

HANDEL, PUCCINI, STRAUSS, POULENC, BROWN, AND GEALT
AN EXPLORATION OF SONG

by

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Abstract

This Master's Report contains extended program notes on the works performed on a graduate recital of music for a Baritone. The text includes biographical information on each composer and an analysis of each piece performed. Text translations are included in the body of the discussions.

The pieces discussed are Handel's "See The Raging Flames Arise," from *Joshua*, Poulenc's *Le Bestiaire*, Strauss's *Zueignung, Nichts* and *Cäcilie*, Puccini's "Questo amor, vergogna mia," from *Edgar*, Jason Robert Brown's *Moving Too Fast*, *The Next Ten Minutes*, *The River Won't Flow* and *She Cries* and lastly Jonathon Reid Gealt's *September of '92*.

The graduate recital was given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Music degree in vocal performance on April 7, 2014. It was performed in All Faiths Chapel at Kansas State University. It featured the piano talents of Amanda Arrington, Paul Meissbach and Norma Roozeboom, the vocal talents of Reginald Pittman, Elise Poehling and Patricia Thompson, and the instrumental talents of Nolan Groff and Craig Archer.

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Preface

The following research and analysis are provided to enhance the performer's understanding of each selected work. The extensive research provided throughout this paper focus on the life and times of the composers as well as the emotional, physical, mental and vocal approach to each selection. The relationship between the personal experience and portrayed experience validates the affect the performer is trying to communicate with the audience. Audience members will be able to find a connection to the performer if the emotional aspect of each piece is portrayed with historical and thematic accuracy. Though each member of the audience may have never personally experienced each emotion, they will be able to empathize with the performer through a basic understanding of the themes and emotions presented.

Chapter 1 - Francis Poulenc – A Man

Early Life

Francis Poulenc, a man of gifted abilities and an expert at setting text, lived a brilliant life enhancing the musical culture of France while creating works that have become constants through the decades. Poulenc was fortunate enough to always have the support of those around him, his parents, *Les Six*, Pierre Bernac and many lovers throughout his life.

Poulenc was born at the turn of the twentieth century, January 7, 1899, in a wealthy Paris neighborhood. His father, Emile, was one of three brothers who owned the powerful Rhône-Poulenc Company, a massive manufacturing organization.¹ Emile loved music and was a very loyal sponsor of the *Concerts Colonne*. Emile was always present on opening night at both the Opéra and the Opéra-Comique. Francis's mother, Jenny Royer, was the predominant musical authority in Francis's early life. Jenny came from a purely Parisian family for a number of generations. Her family included various professions of craftsmen all whom had a love for the arts, which thankfully were a part of young Francis's life.

Poulenc started studying piano at the age of five, instructed by his mother. "Madame Poulenc...was gifted with impeccable musical sensibility and a delightful touch."² She realized that young Francis had a knack for playing piano and started teaching him straight away. Poulenc talking about his early years states: "When I recall my childhood I see myself always sitting at the piano...One day I discovered *Die Winterreise* of Schubert and suddenly something very profound in my life was changed".³ Poulenc, having the opportunity to hear major symphonies and see world-class premiers, tried composing at a young age and presented *Préludes* for piano, which were influenced by Debussy. Francis lost his mother at sixteen and his father at eighteen, at which time he moved to live with his sister Jeanne.

In 1920, Poulenc was part of a six-person group of his contemporaries known as *Les Six*. Membership included: Darius Milhaud, Arthur Honegger, Georges Auric, Louis Durey and

¹ Myriam Chiménes, "Poulenc, Francis, 1: Life," In *Grove Music Online*, accessed January 24, 2014, *Oxford Music Online*.

² Pierre Bernac, *Francis Poulenc: The Man and His Songs* (Victor Gollancz Ltd, Southampton 1978), 22

³ Bernac, *Poulenc*, 22.

