been classified into several different groups by critics and historians. One of the most outstanding representatives of the "neo-Romantic" group was Samuel Barber. Labeling his music "neo-Romantic" pertains mostly to the earlier works, the later works taking on methods inspired by the musical climate of our time.

Born in West Chester, Pennsylvania on March 9, 1910, Barber was the nephew of the famous contralto, Louise Homer. Though he had begun to play the piano at age six and to compose at age seven, he was never pushed into being a prodigy. His parents tried to encourage him to pursue the activities of a normal American boy. His reaction to this is seen in a note left on his mother's dressing table when he was eight. It read: "To begin with, I was not meant to be a athlete [sic] I was meant to be a composer. and will be, I'm sure...Don't ask me to try to forget this... and go and play football. -- Please -- Sometimes I've been worrying about this so much that it makes me mad! (not very)."¹ When he was thirteen, he entered the Curtis Institute of Music at Philadelphia, from which he graduated in 1932. During this time, he studied composition with Rosario Scalero, the Italian violinist and composer, piano with George Boyle, and voice with Emilio de Gogorza, baritone. He was the first student at the Institute to major in three subjects. It was also at the Institute where Barber met his lifelong friend,

¹Nathan Broder, Samuel Barber (New York: G. Schirmer, Inc., 1954), p. 9.

Gian-Carlo Menotti. In both 1935 and 1936, Barber was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for Music. He taught composition at the Curtis Institute from 1939 to 1942. He did not care for teaching however, and never accepted a position anywhere else. Following this, he was further honored in 1945, when he was awarded an Honorary Music Doctorate at the Curtis Institute. Barber then returned to Capricorn, a house about an hour from New York, which he and Menotti had acquired in 1943.² It was here that Knoxville: Summer of 1915 was composed, along with two other vocal works, the Hermit Songs and Prayers of Kierkegaard.

The most significant work composed by Barber in the 1950's was the four-act opera Vanessa, completed in 1957, with the libretto by Menotti. Barber won his third Pulitzer Prize in 1958 for this opera. In 1966, the Metropolitan Opera House commissioned Barber to write an opera for the opening of their new house at Lincoln Center. The result of this was Antony and Cleopatra, with the libretto by Zeffirelli. The opera was basically a failure, due mostly to the production, which was directed and designed by Zeffirelli. In 1974, it was announced that the opera would be re-worked and the libretto reshaped by Menotti.

Knoxville: Summer of 1915 was commissioned by the soprano, Eleanor Steber. While Barber was searching for a subject for this work for voice and orchestra, he happened to read James Agee's long prose poem in The Partisan Reader. At the time, his father's long illness was nearing its end, and Barber was deeply moved by Agee's tender account of the thoughts and feelings of a child lying in the grass of the back yard on a summer evening surrounded by his loved ones.

² Barber did most of his composing at Capricorn until he and Menotti sold the house in 1974.

Eleanor Steber sang the world premiere of Knoxville in 1943 with Serge Koussevitzky conducting the Boston Symphony Orchestra. She had a special fondness for the work because the thoughts expressed in the poem reminded her of her own childhood. She says: "I had taken Knoxville to my heart the first time I read it through, and preparing the first performance was a labor of love. The Agee words are beautiful in themselves, but they produced in me a deep sense of nostalgia for my own years of growing up....And Samuel Barber has treated it in a way which is so marvellously his; I can't imagine any other composer being so right for this work."³ Barber's style of declamation and treatment of the text are what make this work so wonderful. Each word is emphasized in just the right manner to convey the image of childhood. Through Barber's gift of vocal writing, Agee's account of childhood is one that can be felt and understood by all Americans. There is a special quality about such words for Americans, which suggests a whole way of life. The sounds of the words in Knoxville evoke for us a sense of childhood, of being loved and protected and part of a tradition.

Knoxville ranks with the best of Barber's instrumental pieces of the same period. It differs from anything else he had done. To compose a one-movement work to a prose text, in a consistently lyrical vein, presents certain problems for a composer. But Barber was successful in overcoming these problems. Before being commissioned for this work, Barber and Koussevitzky had talked for some time about doing a concerto for voice and orchestra. However, it is quite difficult to find an appropriate text to match the fast-slow-fast form of a concerto. It

³ Samuel Barber, Knoxville: Summer of 1915 (Columbia ML 5843, 1963), Jacket notes by Eleanor Steber.

was in searching for a text for this project that Barber found Agee's poem, and therefore abandoned the original three-movement plan. However, Knoxville approximates a rondo form, which is closely related to the concerto in that the main theme is regularly restated.

