

GITANJALI:
A STUDY OF THE SONG CYCLE BY
RABINDRANATH TAGORE AND JOHN ALDEN CARPENTER

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by

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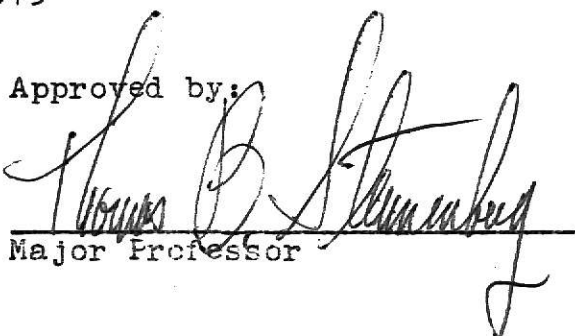

Major Professor

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INTRODUCTION

The history of song is perhaps as old as the history of mankind. For song was the heritage of the people; it had confided the joys and sorrows of the people. In the broadest interpretation of the word, song might include such varied forms and methods of joining words and music as folk song, art song, liturgical chant, madrigal, motet, etc. Therefore, song is a dual art and at its best there is a fusion of text and tone.

During the nineteenth century composers created an abundance of unusually beautiful art songs. This was because the period had such great lyric poets as Goethe, Heine, Müller, Mörike, Mallarmé. Moreover, the piano by this time had attained its mechanical perfection. It is apparent that the outstanding literary production gave great impetus to the composition of songs. The symbol of the art song, for instance, Schubert was not too particular in his choice of poems. But he had the fortune to be born at a time when much poetry of a high order was being written in Germany, and this enabled him to produce more than six hundred songs. Among those there are forty-four songs included in his two cycles, Die Schöne Müllerin and Die Winterreise, based on the poems of Müller. Hereof, naturally one thinks of the Dichterliebe song cycle, one of the best examples, in which the beauties of the poetry of Heine and the music of Schumann are joined.

In 1913 the Gitanjali song cycle was produced out of the union of Rabindranath Tagore's poetry and John Alden Carpenter's music. Tagore and Carpenter were contemporaries as Schubert and Müller or

Heine and Schumann were, but they nevertheless were living in two different parts of the world. It is interesting to note how the Indian poet became known in this western country. The Nobel Prize in Literature made Tagore world-famous even though the award in 1913 to him for his Gitanjali was a complete surprise to the world.

However, Tagore was known in the United States before the award of the Nobel Prize. During his half-year's sojourn in this country he lived in Urbana, Illinois, visited many places in the country, and delivered lectures at Harvard University, the Universities of Chicago, Illinois and elsewhere. It was Carpenter's fortune to live in Chicago where Harriet Monroe published some poems of Gitanjali in the local magazine of verse, Poetry, which was perhaps the first journal in the West to publish Tagore's poems.

Undoubtedly, those poems from Gitanjali that appeared in Poetry led Carpenter to be interested in the whole work. And the beauty of Gitanjali stimulated Carpenter's musical images. The choice of these six poems from the entire work of one hundred and three was due to Carpenter's love of nature and his interest in children. His intention to rearrange the order of the poems in this song cycle is also naticeable.

The study of this Gitanjali song cycle attempts to present how Carpenter gave the form to his music based on the movement of the verse; how he fitted the words of the text into his melodic line; and how he furnished the mood for each song by using the flexible medium, piano, to illustrate and intensify the meaning

of the poetry. Consequently, the general organization and the vocal line of each song were analyzed and included in this report.

CHAPTER I

THE TEXT

Gitanjali is a collection of poems written by Rabindranath Tagore in 1909 and 1910 and published in the latter year. These lyrical poems were originally written in his own language, Bengali, which is only one of over thirty in India. To his own people, Tagore was not only a great poet, he was also a great musician. His songs were sung throughout Bengal. Although he became famous in his own country early in his youth, his world-fame was made after his English translation of Gitanjali (Song-Offerings).

ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF GITANJALI

Sir William Rothenstein, the English painter served as midwife to the birth of Tagore's fame in Europe. Rothenstein had visited India in 1910. During his stay in Calcutta he had already heard of Tagore's reputation as a poet from his Indian friends. On his return to London he read an English translation of one of Tagore's stories from the Modern Review and that impressed him very much. "He wrote to his friends in Calcutta inquiring if any more such translation were available. In response he received a few translations of poems done by Ajit Chakravarty, a colleague of Tagore's on the staff of the Santiniketan school."¹ "The

¹Krishna Kripalani, Rabindranath Tagore, New York, Grove Press. Inc., 1962, p. 217.

poems," Rothenstein stated, "of a highly mystical character, struck me as being still more remarkable than the story, though but rough translations."² Therefore, he wrote to Tagore, expressing a desire to see some of his poems and urging him to come to London.

And so in the beginning of 1912 Tagore made preparation for his third voyage to Europe. He was due to sail from Calcutta on 19 March, but suddenly felt ill on the night before his departure, so the journey was postponed until 27 May. During these days he went to Shelidah to take a rest. It was there he began to translate some of his Gitanjali into English. As Tagore wrote in his letter addressed to his niece, Indira Devi;

...It was then the month of Chaitra (March-April), the air was thick with the fragrance of mongo-blossoms and all hours of the day were delirious with the song of birds... In such a state one cannot remain idle. It is an old habit of mine, as you know, that when the air strikes my bones, they tend to respond in music. Yet I had not the energy to sit down and write anything new. So I took up the poems of Gitanjali and set myself to translate them one by one... I did not undertake this task in a spirit of reckless bravado. I simply felt an urge to recapture through the medium of another language the feeling and sentiments which had created such a feast of joy within me in the days gone by.

The page of a small exercise-book came to be filled gradually, and with it in my pocket I boarded the ship. The idea of keeping it in my pocket was that when my mind became restless on the high seas, I would recline on a deck-chair and set myself to translate one or two poems from time to time. And that is what actually happened....³

When Tagore came to London he gave Rothenstein his manuscript with some diffidence. "That evening," Rothenstein wrote, "I read

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 215.

the poems. Here was poetry of a new order, which seemed to me on a level with that of the great mystics."⁴ Rothenstein then gave the manuscript to W. B. Yeats. Yeats's appreciation of these poems encouraged Rothenstein to have a gathering with a few friends in his Hampstead house on the evening of 30 June. Yeats read the poems to this choice gathering, which included Ezra Pound, May Sinclair, Ernest Rhys, Charles Freer Andrews, and others.⁵ After they had heard the poems their enthusiasm equalled Yeats's and Rothenstein's. As May Sinclair stated in a letter to Tagore;

May I say now that as long as I live, even if I were never to hear them again, I shall never forget the impression that they made. It is only that they have an absolute beauty, a perfection as poetry, but they have made present for me forever the divine thing that I can only find by flashes and with an agonizing uncertainty...You have put into English which is absolutely transparent in its perfection things it is despaired of ever seeing written in English at all or in any Western Language.⁶

Rothenstein proposed to the India Society that the poems be printed. On November 1, 1912, the Gitanjali was first published in English with an introduction by Yeats in a limited edition of 750 copies. The book was on the whole well received in the British press. Later on, Rothenstein persuaded George Macmillan to publish a popular edition. Since this was before the award of the Nobel Prize, some persuasion was necessary to make the publishers take the risk of publishing the unknown Indian work. After some hesitation, Gitanjali was first published by Macmillan in March 1913.

⁴Ibid., p. 218.

⁵Ibid., pp. 218-219.

⁶Ibid., p. 219.

The general reception of Gitanjali in the British press was overwhelmingly favorable. In the same year alone it was reprinted thirteen times.⁷ Tagore's name was sufficiently bandied about in the English papers after the publication of his book for his reputation to have crossed the Atlantic. Finally, the Nobel Prize in Literature went to the first non-white recipient for his Gitanjali in November 1913.

TAGORE IN THE UNITED STATES

Tagore, however, was not in England when Gitanjali was published. "In October 1912 he sailed for the United States accompanied by his son and daughter-in-law. The son, who had earlier graduated from the University of Illinois, persuaded the father to spend some quiet months at Urbana, hoping to take this opportunity of completing his own thesis for the doctorate. A house was rented not far from the College where the family settled down for the winter."⁸ Although the ordinary American citizen was hardly aware of Tagore's obscure existence in Urbana, invitations from academic and other circles began to pour in. During his half-year's sojourn in this country, he delivered lectures at Harvard, the Universities of Chicago, Wisconsin, and elsewhere. He also went to Rochester to attend the Congress of Religious Liberals

⁷Rabindranath Tagore, Gitanjali (Song Offerings), London, Macmillan & Co., 1966, p. IV.

⁸Kripalani, op. cit., p. 221.

where he spoke on "Race Conflict". From Rochester Tagore went to Boston and before his return to London in April 1913 he visited New York.

In January 1913, Tagore stayed in Chicago as a guest of Mrs. William Vaughan Moody.⁹ Previously in December, six poems from the Gitanjali were published with a prose article "Tagore's Poems" by Ezra Pound in the Chicago magazine of verse, Poetry. The magazine, Poetry, was perhaps the first journal in the West to publish Tagore's poems.¹⁰ In the June issue fourteen more of Tagore's poems appeared. Moreover, there was a short notice that Yeats had written a beautiful introduction for the Gitanjali published by Macmillan, and articles on the Indian poet appeared in The North American (May Sinclair), The Fortnightly (Ezra Pound), The Nation (Evelyn Underhill), The Hibbert Journal (T. W. Rolleston), Current Opinion and elsewhere.¹¹ Undoubtedly, Tagore was well known in the United States even before the award of the Nobel Prize.