Germaine Tailleferre. Jane Bathori was another contemporary who appeared with these young men throughout France, performing their works while accompanying herself. Because of Bathori's performances, Poulenc's first works were immediate and astonishing successes.⁴

Poulenc's childhood friend, Raymonde Linossier, introduced him to the book store, *Aux amis des livres*, that would forever change his life, allowing him future interactions with noted poets Guillaume Apollinaire, Max Jacob, Paul Éluard and Louis Aragon. In his future years Poulenc set many of their texts to music. He also met many painters here including, Picasso, Braque, Derain and Laurencin and many others. His next notable meeting propelled his career forward. Poulenc became acquainted with Serge Diaghilev. Diaghilev, ever popular because of his Russian ballet, was a major force in the emerging dance art, specifically ballet. Diaghilev suggested that Poulenc and Laurencin write a modern *Sylphides*. They came up with *Les Biches*, or *House Party*. No one could have been prepared for the success *Les Biches* received from the public or the national fame Poulenc was starting to achieve.⁵

Even though they did not meet until they were thirty-five years of age, Pierre Bernac and Poulenc began a lifelong friendship and twenty five year working partnership. They collaborated on over eighty vocal pieces. Their working partnership would eventually bring them to the United States where they would meet Leontyne Price, Samuel Barber and many others. The post World-War II environment yearned for more works from Poulenc, so he began composing operas, liturgical settings of masses, vocal art songs, choral works, orchestral works, and one of his most popular works, *Gloria*.⁶ Francis Poulenc died January 30, 1963, very unexpectedly and left no unfinished works.

Style

Francis Poulenc obeyed his instinct and did not have a system, "...my 'rules' are instinctive, I am not concerned with principles and I am proud of that; I have no system of writing; and as for inspiration, it is so mysterious that it is wiser not to try to explain it." Bernac

⁴ Bernac, *Poulenc*, 24.

⁵ Bernac, *Poulenc*, 25.

⁶ Roger Nichols, "Poulenc, Francis, 2 - 8: Piano Music - Summary," In *Grove Music Online*, accessed January 24, 2014, *Oxford Music Online*.

states punctually: “For Poulenc, writing music was not an intellectual exercise, but a means of expression”.⁷

Poulenc is best known for his vocal works. Poulenc had an intense love for the human voice; very few things gave him this kind of unbridled joy. “...his inspiration never flowed with greater spontaneity than when he felt the urge to set a literary text.”⁸ His most valued gift was his ability to set melody. It was the very life and soul of his music and was able to excel his beautiful settings of his contemporaries’ literature. Poulenc’s love of the voice is clearly evident noting the number of vocal works he produced. His works include secular and religious choral works both accompanied and a capella, 137 mélodies, some opera and various other works for the stage.⁹ Poulenc felt that “the setting to music of a poem must be an act of love, never a marriage of convenience.”¹⁰ This idea is the singular most important aspect of Poulenc’s style. He never did what was convenient, he always stayed true to his inner muse and let the emotion, and all that lies between the words and notes, shape the work.

Poulenc often played his vocal compositions and made his opinions quite known to the public. “The importance of the piano part of his songs was quite equal to the vocal line.”¹¹ He was very insistent that the piano line was equivalent to the vocal line, “Lady accompanists, will you be kind enough not to forget that there is a *song* in the piano part, with its own accompaniment”.¹² Poulenc played like a composer, not an accompanist. He let his harmonic instinct, vocal knowledge, and command of the keyboard create a work of art each time a song was performed. Poulenc goes into great detail concerning his accompanying style.

The great technical errors which disfigure my piano music to the point of rendering it unrecognizable are: rubato, avarice in the use of the pedal, and too clear articulation of certain patterns of chords and arpeggios which need, on the contrary, to be played with veiled sustained tone... The use of the pedals is the great secret of my piano music (and the lack of it often its downfall). They will never use enough pedal! Never enough!¹³

⁷ Bernac, *Poulenc*, 37.

⁸ Bernac, *Poulenc*, 38.

⁹ Nichols, *Poulenc*, 2-8.

¹⁰ Bernac, *Poulenc*, 39.

¹¹ Bernac, *Poulenc*, 43-44.

¹² Bernac, *Poulenc*, 43.