Knoxville begins with a brief orchestral introduction in f# minor. The woodwinds play in parallel sixths, creating a tranquil atmosphere. The strings usher in the main theme, a gentle, rocking melody in $\frac{12}{8}$ whose sweetness is mixed with nostalgia. The accompaniment is an arpeggiated outline of the triad, alternating between tonic and dominant on each beat. This pattern continues throughout the main theme, with a brief modulation to G minor, returning immediately to f# minor. This mood is suddenly interrupted by the "iron-moan" of the streetcar. Here the melody becomes quite disjunct, over a highly chromatic line. The color in this orchestral interlude is remarkable. This is an excellent example of Barber's keen ear for orchestral colors, always used to enhance the music's expressiveness. He chooses a very diverse group of instruments to portray the streetcar. The frequent contrast between orchestral colors and tessitura, coupled with the rambunctious melody, brings to mind the image of a streetcar clattering noisily down the tracks. The vocal line is equally as frenzied, with frequent changes of meter and displaced strong beats. An especially effective touch in the orchestration is the sliding pizzicati in the lower strings at the words "the bleak spark crackling and cursing above it, like a small malignant spirit set to dog its tracks." The flutes and piccolos echo this pattern, creating a canon effect. Barber gradually fades out this section starting with the words "still fainter; fainting, lifting, lifts, faints foregone: forgotten." A short transition section gradually returns to the rocking

melody heard at the beginning, again in f# minor, as the child's thoughts return to the tranquil events and sounds at home. A very simple, light melody characterizes the next section as the child contemplates lying in the back yard on quilts staring at the stars and then thinks about the various members of his family. This section begins in F major and modulates to A flat major. Following this the music wells up into a passionate outburst on the words "By some chance, here they are, all on this earth; and who shall ever tell the sorrow of being on this earth..." Intervals of seconds and ninths combine to intensify this climactic passage. Following is a prayer, in which the child asks God to bless all his loved ones. It is interesting to note the special emphasis put on the mother by the use of a higher tessitura and a broadening of the tempo. This symbolizes the importance of the role of the mother to a young child growing up. An orchestral interlude echoes this prayer in the original key of f# minor. The rocking motif returns, still in f# minor, as the child is taken in and put to bed. There is one final climax as the child yearns for an identity. The orchestra brings the work to a close with a quiet postlude of the main theme in A major.

Although Barber's keen ear for orchestration is a contributing factor to Knoxville, it is not mandatory. Through Barber's own piano reduction, very little is lost in the total performance. He still manages to capture the essence of the various tone colors through his creative use of the different registers of the piano. The only thing lacking in places is the thick textural sound in the sections where the full orchestra is playing, which is hard to recreate in a single instrument.

Knoxville is a tonal work. Barber relies on traditional key relationships, such as relative major and minor keys and modulations of a

third. However, there are few traditional harmonic textures. He often uses parallel intervals, which give an open, stark, tranquil effect.

The rhythms are varied and active. The vocal line is fluid and carefully suited to the rhythm of the words. Barber frequently changes meter in order that the natural stress of the text be in conformity with the melody. It is his rhythmic treatment of the text that gives each word such strong significance, contributing to the expressiveness of Agee's poem.

Eleanor Steber had always hoped that Barber would add two more movements to supplement Knoxville: Summer of 1915, possibly taken from Agee's A Death in the Family, into which he had interpolated the Knoxville fragment. But, with Barber's recent death on January 23, 1981, this work is destined to stand alone as an example of this aspect of his art. Barber's gift for capturing the feelings behind the words has made him stand out in the field of American music.

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A RECITAL

by

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Department of Music

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ABSTRACT

This Master's Report (recital) features vocal selections by Joseph Haydn, Johann Sebastian Bach, Claude Debussy, Hugo Wolf, Gaetano Donizetti, and Samuel Barber. Included with the recital program and a tape of the recital is a series of program notes. These notes deal with each selection individually, including pertinent biographical information of the composer, historical background, and style analysis of each work.