CARPENTER'S CHOICE OF TEXT

Most of John Alden Carpenter's music is "programmatic"-inspired by some outside source. As he put it "With only a few exceptions everything that I have written has started from a non-

⁹Ibid., p. 226.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 225.

¹¹Harriet Monroe, ed., Poetry, vol. II, June, 1913, p. 116.

musical basis."¹² When he composed, there had to be first a special mood which created his desire for musical expression. This may have been produced by a poem. And that was especially true in the composing of his earlier works, for up to 1913 Carpenter's compositions were almost exclusively songs.

As a song-composer living in Chicago, Carpenter may have happened to be a reader of Poetry. In the first issue of the magazine (October, 1912), there was a poem, "To One Unknown", by the Chicago born Helen Dudley. The poem did create Carpenter's desire for musical expression. As a result, the song, "To One Unknown", was composed in the same year and published in 1913. Undoubtedly, Carpenter had heard of Tagore and read his poems in Poetry as early in December 1912. Certainly, the six poems from Gitanjali which appeared in Poetry led Carpenter to be deeply interested in the whole work.

In the beautiful introduction for the English book of Gitanjali Yeats wrote;

...I have carried the manuscript of these translations about with me for days, reading it in railway trains, or on the top of omnibuses and in restaurants, and I have often had to close it lest some stranger would see how much it moved me. These lyrics - which are in the original, my Indians tell me, full of subtlety of rhythm, of untranslatable delicacies of colour, of metrical invention - display in their thought a world I have dreamed of all my life long. The work of a supreme culture, they yet appear as much the growth of the common soil as the grass and rushes...¹³

These poetic and imaginative poems were, undoubtedly, the

¹² Madeleine Goss, Modern Music-Makers, New York, E. P. Dutton & Company, Inc., 1952, p. 44.

¹³ Tagore, op. cit., pp. xiii-xiv.

direct stimulus to Carpenter's musical expression. From the English book of Gitanjali Carpenter chose seven poems for his texts. However, the song, "The day is no more", is not included in his Gitanjali song cycle. It was composed and published in 1915.

The Gitanjali song cycle was composed in 1913 and published in 1914. Carpenter kept the title "Gitanjali" as the name of his song cycle even though only six were used among the total of a hundred and three poems. This cycle is a setting of six songs which interprets the following six poems.

Light, my light, the world-filling light
 On the seashore of endless worlds children meet
 The sleep that flits on baby's eyes
 When I bring to you colour'd toys, my child
 I am like a remnant of a cloud of autumn
 On the day when death will knock at thy door

These selected poems can be simply divided into two kinds of subject matter. One is about children and the other about the genius of nature. Because he chose these texts, we find that Carpenter was interested in children, and in the expressing of nature.

Interest in Children

The most popular songs of the cycle, "When I bring to you colour'd toys" and "The sleep that flits on baby's eyes", are obviously the childlike type of songs. The fifth song of the

cycle, "On the seashore of endless worlds", is also concerned with the fragility and transparency of the child spirit. Carpenter's interest in children can be found in many of his works.

In 1914 Carpenter wrote his first important orchestral work, the suite Adventures in a Perambulator, which made him as famous in the symphonic world as he already was on the concert stage.¹⁴ This charming suite tells of a baby's outing in the park, and perfectly interprets the child's impressions of life. In the suite Carpenter described the world as seen through a child's eyes.

What made Carpenter choose the subject? Once he himself said, "All artists are interested at one time or another in children."¹⁵ Carpenter, indeed, was interested in children all the time. One of his earliest works was a group of songs titled Improving Songs for Anxious Children which was composed in 1901-1902. He and his wife wrote the words together. The Improving Songs for Anxious Children is similar in type to the Perambulator suite. It shows real live children in every mood. "Sometimes they are good little boys and girls, other times not so good; but always little boys and girls, as liable to human failings as their parents."¹⁶

His later songs such as "If" (Mabel Livingstone) and "Worlds" (Aileen Fisher), composed in 1934-1935, show Carpenter's continu-

¹⁴Goss, op. cit., p. 36.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶John Tasker Howard, Our American Music, New York, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1931, p. 482.

ing devotion to the childlike type of songs, which he did so well.¹⁷

Love of Nature

Carpenter's sympathetic reaction to the moods of nature is remarked on by Upton in his book, Art-Song in America. He states:

...I find in Carpenter, to a greater extent than in the case of any other American song-writer, the meditative spirit, the love of expressing the quieter aspects and in its influence upon human experience. We need but recall Where the Misty Shadows Glide, Chanson d'Automne, Le Ciel, Il pleure dans mon coeur, The Green River, Looking-Glass River, The Cock shall Crow, Les Silhouettes, Fog Wraiths, On the Seashore of Endless Worlds, Light, my Light, The Day is No More, Water Colors and Slumber-Song. Surely no other among our composers has been so drawn in this direction. This sympathetic reaction to the moods of nature has been, perhaps, my chief point in feeling a certain non-Americanism in Carpenter's work...We may acquire this sincere love of nature and it is to be hoped that most of us do, but it is a matter not lightly to be taken for granted. That Carpenter has felt this so keenly...To my mind, songs of this type are the most beautiful and companionable of all types, but not to every composer is it given to write worthily...¹⁸

Indeed, Carpenter had an inborn love of the out-of-doors in its more subjective moods. In this Gitanjali song cycle alone he selected four poems which deal with the varied moods of natural phenomena such as the solemnity of death, the brilliance of light, etc.

Undoubtedly, Carpenter's love of nature and his interest in

¹⁷William Treat Upton, A Supplement to Art-Song in America 1930-1938, Philadelphia, Oliver Ditson Company, 1938, p. 7.

¹⁸William Treat Upton, Art-Song in America, Boston, Oliver Ditson Company, 1930, pp. 212-213.

children made him choose these six poems. However, he rearranged the order of the poems, making an alternation between two kinds of subjects; the first, the third, and the fifth song of the cycle deal with the child spirit, and the others describe the varied moods of nature.

The following are the setting of six songs which are in the order of the Gitanjali song cycle; the Arabic numerals numbered the poems in Tagore's Gitanjali:

- 62 When I bring to you colour'd toys
- 90 On the day when death will knock at thy door
- 61 The sleep that flits on baby's eyes
- 80 I am like a remnant of a cloud of autumn
- 60 On the seashore of endless worlds
- 57 Light, my light

CHAPTER II

THE FORMAL ORGANIZATION OF THE SONGS

The songs in the Gitanjali song cycle are through-composed, which is adjusted to poems written in free verse. The form and length of each song is determined by the text. In composing the music Carpenter's sectional structure for each piece is very often furnished by the stanzas of the text. The formal organization is mainly supplied by the accompaniment which controls unity in each piece.

The general analysis of each song in the cycle was made in accordance with the correlation of the formal organization with the text.

WHEN I BRING TO YOU COLOUR'D TOYS

The sixty-second poem in Tagore's Gitanjali, "When I bring to you coloured toys, my child", consists of the following four verses:

When I bring to you coloured toys, my child, I understand why there is such a play of colours on clouds, on water, and why flowers are painted in tints - when I give coloured toys to you, my child.

When I sing to make you dance, I truly know why there is music in leaves, and why waves send their chorus of voices to the heart of the listening earth - when I sing to make you dance.

When I bring sweet things to your greedy hands I know why there is honey in the cup of the flower and why fruits

are secretly filled with sweet juice - when I bring sweet things to your greedy hands.

When I kiss your face to make you smile, my darling, I surely understand what the pleasure is that streams from the sky in morning light, and what delight that is which the summer breeze brings to my body - when I kiss you to make you smile.¹

Carpenter omitted the last verse of this poem. Therefore, the text of the song, "When I bring to you colour'd toys", falls into three parts.² The repeated leading idea, When I bring...., When I sing...., When I bring.... suggests a ternary form of statement, contrast, and restatement.

The song is 79 measures long. In addition to the 8-measure introduction and a brief postlude, the song falls into three parts as the text itself does. Although the ternary structure is merely suggested in the voice part by a return in Part III to the opening motive of Part I, yet such structure is obviously shown in the piano accompaniment by the return of mood. The general organization of the song is shown in Figure 1. How the introductory material is used between the two adjacent parts in a way to give more unity to the form is also illustrated in this figure.

ON THE DAY WHEN DEATH WILL KNOCK AT THY DOOR

The lyric, "On the day when death will knock at thy door",

¹Rabindranath Tagore, Gitanjali, Introduction by W. B. Yeats, London, Macmillan and Co., 1966, pp. 57-58.

²John Alden Carpenter and Rabindranath Tagore, Gitanjali (Song Offerings), New York, G. Schirmer, Inc., 1942, pp. 3-7.