¹³ Bernac, *Poulenc*, 44.

Poulenc not only dictates exactly how the piano line should be played; he takes great care in the vocal line, marking that every expression and dynamic be indispensable, no matter how subtle it may seem. The melodies of Poulenc must be sung! His vocal style is more along the lines of *Bel Canto* than any other style. The tessitura is usually quite extensive, and requires mastery of the instrument and emotion calling for *pianissimos* at the top of the range and *fortes* at the bottom. All of the markings must be precisely executed. If everything Poulenc put in the music is observed, then one is performing how the composer truly intended his works to be performed. Poulenc's rarely received inspiration while sitting at the piano, but rather while walking. He was an avid walker and birthed most of his melodies while walking through different areas of where he was living or visiting.

Guillame Apollinaire

Guillaume Apollinaire, a contemporary Poulenc met in *Aux amis des livres*, was the first major poet whose text Poulenc set to music. The text for *Le Bestiaire* was set to Poulenc's first collection of *mélodies*. "If on my tomb were inscribed: here lies Francis Poulenc, the musician of Apollinaire and Eluard, I would consider this to be my finest title to fame."¹⁴ Guillaume Apollinaire, born as Wilhelm Apollinaire de Kostrowitsky, was born in Rome in 1880.

Apollinaire was attracted to Orphism, a monotheistic, sixth century B.C. cult that had flourished in Greece, whose main belief was the reconciliation of Earth and Heaven. Apollinaire took solace in Orpheus's ideals. Young Apollinaire had a devout Catholic education and considered Orpheus a model of Christ, as did many believers in the early church. One should note this is not the Orpheus who traveled to Hades to retrieve Eurydice, but "a minstrel of vase paintings, who sits with lyre in hand and contemplates the sun... a seer, a founder of mystic rites... a magician, and later as an astrologer... 'Orphism' is a religion of light".¹⁵ Scholars believe Apollinaire is referring to Christ using the word "Orphée". This ideal and belief is the root of his composition, *Le*

¹⁴ Bernac, *Poulenc*, 50.

¹⁵ John Wesley Cameron, "Apollinaire and the Painters: His Poetic Orphism," (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1955), 9 .

Bestiaire ou Cortège d'Orphée.¹⁶ Bernac speculates that Paris often inspired both Apollinaire and Poulenc and that is why Poulenc was so attracted to Apollinaire's works. One theme central to both of their work states: "In poetry as in painting, the beauty is not born of the subject but of the treatment".¹⁷

Poulenc composed *Le Bestiaire ou Cortège d'Orphée* when he was twenty years old. Poulenc originally set twelve of the original thirty-seven quatrains, four-line verse, to text; however, his dear friend Georges Auric advised he only keep six. Though one must note Poulenc did complete a seventh, years later in 1956, entitled "La Souris," the mouse. This cycle set the bar for Poulenc's future *mélodies*. Poulenc demands: "To sing *Le Bestiaire* with irony is a complete misconception. It would show no understanding whatever of Apollinaire's poetry or my music".¹⁸ Each song in the cycle is held together by a rhythmic or melodic grouping, most often found in the piano, usually identifiable as an ostinato.

¹⁶ Joanna Gewertz Harris, "The Theater of Guillaume Apollinaire," (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1975), 3-5.

¹⁷ Bernac, *Poulenc*, 51.

¹⁸ Bernac, *Poulenc*, 52.

Le Bestiaire ou Cortège d'Orphée

“Le Dromadaire”

The Dromedary (camel)

Avec ses quatre dromadaires
Don Pedro d'Alfaroubeira
Courut le monde et l'admira.
Il fit ce que je voudrais faire
Si j'avais quatre dromadaires.

With his four dromedaries.
Don Pedro of Alfaroubeira
roamed the world and admired it.
He did what I would like to do
if I had four dromedaries.

This piece must have a great sense of legato, emulating the camels roaming the world. The accompaniment has a falling pattern in the left hand representative of Don Pedro, a famous fifteenth century Portuguese explorer, and his camels' ever-slow progress of exploration. There is a four bar tag at the end suggestive of a brief spark of emotion before sauntering into the Tibetan goat's domain.

Figure 1.1 Last four bars of “Le Dromadaire”



“La chèvre du Thibet”

The Tibetan Goat

Les poils de cette chèvre | et même
Ceux d'or pour qui prit tant de peine
Jason,
ne valent rien au prix
Des cheveux dont je suis épris.

The hair of this goat and even
that hair of gold for which so much
trouble was taken by Jason
are worth nothing to the value
of the hair I love.

The poet says the hair of this Tibetan goat and the hair made of gold, which Jason toiled over have no worth compared to his true loves hair. The poet is referring to the Golden Fleece dating to mythological beliefs. Bernac, in speaking about this song, states:

“The song ends with a *rallentando*... which must be illuminated by a smile, both in the voice and in the eyes.”¹⁹

¹⁹ Bernac, *Poulenc*, 52.

“La Sauterelle”

The Grasshopper

Voici la fine sauterelle,
La nourriture de saint Jean
Puissent mes vers être comme elle
Le régal des meilleures gens.

Here is the delicate grasshopper
The nourishment of St. John
May my verses be likewise
The feast of superior people.

“La Sauterelle” is the shortest song in the cycle, only numbering four bars. Each phrase rests comfortably in a bar. Apollinaire references Mark 1:6 concerning the delicate nourishment of St. John. The word locust not only refers to these grasshoppers but also to a variety trees. In the Catholic faith St. John is recognized to be vegetarian eluding one to believe that the text is referring to the tree and not the insect. The pretention of the faith and Apollinaire being raised devoutly Catholic, align superior people with a pillar of the Catholic faith, St. John.

“Le Dauphin”

The Dolphin

Dauphins, vous jouez dans la mer
Mais le flot est toujours amer
Parfois ma joie éclate-t-elle
La vie est encore cruelle

Dolphins you sport in the sea
Yet the waters are always briny
At times my joy bursts forth
But life is still cruel.

“Le Dauphin” tells the simple fun that dolphins’ experience that the poet cannot. When listening to the accompaniment one can hear the waves breaking as the measures alternate between *p* and *mf*.

“L’écrevisse”

The Crayfish

Incertitude | ô! mes délices
Vous et moi nous nous en allons
Comme s'en vont les écrevisses
À reculons à reculons

Uncertainty O! my delights
You and I we progress
Just like the crayfish
Backwards, backwards.

In “L’écrevisse,” Apollinaire compares life’s uncertainties to the progress of a crayfish. The song ends with a feeling of moving backwards, which is reflected by the text, the falling vocal pattern, the *rallentando* and the final fermata. All of this brilliant text painting and musical construction allows for one to picture the natural backward movement of the crayfish.

“La carpe”

The Carp

Dans vos viviers, dans vos étangs
Carpes que vous vivez longtemps
Est-ce que la mort vous oublie
Poissons de la mélancolie.

In your fish-ponds in your pools
carp how long you live
is it that death has forgotten you
fish of melancholy?

“La Carpe’s” tempo is slower than any other piece in the cycle. The carp, fish of melancholy, has a life expectancy of 40-50 years. “The pianist and the singer must rival one another in their quality of sonority and legato to express the poetic melancholy of this beautiful song.”²⁰ Bernac also suggests in a different publication: “Using both pedals [noted in the original score] and beautiful sonority, a wonderfully liquid impression can be given by the pianist...and the singer must of course sing *p*, but with rich sonority and perfect legato”.²¹ Poulenc brilliantly creates the feeling of another world through a two-bar ostinato emulating the dark, gloomy environment the carp calls home.

Chapter 2 - George Frederic Handel

Master of The Oratorio

George Frederic Handel, master of the Oratorio, was born in Halle, an upper-Saxony city, on February 23rd or 24th.²² Because of his life travels through Germany, Italy and England Handel was able to enrich the musical lives of those around him. His operas and oratorios have stayed in the repertoire for over three centuries, and are unlikely to make an exit anytime soon.