Form Outline

"When I bring to you colour'd toys"

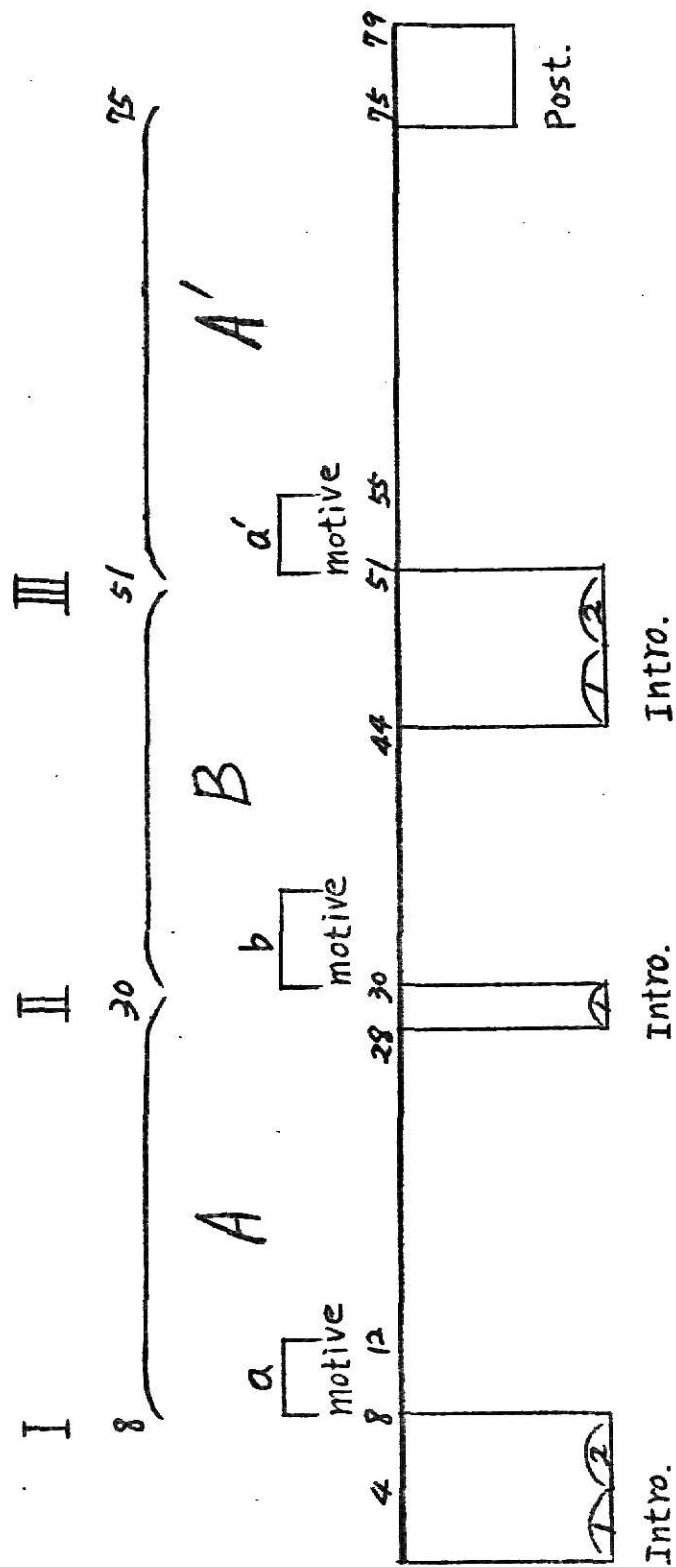


Figure 1

is the ninetyeth poem in Tagore's Gitanjali. It is in a simple question and answer form. This brief poem is as follows.

On the day when death will knock at thy door what wilt thou offer to him?

Oh, I will set before my guest the full vessel of my life - I will never let him go with empty hands.

All the sweet vintage of all my autumn days and summer nights, all the earnings and gleanings of my busy life will I place before him at the close of my days when death will knock at my door.³

In the text of the song, "On the day when death will knock at thy door", Carpenter repeated the question, "On the day when death will knock at thy door what wilt thou offer to him?" at the end of the poem.⁴ Owing to the reappearance of the question, the text becomes a ternary structure. The song is, therefore, contrived in a ternary form also. The general organization of the song is shown in Figure 2.

Part I, mm. 1-20, interprets the first two verses of the poem. The last verse of the poem is carried out in Part II, mm. 21-33, along with the changes of key signature and rhythmic pace. Part III is the recurrence of the first part of Part I, section Q, which ends the 43 measures composition.

³Tagore, op. cit., p. 83.

⁴Carpenter and Tagore, op. cit., pp. 9-11.

Form Outline

"On the day when death will knock at thy door"

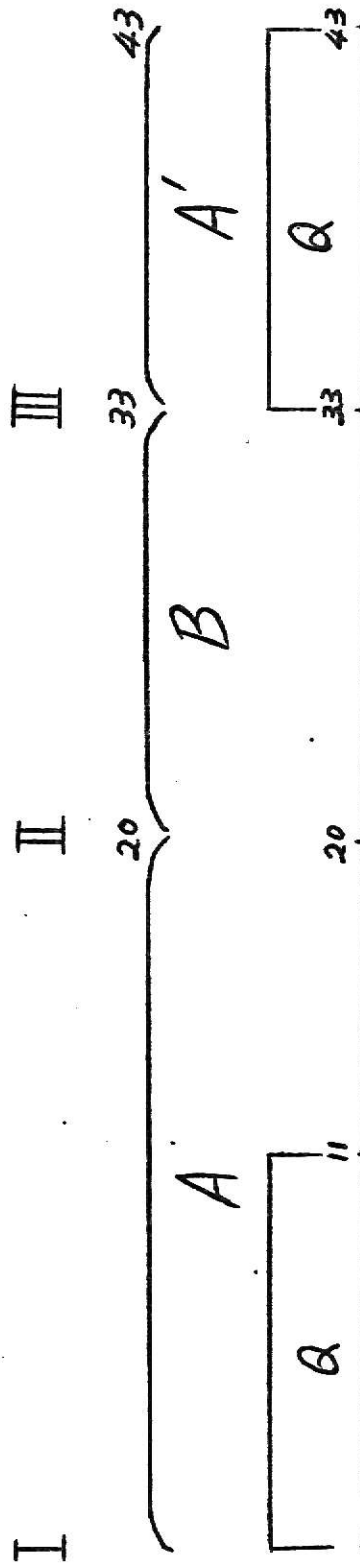


Figure 2

THE SLEEP THAT FLITS ON BABY'S EYES

Carpenter made "The sleep that flits on baby's eyes" into a short, tender song. However, the sixty-first poem of Tagore's Gitanjali is not short, but consists of three verses;

The sleep that flits on baby's eyes - does anybody know from where it comes? Yes, there is a rumour that it has its dwelling where, in the fairy village among shadows of the forest dimly lit with glow-worms, there hang two timid buds of enchantment. From there it comes to kiss baby's eyes.

The smile that flickers on baby's lips when he sleeps - does anybody know where it was born? Yes, there is a rumour that a young pale beam of a crescent moon touched the edge of a vanishing autumn cloud, and there the smile was first born in the dream of a dew-washed morning - the smile that flickers on baby's lips when he sleeps.

The sweet, soft freshness that blooms on baby's limbs - does anybody know it was hidden so long? Yes, when the mother was a young girl it lay pervading her heart in tender and silent mystery of love - the sweet, soft freshness that has bloomed on baby's limbs.⁵

Among these three verses, only the first one is used as the text of the song.⁶ The text contains two simple thoughts: the question, where does sleep come from, and the answer. Because of the text, Carpenter composed this song in two parts. The general organization of the song is shown in Figure 3.

After a 4-measure introduction, there is Part I, mm. 5-11, which interprets the first thought of sleep and from where it comes. Carpenter furnished this part with Berceuse-like rhythm for associating with baby. Example 1 illustrates the rhythmic

⁵Tagore, op. cit., pp. 56-57.

⁶Carpenter and Tagore, op. cit., pp. 13-15.

Form Outline

"The sleep that flits on baby's eyes"