Handel was born to a second marriage of his sixty-three year old father, George Handel, and mother, Dorothea Elisabeth Taust, along with two sisters, Dorothea Sophie, and Johanne Christianne.²³ Georg forbid young George from studying music, hoping that he would one day become a civil lawyer, though all the restraining did was peak

²⁰ Bernac, *Poulenc*, 53.

²¹ Pierre Bernac, *The Interpretation of French Song*, (W.W. Norton & Company, New York, 1970), 279.

²² Otto Erich Deutsch, *Handel: A Documentary Biography*, (W.W. Norton & Company Inc., London, 1955), 1.

²³ Donald Burrows, *Handel*, (Oxford University Press, London, 1994), 4-5.

George's curiosity. George somehow managed to sneak a clavichord into his third story home and practiced while his family slept. Fate would have it young George would play a church service that the Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels was attending. After hearing the music, the Duke took it upon himself to encourage and develop young George's talent, conversing with his father, Georg, saying that he shouldn't force young George down one path when his talent opened a path right in front of his eyes.²⁴

Legitimizing young George's interest in music, his father sent him for training with Friedrich Wilhelm Zachow, the organist at *Marienkirche*, the church where baby George had been baptized. Under Zachow's tutelage, young George's training was very practical employing keyboard studies, harmony lessons and a large collection of stylistically National music of Germany and Italy. Some scholars believe young George studied violin and oboe, though not as prolifically as organ and harpsichord.²⁵ The young, impressionable Handel was fortunate enough to have two substantial musicians living in a close radius to his home. In Leipzig, Nikolaus Adam Strungk, music director of the churches and Kantor of Thomasschule, and Johann Schelle, the Director Musices of principal composers and musicians, afforded him many concerts of high quality, both being significant composers and musicians in their generation.²⁶

At just eleven years of age, young George's heart was broken by his father's death on February 14, 1697. Most scholars believe this event was so psychologically damaging that it ultimately resulted in his apparent celibacy in adulthood.²⁷ Five years later exciting things started happening in young George's life.

Handel enrolled himself at the University of Halle on February 10, 1702, days before his seventeenth birthday. It is not known exactly what he studied there, but scholars suggest beginning Law and general education were most likely. A month later on March 13 he became appointed as organist at the *Halle* Cathedral, though one year's time would see him vacating the post and living in Hamburg by July 1703.²⁸ It was here

²⁴ Deutsch, *Handel*, 2-3.

²⁵ Burrow, *Handel*, 6.

²⁶ Burrow, *Handel*, 7.

²⁷ Burrow, *Handel*, 9.

²⁸ Deutsch, *Handel*, 9.

he met tenor Johann Mattheson, whom scholars have to thank for most of the first-hand knowledge of young Handel's career. It is in Hamburg that Handel's first opera, *Der in Krohnen erlangte Glücks-Wechsel, oder Almira, Königin von Castilien* (usually known as *Almira*), was premiered on January 8, 1705.²⁹

The latter half of 1707 found Handel moving to Italy, for he had the attention of Prince Gian' Gastone de' Medici. The young prince invited Handel to Rome, but he insisted on doing it of his own accord. Early in 1707 Handel reached Rome and came under the patronage of Cardinals Colonna, Pamphili and Ottoboni. In May of 1707 he would join the household of the most important secular patron in Rome, the Marquess Francesco Maria Ruspoli.³⁰ His next commission from Ruspoli, dated October 1707, eventually came to be known as *Rodrigo*, exhibiting his Italian studies and mastery of the language. The next two years would see two major commissions, one by Ruspoli, an oratorio, *La resurrezione*, and one by the the Duchess of Laurenzano, a dramatic cantata, *Aci, Galatea e Polifemo*, which would cause Handel's travel to Naples. From Naples he traveled to Venice where *Agrippina*, a satirical comedy, would be an enormous success. After *Agrippina* closed, Handel traveled to Innsbruck, continuing to Hanover, stopping briefly in Düsseldorf, before arriving in London in early autumn 1710.

Italian-style opera had been introduced to London in 1705 and gained popularity because of Bononcini's *Camilla*. This paved the way for Handel's *Rinaldo*, which he composed for the 1710-1711 season, premiered at St. James's Palace on Queen Anne's birthday, February 6th. Handel came under the patronage of the young Earl of Burlington in 1713, where he also resided for the next four years. 1717 would see Handel have a brief relationship with the Earl of Carnarvon and later Duke of Chandos, James Brydges. In May of 1719 Handel found himself employed as a musician by the First Duke of Newcastle, the Lord Chamberlain. He was ordered to look for new singers and spend the next few years traveling, collecting singers and composing. *Giulio Cesare*, *Tamerlano*, *Scipio* and *Rodelinda* all came out of the 1724-1725 year, drawing the attention of many figureheads and leading to the eventual commission for King George II's coronation

²⁹ Anthony Hicks, "Handel, George Frideric, 2: Hamburg," In *Grove Music Online*, accessed February 22, 2014, *Oxford Music Online*.

³⁰ Hicks, "Handel, 3: Italy."

ceremony. *Zadok the Priest* was played at the coronation and has been played at every coronation since. Between 1711 and 1739 more than twenty-five of Handel's operas premiered at the Queen's Theater. In 1734 the Covent Garden Theater, having recently opened in 1732, became the venue performing Handel, two opera nights a week. He wrote *Ariodante* and *Alcina* in the first half of 1735 and *Alexander's Feast* just a year later. The next few years saw compositions as *Arminio*, *Giustino*, *Bernice*, *Il trionfo del Tempo e della Verità*, a revision of *Alcina* and adaptation of Vinci's *Didone abbandonata*.³¹ In March 1738 *Alexander's Feast* was published and seven members of the royal family headed the lengthy subscription list. Handel's success was unparalleled in London resulting in wealth and the opportunity to support charities such as the Royal Society of Musicians. July of the same year we see Handel return almost solely to oratorio beginning with *Saul*, immediately followed by *Israel in Egypt*.³² In the years 1740 and 1741 Handel composes his two last operas, *Imeneo* and *Deidamia*, both with minimal performances.

It is in this time of Handel's life that most of his profound works are produced including, *Messiah*, *Samson*, *Allessandro in Persia*, *Joseph and his Brethren*, *Semele*, revivals of *Samson* and *Saul*, *Acis and Galatea*, *Hercules* and *Belshazzar*. On April 1st 1747 *Judas Maccabaeus* opened having instantaneous success and proving to be one of the most endearingly popular oratorios.³³ Handel also composed *Alexander Balus* and *Joshua*, both with libretti by Thomas Morell, a frequent collaborator with Handel. *Solomon* and *Susanna* closely followed these compositions. Only two years later *The Music for the Royal Fireworks* was composed, quickly becoming a steadfast in the British repertory. That same year Morell and Handel once again collaborated to create *Theodora*, and Handel sets *Alceste* with a libretto by Scottish writer, Tobias Smollett.³⁴ Handel did not produce a 'new' oratorio again until 1757, *The Triumph of Time and Truth*, though it was mainly an English version of *Il trionfo del Tempo e della Verità*. Handel became confined to bed after the his final attendance at *Messiah* on April 6, 1759. He dictated his final will and died in the evening of April 14, 1759. Three thousand

³¹ Hicks, "Handel, 8: Opera at Convent Garden."

³² Burrows, *Handel*, 245-246.

³³ Hicks, "Handel, 10: Oratorios and musical dramas."

³⁴ Burrows, *Handel*, 330-331.

people attended his funeral service, taking place April 20, 1759. As an honor to the great composer, L.F. Roubiliac's monument was unveiled to the public July 10, 1762, featuring the composer holding an open *Messiah* score showcasing "I Know That My Redeemer Liveth".³⁵