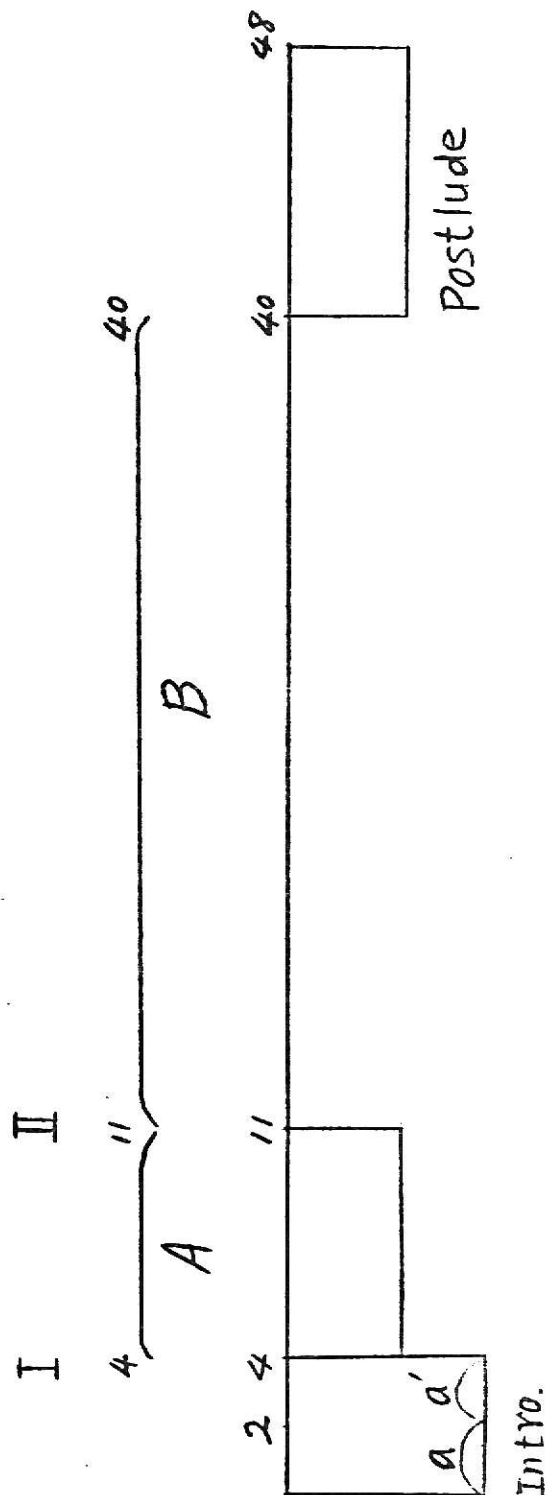


Figure 3

scheme of Part I. In Part II, mm. 12-40, both tempo and meter are changed, and, the lullaby is dropped in accordance with the changing thought in the text. The 8-measure piano postlude completes the song. It is noticeable that for giving unity in the composition, the Berceuse-like rhythm is returned in the postlude. Example 2 shows how Carpenter fitted the same rhythmic plan of Part I into the postlude under a different time signatures

Ex. 1



Ex. 2



I AM LIKE A REMNANT OF A CLOUD OF AUTUMN

The eightieth poem of Tagore's Gitanjali, "I am like a remnant of a cloud of autumn", contains three verses which are as follows.

I am like a remnant of a cloud of autumn uselessly roaming in the sky, O my sun ever-glorious! Thy touch has not yet melted my vapour, making me one with thy light, and thus I count months and years separated from thee.

If this be thy wish and if this be thy play, then take this fleeting emptiness of mine, paint it with colours, gild it with gold, float it on the wanton wind and spread it in varied wonders.

And again when it shall be thy wish to end this play at night, I shall melt and vanish away in the dark, or it may be in a smile of white morning, in a coolness of purity transparent.⁷

Carpenter set the complete poem into the fourth song of the cycle. Although the constant half-note rhythm in the bass line is used through most of the composition, still the song can be divided into three parts as can the poem itself. The general organization of the song is shown in Figure 4.

Following the 4-measure introduction, Part I, mm. 5-30, carries out the first verse of the poem. In addition to the rhythmic constancy in the bass line, the triplet motive of introductory material is also used in this part. The central part of the poem is interpreted in Part II, mm. 31-61, which includes a 15-measure interlude. With the gradual increasing of rhythmic frequency in the piano part and changes of both meter and tempo,

⁷Tagore, op. cit., pp. 74-75.

Form Outline

"I am like a remnant of a cloud of autumn"

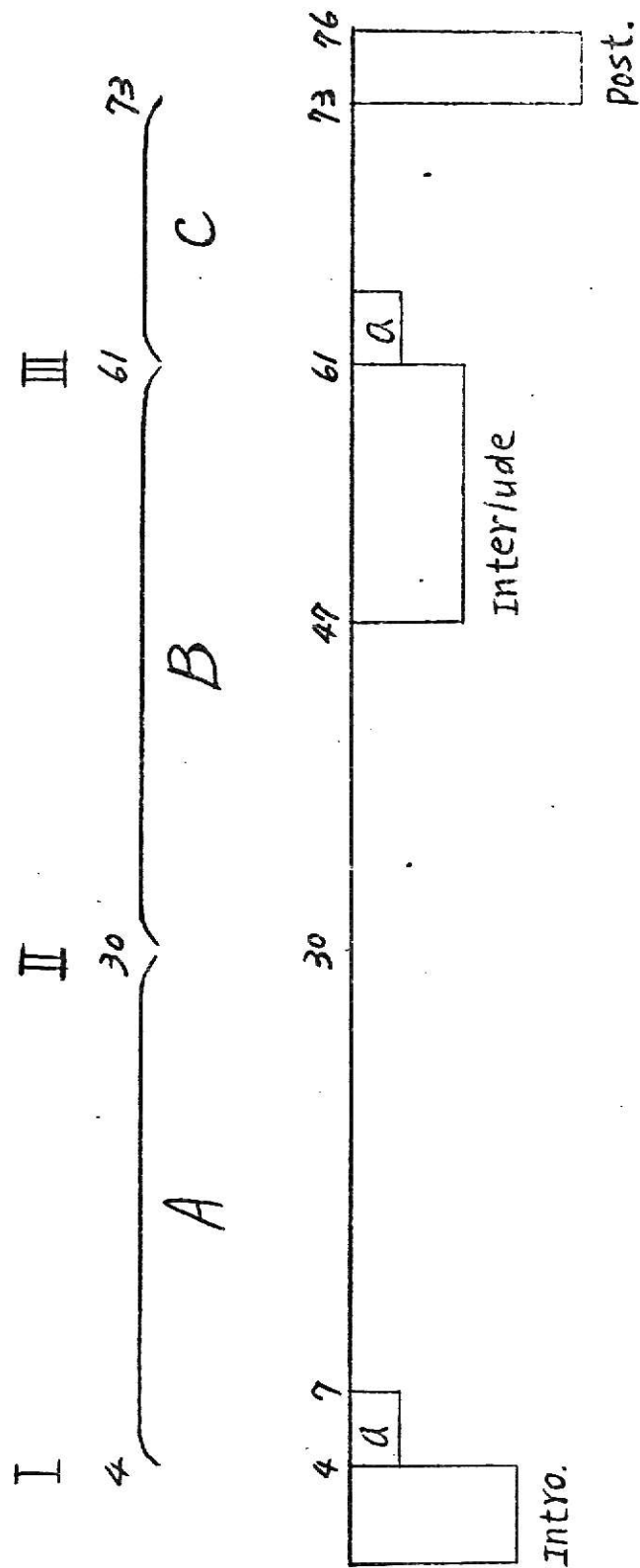


Figure 4

the climax (mm. 37-47) developed to define the portion of the text, "paint it with colours, gild it with gold, float it on the wanton wind and spread it in varied wonders." After the interlude, Part III starts with the first tempo. Besides, the first 3-measure piano accompaniment of Part I recurs. Nevertheless, there is no return in the vocal line, nor in mood. Instead, Part III, mm. 62-73, presents the last verse of the poem as a semi-declamation enhanced by the thickened chords.

ON THE SEASHORE OF ENDLESS WORLDS

In the Introduction to Tagore's Gitanjali Yeats quoted the second and third verse of the poem, "On the seashore of endless worlds children meet", and suggested that when Tagore is speaking of children he is also speaking of the saints.⁸ Like Yeats, Carpenter loved this poem greatly. Moreover, he successfully transmuted the fragile and transparent beauty of the child-spirit into tones. The poem consists of five verses;

On the seashore of endless worlds children meet. The infinite sky is motionless overhead and the restless water is boisterous. On the seashore of endless worlds the children meet with shouts and dances.

They build their houses with sand and they play with empty shells. With withered leaves they weave their boats and smilingly float them on the vast deep. Children have their play on the seashore of worlds.

They know not how to swim, they know not how to cast nets. Pearl fishers dive for pearls, merchants sail in their ships, while children gather pebbles and scatter them

⁸ Ibid., p. xxii.

again. They seek not for hidden treasures, they know not how to cast nets.

The sea surges up with laughter and pale gleams the smile of the sea beach. Death-dealing waves sing meaningless ballads to the children, even like a mother while rocking her baby's cradle. The sea plays with children, and pale gleams the smile of the sea beach.

On the seashore of endless worlds children meet. Tempest roams in the pathless sky, ships get wrecked in the trackless water, death is abroad and children play. On the seashore of endless worlds is the great meeting of children.⁹

All of the poem is used in the song, "On the seashore of endless worlds", the fifth in the cycle. In treating this long poem Carpenter wrote the song in a 5-part of ABCDA' form in accordance with the structure of this five-verse poem. The return in Part V to phrase a of Part I in the vocal line is as obvious as is the return in the words. The sectional structure of the music is supplied by the changes of meter, tempo and key signature.

Except for the 4-measure introduction, the song falls into five parts; each part interprets one verse of the poem. The general organization of the song is shown in Figure 5 which illustrates how the material from the introduction is used later in the work.

LIGHT, MY LIGHT

"Light, my light, the world-filling light" is the poem numbered "57" in Tagore's Gitanjali. The following is the entire poem of five verses used for the text of the last song in the

⁹Ibid., pp. 54-55.

Form Outline

"On the seashore of endless worlds"

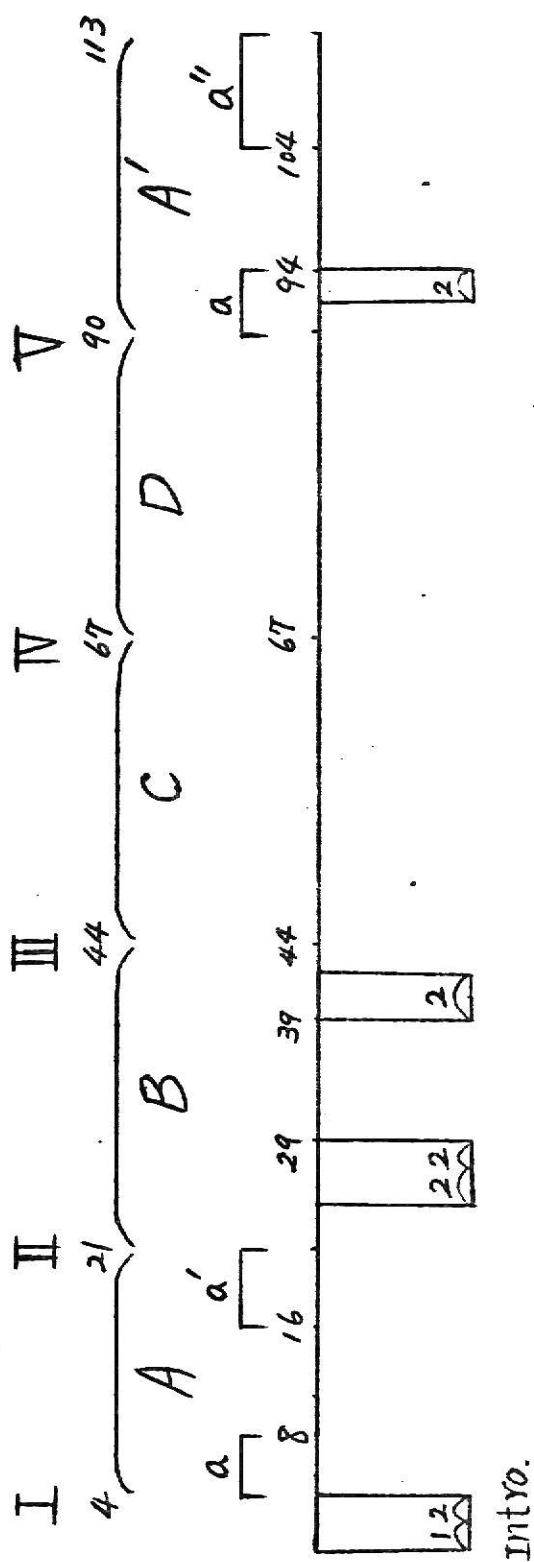


Figure 5

cycle.

Light, my light, the world-filling light, the eye-kissing light, heart-sweetening light!

Ah! the light dances, my darling, at the centre of my life; the light strikes, my darling, the chords of my love; the sky opens, the wind runs wild, laughter passes over the earth.

The butterflies spread their sails on the sea of light. Lilies and jasmines surge up on the crest of the waves of light.

The light is shattered into gold in every cloud, my darling, and it scatters gems in profusion.

Mirth spreads from leaf to leaf, my darling, and gladness without measure. The heaven's river has drowned its banks and flood of joy is abroad.¹⁰

Although these five verses are set into the song, "Light, my light", Carpenter did not write the song in five parts as is the poem. Instead, a three-section structure is designed for the last song of the cycle. However, excepting the change of tempo, the sectional structure can not be found in the vocal line. The accompaniment is the one which takes care of such a structure. The general organization of the song is shown in Figure 6.

The song is 157 measures long. Because of the recurrence of the rhythmic pattern in the piano part, the song can be simply divided into three parts. Part I, mm. 1-83, interprets the first two verses of the poem. The next two verses are presented in Part II, mm. 84-119. Part III, mm. 120-157, carries out the last verse of the poem.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 52-53.

Form Outline

"Light, my light"

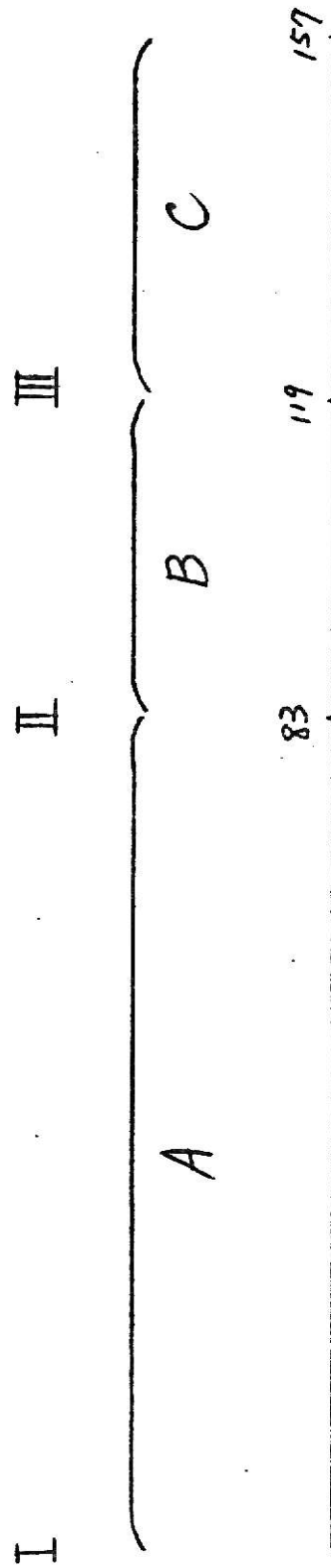


Figure 6

CHAPTER III

THE MELODIC LINE

In Carpenter's setting of the songs, the melodic line is determined by the words. The melody, rather than being stereotyped, falls in uneven phrase lengths; there is little rhythmic consistency from figure to figure; instead, such regularity is taken care of in the piano part. The melody, then, is one suggested by grammatical construction and by speech. The correlation of the melodic line and the text is excellent. This can be demonstrated by comparing the important notes of the music with the important words of the poem; the long notes or the accents in the vocal line often coincide with the important verbs, nouns and adjectives. No wonder Upton suspected that no one of all the myriad interpreters of Tagore has more truly caught his spirit.¹

In only one instance did Carpenter take a small liberty with the words as Tagore had translated them. In the song, "The sleep that flits on baby's eyes", Carpenter added the word the in the line "among the shadows of the forest". This he did to retain a desirable similarity of rhythmic movement between two phrases.

¹William Treat Upton, Art-Song in America, New York, Cliver Ditson Company, 1930, p. 208.

Following is the analysis of the coincidence of important words with important tones in each song. This is done by the use of three staves; the upper is a Xerox copy of the vocal line and the text; the middle shows the correlative placement of important words with pitches; the lower outlines the overall contour of the vocal line.

Xerox copy of
melodic line and
text

Correlative placement
of important words
and pitches

Overall contour

The image shows a handwritten musical analysis of the phrase "On the day when death will knock". It consists of three staves, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb).

- Top Staff:** A handwritten melodic line. The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), Bb4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), Bb4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (half). The lyrics "On the day when death will knock" are written below the notes.
- Middle Staff:** Shows the correlative placement of important words and pitches. It contains three whole notes: G4, Bb4, and A4. Above the first note is "n.", above the second is "n.", and above the third is "v.". Below the notes are the words "day", "death", and "knock" respectively.
- Bottom Staff:** Outlines the overall contour of the vocal line. It contains two whole notes: G4 and A4.

"When I bring to you colour'd toys"

mf *a tempo*

When I bring to you colour'd

v.

bring

toys, my child, _____ I un-der-stand why there is such a play of

n. *n.* *v.* *n.*

toys child. under-stand play

p

col-our on clouds, _____ on wa - ter, _____ and why

n. *n.* *n.*

colours clouds wa - ter

poco rall. *a tempo, mf*

flow'rs are paint-ed in tints: - when I give colour'd toys to

flow'rs are paint-ed tints give toys

rall. *a tempo*

you, my child.

you my child

mf *a tempo*

When I sing to make you dance, I tru-ly know why there is

sing dance know

f *a tempo*

mu - sic in leaves, _____ and why waves send their cho - rus of

n. *n.* *n.* *v.* *n.*

mu - sic leaves waves send cho - rus

ff

voi - ces to the heart of the lis - ten - ing earth: _____

n. *n.* *n.*

voi - ces heart earth

rall.
p

When I sing to make you dance. _____

v. *v.*

sing dance

p a tempo ma poco più lento

When I bring sweet things to your greedy hands, — I

v. *n.* *a.* *n.*

bring things greedy hands

poco rall. *a tempo* *poco rall.*

know why there is hon-ey in the cup of the flower and why fruits are secretly

v. *n.* *n. prep.* *n.*

know hon-ey cup of flower fruits

a tempo *p*

filled — with sweet juice: —

v. *n.*

filled juice

sempre p *mf rall.*

When I bring _____ sweet things _____ to your greedy

v. *n.* *a.*

bring things greedy

a tempo

hands. _____

n.

hands

"On the day when death will knock at thy door"

Grave maestoso (♩ = 40)

f

On the day when death will

n. n.

day death

ff

knock at thy door, what wilt thou of-fer to him?

v. n. p. aux. v. pro.

knock door wilt offer him

Poco più mosso (♩ = 50)

mf nobilmente

Oh, I will set be-fore my guest the

int. v. n.