Joshua

Handel began the composition of *Joshua* (HWV 64) July 19, 1747 and was concluded in just a month. *Joshua* is based on the biblical story of the same name and premiered at the Covent Garden Theatre March 9, 1748.³⁶ The libretto is thought by some scholars to be anonymous, while most claim Thomas Morell is the librettist, which is the opinion adopted throughout this report. Considering only those oratorios performed after *Samson*, *Joshua* was the second most performed work of the composer's lifetime.³⁷ *Joshua* is one of four oratorios written between 1746 and 1748, along with *The Occasional Oratorio*, *Judas Maccabeus* and *Alexander Balus*, all having heavy military overtones. Handel's compositional speed surely taxed Morell's abilities, though he rose to the challenge with each new oratorio. Morell took his libretto from the bloodthirsty account in the Old Testament 'Book of Joshua', condensing the campaigns against Jericho, Ai and the Five Kings into one dramatic block, and enlarging the parts taken by Othniel and Achsah to provide the romantic foil necessary to break up and contrast with an otherwise almost continuously war-like story.³⁸

The scoring of this oratorio is quite lavish and suggests that Handel was financially secure in performances. The orchestra contained flutes, trumpets, horns, timpani, strings, oboes, bassoons, and a continuo instrument. The most powerful writing in *Joshua* implores the use of timpani enhancing the dramatic moments of Jericho's walls tumbling, and the ensuing raging fires that destroy the city.

³⁵ Hicks, "Handel, 12: The Last Years."

³⁶ Hicks, "Handel, 11: The Later Oratorios."

³⁷ Robert King, "Georg F. Handel's 'Joshua,'" accessed March 1, 2014, <http://musicologicus.blogspot.com/2012/02/georg-f-handels-joshua.html>

³⁸ King, "Handel's 'Joshua.'"

“See the Raging Flames Arise,” preceded by the recitative “The Walls are Level’d,” is sung by the patriarch Caleb, as Jericho meets her doom and is destroyed.

This text is based on *Joshua* Chapter VI, verses 2-5, 17 and 22-25.

Then the Lord said to Joshua, “See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men. March around the city once with all the armed men. Do this for six days. Have seven priests carry trumpets of rams’ horns in front of the ark. On the seventh day, march around the city seven times, with the priests blowing the trumpets. When you hear them sound a long blast on the trumpets, have the whole army give a loud shout; then the wall of the city will collapse and the army will go up, everyone straight in. The city and all that is in it are to be devoted to the Lord. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall be spared, because she hid the spies we sent. Joshua said to the two men who had spied out the land, “Go into the prostitute’s house and bring her out and all who belong to her, in accordance with your oath to her.” So the young men who had done the spying went in and brought out Rahab, her father and mother, her brothers and sisters and all who belonged to her. They brought out her entire family and put them in a place outside the camp of Israel. Then they burned the whole city and everything in it, but they put the silver and gold and the articles of bronze and iron into the treasury of the Lord’s house. But Joshua spared Rahab the prostitute, with her family and all who belonged to her, because she hid the men Joshua had sent as spies to Jericho—and she lives among the Israelites to this day.³⁹

The recitative and air take place as Caleb is commanding his forces to lay waste to the city and its populus, remembering to spare Rahab as the walls of Jericho are crashing down around them.

³⁹ Josh. 6: 2-5, 22-25.

Recitative

The walls are level'd, pour the chosen bands,
 With hostile gore imbrue your thirsty hands,
 Set palaces and temples in a blaze,
 Sap the foundations, and the bulwarks raze.
 But oh, remember, in the bloody strife,
 To spare the hospitable Rahab's life

Air

See, the raging flames arise,
 Hear, the dismal groans and cries!
 The fatal day of wrath is come;
 Proud Jericho hath met her doom.

The rhyme scheme of the recitative is AABBCC. It is a very declarative, demanding recitative, and should drive forward until Caleb remembers the Rahab and his assistance.⁴⁰ The air, “See the raging flames arise”, shows great vocal text painting as the vocal melismas imitate the raging flames, specifically written for Antonio Montagnana, an eighteenth century Italian Bass.⁴¹ The rhyme scheme of this text is AABB, and the aria is in ABA form. Handel chooses to use the opposite of his fiery melismatic passages and employs legato singing to reflect the text, “dismal groans and cries.” The song concludes with a flourish in the orchestra as Handel musically depicts Caleb’s destructive forces obliterating the city. The air is marked Allegro, with a suggested meter of quarter note equal to 120. Ultimately the tempo depends on the performer and how fast his voice can manipulate the melismatic passages. The final cadenza, “proud Jericho hath met her doom,” demands appropriate melismatic improvisation as Caleb and his forces raze the city to the ground.