Oh set guest

f full ves-sel of my life; *ff* I will nev - er let him

a. n. n. adv.

full vessel life nev - er

go with empty hands.

v. n.

go hands

Più mosso (♩ = 60) *mf* 3

All the sweet vin - tage of all my au - tumn days

a. n. a. n.

All vin-tage all days

p and summer nights, _____ *f rubato* all the earnings and

a. n. *a. n.*

summer nights all earnings

rall.

gleanings of my busy life, will I place before him at the close of my

n. n. v. prep. n.

gleanings life will place at close

p a tempo f

days, — when death will knock at my door, _____

n. n. v. n.

days death knock door

Tempo I?

pp

On the day when death will knock at thy door, _____

n. n. v. n.

day death will knock door

mf what wilt _____ thou of - fer to *p* him? _____

v. aux. v. pro.

wilt offer him

"The Sleep that flits on Baby's Eyes"

Poco più animato $\text{♩} = 80$ *p* *accel. poco*

The sleep that flits on ba-by's eyes, does an-y-bod-y

n. v. n.a. n. v. aux.

sleep flits ba-by's eyes does

know from where it comes?

v. pro. v.

know it comes

Ancora più mosso $\text{♩} = 112$ *p*

Yes, there is a ru-mour that it has its dwell-ing where, in the

adv. v. n. pro. v. n. prep.

yes is rumour it has dwelling in

fair - y vil - lage a - mong the shad - ows of the for - est

a. n. prep. n. prep. n.

fair - y vil - lage a - mong shadows of for - est

rall. *p*

dim - ly lit with glow - worms, —

adv. *v.* *n.*

dim - ly lit glow - worms

Lento $\text{♩} = 92$ *dolce* *mf* *p*

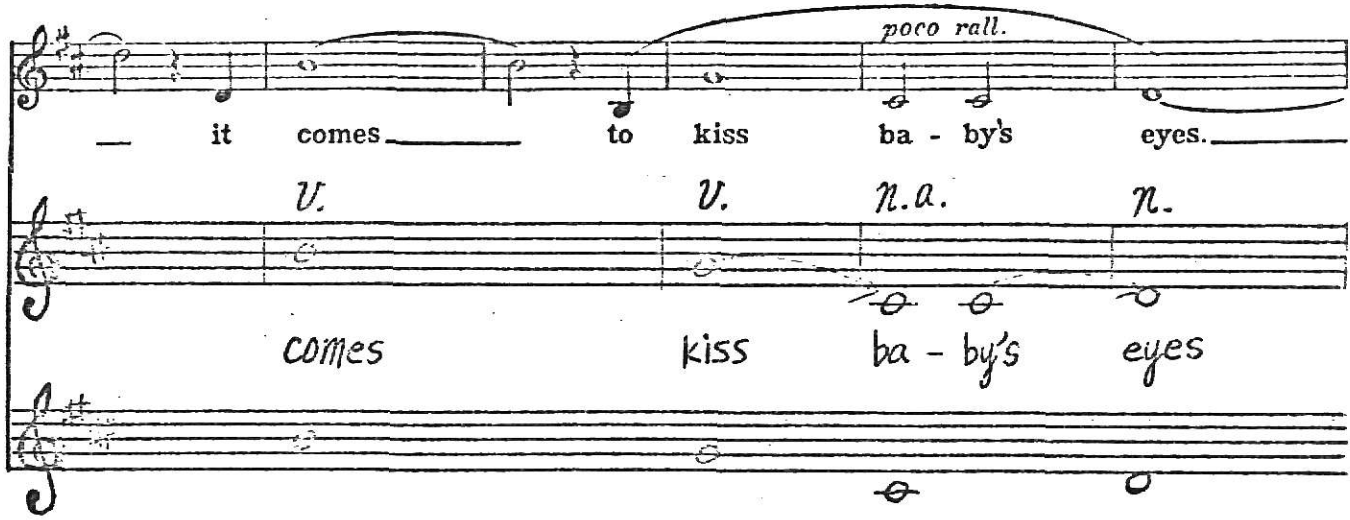
there hang two tim - id buds of en - chant - ment. — From there —

v. *a.* *n.* *n.* *pro.*

hang timid buds enchantment there

(0)

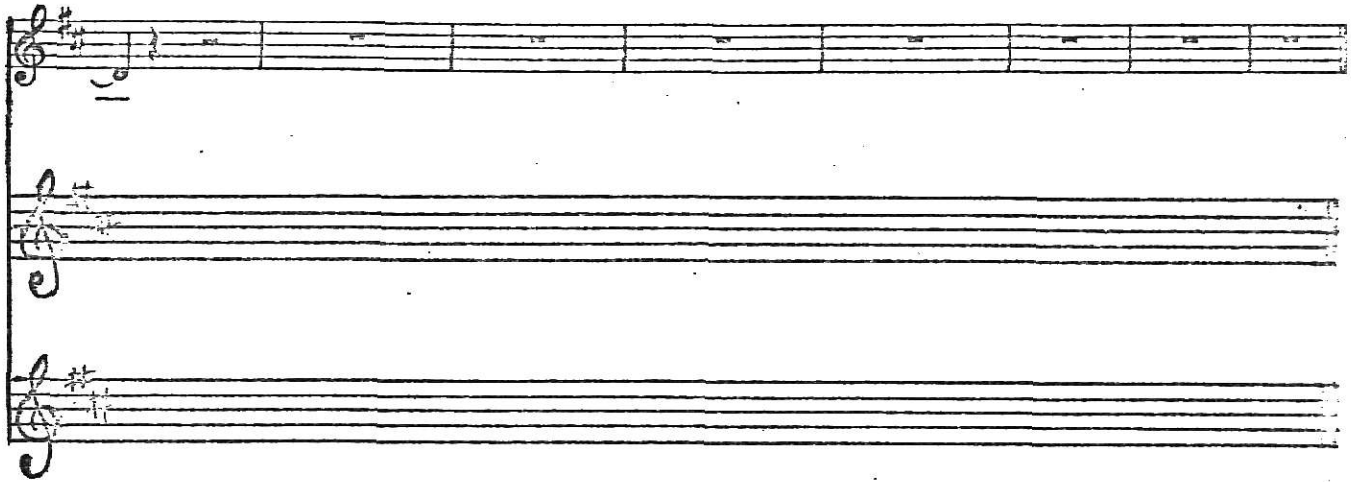
poco rall.



it comes to kiss ba - by's eyes.

U. U. n.a. n.

comes kiss ba - by's eyes



"I am like a Remnant of a Cloud of Autumn"

Grave (♩ = 63)

mf

I am like a

pro.

I

rem-nant of a cloud of au-tumn . use - less-ly roam-ing in the sky,

n. n. n. adv. v. prep. n.

remnant cloud autumn use-lessly roaming in sky

ff

O my sun ev-er - glo - ri - ous!

int. n. a.

O sun ever-glo - ri - ous

p Thy touch has not yet melt-ed my va-pour, making me one with thy light, —

n. *v.* *n.* *v.* *n.*

touch melt-ed va-pour making light

— and thus I count months and years — se-pa-ra-ted from thee.

adv. *n.* *n.* *v.* *pro.*

thus months years separated thee

mf If this be thy wish and if this be thy play,

pro. *n.* *pro.* *n.*

this wish this play

poco *a*

then take this fleet-ing emp-ti-ness of mine, paint it with

adv. v. a. n. pro. v.

then take fleeting emptiness mine paint

poco accel. 3 e cresc. ff **Vivo (♩ = 132)**

col-ours, gild it with gold, float it on the

n. v. n. v.

col-ours gild gold float

molto rall. fff a tempo

wan-ton winds, and spread it in va-ried won-

n. v. pro. a. n.

wanton winds spread it varied won-

ders.

ders

Tempo I?
p *Recitando*

And a-gain, when it shall be thy

adv.

a-gain

wish, to end this play at night, I shall melt and van-ish a-way in the

n. n. v. v.

wish night melt vanish

sempre p *dolciss.*

dark, or it may be in a smile of the white morn-ing, in a

n. u. n.

dark be smile morning

p *molto rall.*

cool-ness of pu-ri-ty trans-pa-rent.

n. n. a.

coolness purity transparent

"On the Seashore of Endless Worlds"

Poco più mosso $\text{♩} = 84$

p
On the sea - shore _____ of end-less worlds

n. *a.* *n.*
Sea - shore endless worlds

chil - dren meet. _____

n. *v.*
chil - dren meet

The in-fin-ite sky is mo - tion - less o - ver -

a. *n.* *a.* *adv.*
infinite sky mo - tion-less o - ver-

head _____ and the

head

rest - less wa - - - ter is boi - - - ter-ous.

a. n. a.

restless wa - - - ter. boi - - - terous

p On the sea - shore _____ of end-less worlds the

n. a. n.

Sea - shore endless worlds

mf
 chil - dren meet with shouts and danc - es.

n. *v.* *n.* *n.*
 chil - dren meet shouts danc - es

p
 They build their hous - es with

v. *n.*
 build hous - es

sand and they play with empty

n. *v.* *a.*
 sand play empty

poco rall. *mf* Poco meno mosso ♩ = 72

shells. _____ With wither'd leaves _____

n. *a.* *n.*

Shells _____ wither'd leaves _____

accel. e cresc. *f* *rubato* ♩ = 84

— they weave their boats _____ and smil - ingly _____

v. *n.* *adv.*

weave boats _____ smilingly _____

float them on the vast deep. _____ *rall.*

v. *prop.* *n.*

float on deep _____

Più lento $\text{♩} = 60$ *p*

Chil-dren have their play on the sea-shore of worlds.

n. v. n. n. n.

Children have play seashore worlds

mf *recitando quasi ad lib.*

They know not how to swim, they know not how to cast

v. adv. v. v. adv. adv.

know how swim know not how

$\text{♩} = 60$

nets. Pearl-fishers dive for pearls, merchants sail in their

n. n. v. n. n. v.

nets pearl-fishers dive pearls merchants sail

ships, while chil - dren ga-ther

rall.

n. *n.* *v.*

Ships chil - dren gather

peb - bles and scatter them a - gain.

p a tempo *mf*

n. *adv.*

peb - bles a - gain

♩ = 58

They seek not for hid - den trea - sures, — they

v. *a.* *n.*

seek hid - den trea - sures

know not how to cast nets. The

tr. adu. adu. n.

know not how nets

Poco più con moto ♩ = 76 *poco a poco*

sea surges up with

n. u. adu.

sea surges up

accelerando e

laugh - - - ter, and

n.

laugh - - - ter

crescendo

pale gleams the smile of the

n. *v.* *n.* *Prep.*

pale gleams smile of

(10)

ff

sea - - - beach.

n.

Vivo ♩ = 120

Sea - - - beach

ff

—

Poco meno mosso $\text{♩} = 92$ *f marcato**ral - - len -*

Death - deal-ing waves sing - mean - ing-less bal-lads to the

a. n. a. n.

Deathdeal-ing waves meaning-less ballads

*tan - - do**molto più lento e legato**pp dolce*

chil - - dren, e - ven like a moth - er while

n. adv. v. n.

chil - - dren even like moth - er

 $\text{♩} = 58$ *p*

rock - ing her ba - by's - cra - dle. The sea plays with

v. n. a. n. n. v.

rock - ing ba - by's cra - dle sea plays

più mosso *rall.* *p*

chil-dren, and pale gleams the smile of the sea - beach.

children pale gleams smile sea - beach

Tempo I? $\text{♩} = 66$

On the sea - shore of end - less worlds

sea - shore endless worlds

chil- dren meet.

chilaren meet

$\text{♩} = 84$ *accel.* *e*

Tem-pest roams in the path-less sky,

n. v. a. n.

Tempest roams pathless sky

cresc.

ships get wrecked in the track-less wa - ter,

n. v. a. n.

ships get wrecked trackless wa - ter

rall. *ff*

death is a - broad

n. v. adv.

death is a - broad

p Lento $\text{♩} = 56$

and children play.

n. *v.*

children play

Tempo I^o $\text{♩} = 66$

p

On the sea - shore of end-less

n. *a.*

sea - shore endless

worlds

n.

worlds

is the great meeting of chil - - - dren.

u. *n.* *n.*

is meeting chil - - - dren

"Light, My Light"

Presto giocoso (♩ = 69)

f
Light,

n.
Light

my light,

n.
light

ff
the world-filling light, the eye-kissing light,

a. *n.* *a.* *n.*
world filling light eyekissing light

dim.

— heart-sweet-en-ing light! —

a.

heartsweetening light

f

— Ah! — the light dances, my

int.

v.

Ah! — dances

dar - - - ling, — at the

n.

dar- - - ling

cen - - tre of my life;

n. *prep.* *n.*

cen - - tre of life

mf

the light strikes, my dar - - ling,

n. *v.* *n.*

light strikes dar - - ling


cresc.

the chords of my love; the

n. *prep.* *n.*

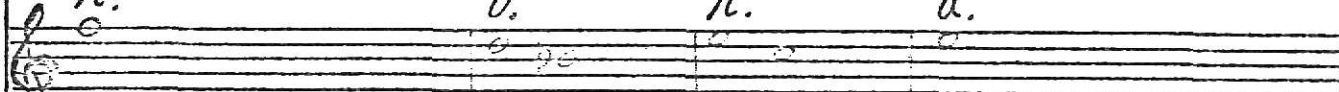
chords of love

ff

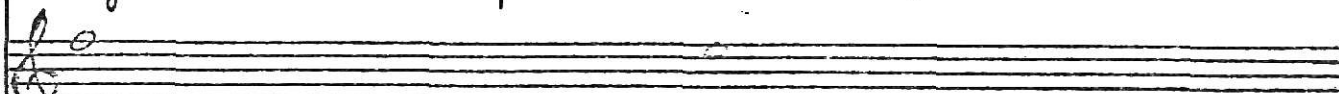
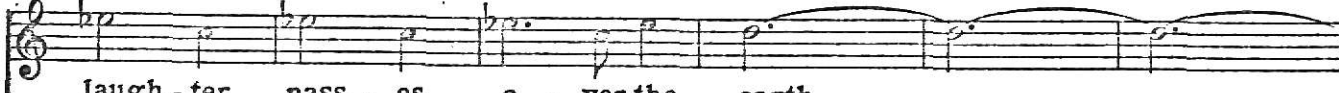


sky _____ o - pens, the wind runs wild, _____

n. v. n. a.




sky opens wind wild






laugh - ter pass - es o - ver the earth. _____

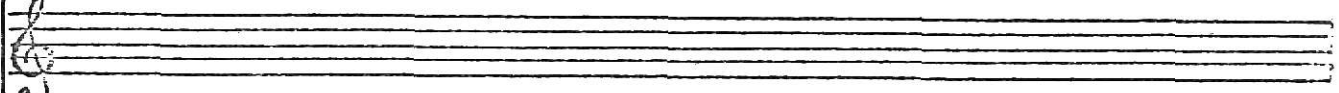
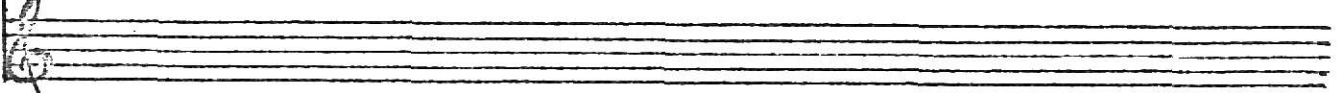
n. v. adv. n.



laughter passes over earth

_____ *p* The

Poco più lento (♩ = 152)

but - ter - flies — spread their sails — on the sea of light.

n. *n.* *n.* *n.*

but - ter - flies sails Sea light

Lil - ies and jas - mines surge

n. *n.* *v.*

Lil - ies jas - mines surge

up on the crest of the waves of light.

adv. *prep.* *n.* *n.* *n.*

up on crest waves light

poco accelerando

— The light is shat-tered in-to gold on ev - 'ry

n. v. n. a.

light is shattered gold ev - 'ry

molto dim.

f. cloud, — my dar - ling, —

n. n.

cloud dar - ling

poco rall.

mf. and it scat-ters gems in pro - fu - - - sion. —

v. n. prep. n.

scat-ters gems in pro-fu - - - sion

Tempo I?

f Mirth _____ spreads from

n. *v.*

Mirth _____ spreads

leaf to leaf, my dar - ling, _____ and glad - ness with - out

n. *n.* *n.* *n.* *prep.*

leaf leaf dar - ling glad ness with - out

ff mea - sure _____ The heav - ens riv - er _____ has

n. *a.* *n.*

mea - sure heavens riv - er has

drowned its banks _____ and the flood _____

v. *n.* *n.*

drowned banks _____ flood

_____ of joy _____ is a - broad. _____

ff *poco rall.* *fff a tempo*

n. *v. adv.*

joy is a-broad

CHAPTER IV

THE PIANO ACCOMPANIMENT

As through-composed art songs, the songs in this cycle are for voice and piano, not for voice supplemented by the piano. It has been said that the piano part supplies the main source of formal organization and controls unity in each song. Moreover, the piano part is a partner with the voice, sharing equally in the task of supporting, illustrating, and intensifying the meaning of the poetry. Very often, the piano part with its harmonic subtlety furnishes the mood of the song which becomes a live tone-painting.

Carpenter believed that "All music that lives is based on a mood, whether directly or indirectly."¹ Therefore, his methods of procedure throughout the songs such as the vocal phrase, the color of harmonic background, the figuration of the accompaniment, all tended to emphasize just the right mood. The mood of each song is, of course, directly based on the meaning of its text.

As far as the accompanimental background is concerned, the song, "When I bring to you colour'd toys", is rich in tone-painting. Example 1 demonstrates how a picture of the "colour'd toys" is suggested by means of these repeated parallel fourths.

¹Madeleine Goss, Modern Music-Makers, New York, E. P. Dutton & Company, 1930, p. 210.

Ex. 1

The musical score for Example 1 consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It begins with a melody marked *mf* and *a tempo*. The lyrics are: "When I bring to you colour'd toys, my child, _____". The piano accompaniment is in G major and 3/4 time. It starts with a *rall.* (rallentando) section, followed by a section marked *mf* and *a tempo*. The piano part features a prominent eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a more active bass line in the left hand. A *Red.* (Reduction) mark is placed below the piano part.

Because the similarity in mood, the same figures of Example 1 are used in the last section to be suggestive of the words "when I bring sweet things to your greedy hands".

In Example 2, a lively suggestion of dancing is given by the means of jumping staccato figures and some appoggiaturas associated with the words, "make you dance".

Ex. 2

mf *a tempo*

When I sing to make you dance, I truly know why there is

a tempo

rall. *mf*

*

mu - sic in leaves, _____

What an atmosphere of solemnity is furnished in the song, "On the day when death will knock at thy door", by these minor dominant chords, seventh chords, and especially the death motive in the lower score of the accompaniment.

Ex. 3

Grave maestoso (♩ = 40) *f*

On the day when death will

f *p*

knock at thy door, _____ what wilt thou of-fer to

ff

him? _____

mf *p*

Ex. 4

Più mosso (♩ = 60)

mf All the sweet vin-tage of all my au-tumn days

p and summer nights, — *f rubato* all the earnings and

p gleanings of my busy life,

p simile

In vividly contrasting mood is the middle section of the song which shows in Example 4. The graceful rhythmic pace, and few long notes, accompany the thought "All the sweet vintage of all my autumn days and summer nights, all the earnings and gleanings of my busy life."

The poesy of "I am like a remnant of a cloud of autumn" is an example of that meditative type of song; it is a good example of atmospheric writing. A background of broad chords dominates the entire song. Even though at times it has entirely disappeared, its rhythm is present almost throughout the whole song.

It is interesting to know how the climax of the song is built on the accompaniment by means of gradually increased intensity. Example 5 shows the four stages of different intensity in the piano part.

Ex. 5

(1) (2) (3)

(4)

Example 6 illustrates how the climax at "paint it with colors, gild it with gold, float it on the wanton wind and spread it in varied wonders" is finely developed.

Ex. 6

poco *a* *poco* *accel.* *a* *e* *cresc.*

paint it with col - ours, gild it with gold,

poco *a* *poco* *accel.* *e* *cresc.* *r.h.*

Vivo ($\text{♩} = 132$) *ff* *molto rall.*

float it on the wan-ton winds, and spread it in va-ried

ff *molto rall.*

fff a tempo

won - ders.

fff a tempo

Ex. 7

while chil - dren ga-ther

rall.

p

rall.

This system features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. It contains the lyrics "while chil - dren ga-ther". The piano accompaniment is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with the same key signature and time signature. The tempo is marked "rall." (rallentando). The piano part begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic.

peb - bles and scatter them a - gain.

p a tempo

mf

p a tempo

mf

This system continues the vocal and piano parts. The vocal line has the lyrics "peb - bles and scatter them a - gain.". The piano accompaniment maintains the "p a tempo" (piano at tempo) marking in the left hand and "mf" (mezzo-forte) in the right hand.

They seek not for hid - den trea - sures, — they

leggiero

This system shows the vocal line with the lyrics "They seek not for hid - den trea - sures, — they". The piano accompaniment is marked "leggiero" (light and graceful) in the right hand.

know not how to cast nets.

This system contains the final vocal phrase "know not how to cast nets." and the corresponding piano accompaniment.

In the song, "On the seashore of endless worlds", the arpeggiated design of sixteenth notes to the suggestion of "seashore" in the piano part is apparent. The background of arpeggiated sixteenth notes masters the entire song except for Part III and part of Part II. There is nothing more felicitous than the setting of the passage beginning "while children gather pebbles and scatter them again" in Part III (Example 7).

In Example 8, the contrast between quiet and motion is well furnished in the piano part in accordance with the contrary meaning of the words. Throughout the song, however, the effect attained is in remarkable contrast with the simplicity of the means employed.

Ex. 8

The musical score for Example 8 consists of two systems. The first system features a vocal line in treble clef and a piano accompaniment in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The tempo is marked $\text{♩} = 56$ and the dynamic is *p*. The lyrics are "The sea plays with chil-dren, and pale _____ gleams the". The piano part includes a *p* marking and a *più mosso* instruction. The second system continues the vocal line with the lyrics "smile of the sea - beach. _____". It includes a *rall.* marking, a *p* dynamic, and a *più mosso* instruction. The piano part features a *rall.* marking and a *p dolce* dynamic. The score concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

In the last song, the "light" is well suggested by the piano background in the first 33 measures. Example 9 shows how Carpenter obtained the effect of the glorious light by means of the constant octave tremolo and the high degree of volume.

Ex. 9

Presto giocoso (♩. = 69)

The musical score for Example 9 consists of two systems, each featuring a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked "Presto giocoso" with a quarter note equal to 69 beats per minute (♩. = 69). The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4.

First System:

- Vocal Line:** The lyrics "Light," are written above the staff. The melody consists of a series of eighth notes, starting on a middle C and ascending to a G4.
- Piano Accompaniment:** The right hand plays a series of chords, primarily triads, with a constant octave tremolo effect. The left hand plays a series of eighth notes, also with a constant octave tremolo effect. The volume is marked *ff* (fortissimo) and *f marcato* (forte marcato).

Second System:

- Vocal Line:** The lyrics "my light," are written above the staff. The melody continues with a series of eighth notes, starting on a middle C and ascending to a G4.
- Piano Accompaniment:** The right hand plays a series of chords, primarily triads, with a constant octave tremolo effect. The left hand plays a series of eighth notes, also with a constant octave tremolo effect. The volume is marked *ff* (fortissimo) and *mf* (mezzo-forte).

About the brilliant paeon of praise to "Light, my light", Upton has made the following comment in his book, Art-Song in America:

Here is no slender threadlike melodic line, but great bursts of golden tone like the full-throated voice of the orchestra. It is no song in the true sense of the word, but a flaming forth of elemental ecstasy. I know of nothing like it. It is written for no mortal voice. Perhaps arch-angelic voices might cope with long-drawn trumpet-like phrases, but no earthly voice should attempt these soaring flights!²

It is true that Carpenter tried hard to end the cycle with a song of supreme climax. In using of dynamic marks, for instance, the forte (f) and fortissimo (ff) are used for the vocal part in most of the song. Furthermore, the fortissimo (fff) is used for the very last long note which is the great ending for both the song and the whole song cycle.

²William Treat Upton, Art-Song in America, New York, Oliver Ditson Company, 1930, p. 210-211.

CONCLUSION

Tagore's Gitanjali was not merely a stimulus to Carpenter's musical expression. Its structure and the organization of its lines and stanzas were more important, for the poem gave form to his music. It is true that the form of the idea song is dictated by the poem and that each song creates its own design. In this cycle, Carpenter's sectional structure for each song is often furnished by the stanzas of the poem. The main source of formal organization is supplied by the piano accompaniment which controls unity and develops the sectional organization in each song.

The correlation of the text with the melodic line is excellent. Consistently, such important words as nouns, verbs, and adjectives coincide with the long notes and the accents of the vocal line. The melody pattern is basically suggested by the grammatical structure and speech of the text. Nevertheless, the melody is not reduced to a mere "declamation" but, instead is mostly "tuneful". No wonder Upton stated in his book, Art-Song in America, that "we have no composer more expert at fitting the tone to the word than he; and herein lies much of his strength as a composer of songs."

However, the melody is considered as but one of the lines of the texture. The piano accompaniment is very important in this cycle; it is a partner with voice, sharing equally in the task of supporting, illustrating, and intensifying the meaning of the poetry. His ability to imagine and his sensitiveness to the text made Carpenter a great tone-painter. Throughout the

cycle, the vocal phrase, the color of harmonic background, and the figuration of the accompaniment all tend to emphasize just the right mood.

In the world of the art song one may study the component parts; examining the structure, relating text to melody, analyzing the accompaniment, harmonies, etc., and yet he must discover that strangely enough the sum of its parts is less great than the whole. The study of this Gitanjali song cycle allows no exception.

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GITANJALI:
A STUDY OF THE SONG CYCLE BY
RABINDRANATH TAGORE AND JOHN ALDEN CARPENTER

by

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ABSTRACT

This study presented pertinent information concerning how the Indian work Gitanjali become known in this country and the fact that the beauty of Tagore's poetry gave great impetus to Carpenter's composition of this song cycle. The choice of these six poems from the entire work of one hundred and three was due to Carpenter's love of nature and his interest in children. His intention to rearrange the order of these six poems in the song cycle was also noted.

Carpenter gave the form to his music based on the movement of the verse; very often, the sectional structure for each song is furnished by the stanzas of the poem. There were six diagrams (Figures 1 to 6) made in this paper; each represents the formal organization of each song. The analysis of the melodic line was also made for each song. The correlation of the text with the melodic line is excellent. This was demonstrated by comparing the important notes of the music with the important words of the poem; the long notes or the accents in the vocal line often coincide with the important verbs, nouns and adjectives. Although the melody pattern is basically suggested by the grammatical structure and speech of the text, the melody is not reduced to a mere "declamation" but, instead is mostly "tuneful". No wonder Upton called Carpenter an expert at fitting the tone to the word.

The piano accompaniment is very important in this cycle; it is a partner with voice, sharing equally in the task of supporting,

illustrating, and intensifying the meaning of the poetry.

Carpenter's ability to imagine and his sensitiveness to the text made him a great tone-painter. Throughout the cycle, the vocal phrase, the color of harmonic background, and the figuration of the accompaniment all tend to emphasize just the right mood. In order to illustrate how Carpenter used the flexible medium, piano, to furnish the mood for the songs, nine examples were given in this paper.