Figure 2.1 An example of a melismatic passage



⁴⁰ Willie Archie Knowles, “A Performer’s Analysis of the Bass Roles in Selected Old Testament Narrative English Oratorios of George Frideric Handel,” (DMA diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2003), 102-104.

⁴¹ King, “Handel’s ‘Joshua.’”

Chapter 3 - The Lieder of Richard Strauss

German *Lied*, an art form erupting onto the musical scene in the early 19th century, runs parallel to the artistic and literary Romanticism movement occurring throughout Europe. Germany in particular was dominated by romantic music. Out of this movement many noted composers arose: Franz Schubert, Johannes Karl Gottfried Loewe, Hugo Wolf, Robert and Clara Schumann, Johannes Brahms and Richard Strauss. The compositional and piano abilities of Richard Strauss aided him in writing some of the most celebrated *lieder*, still in the repertoire today.

Richard Georg Strauss was born June 11, 1864 in Munich, a lively place of artistic intrigue. The opportunities and musical upbringing presented to Strauss could have been drastically different had he not been born in Munich. His father, Franz, was the principal horn player of the Munich *Hofkapelle* for forty-two years, which explains Richard's fondness of the instrument throughout his many works.⁴² His mother, Josepha, was the daughter of a Munich brewer, enabling a comfortable middle-class life. Josepha had very intense anxiety that affected her for periods throughout her entire life. Her husband, Franz, only aggravated her condition. Richard recalled that his father was hostile and dictatorial, especially concerning his mother. Franz was a critic in the anti-Wagner group emerging in Munich by the 1860s, which meant a young Richard did not see a Wagner score until he was sixteen. Franz and Richard Wagner knew each other and did not get along; however, Wagner is quoted saying, "Strauss is an unbearable fellow, but when he plays his horn, one cannot be cross with him".⁴³ Fortunately Franz had a musical upbringing and was competent on various instruments, excelling on the French horn.

Richard Strauss's compositional styles were heavily influenced by his environment and education. Because of Franz Strauss's adverse obsession of most things

⁴² Raymond Holden, *Richard Strauss: A Musical Life* (Yale University Press, New Haven 2011), 3.

⁴³ Holden, *Strauss: A Musical Life*, 5.

new, young Richard's music education became an obsession of his fathers; paralleling the father-son relationship of Richard's hero, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

At four years old, Richard began studying piano with August Tombo, the harpist of the Munich *Hofkapelle*.⁴⁴ His sister, Johanna, comments: "Richard made swift progress in playing the piano... sight-reading presented him with no problems...".⁴⁵ He also studied violin with Benno Walter, his father's cousin and leader of the Munich *Hofkapelle*. Richard never did achieve more than a basic level, though the rudimentary knowledge of string playing was put to use throughout the rest of his life. Richard changed piano teachers in 1878 to attain full functionality of his left hand; his father chose the distinguished pedagogue Friedrich Niest.⁴⁶ Not long after, Richard was to have harmony, counterpoint and orchestration lessons with Friedrich Wilhelm Meyer, by his father's arrangement. Meyer's influence on Richard was deep and long-lasting. Strauss would later dedicate many works to Meyer including his *Serenade in G Major*, *Overture in A Minor* and *Serenade in E-flat Major*. Strauss's traditional education began at the *Domschule* (Cathedral School). Ironically he would later become a confirmed atheist. He continued at *Widmann'sche Lehranstalt* where he studied for his entry to *Ludwigs-Gymnasium* in 1873. Richard excelled at his schoolwork and was generally liked by everyone.⁴⁷ Eventually he would study for a year at the *Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität* in Munich before leaving the university.

Richard Strauss adored Mozart, having been introduced to his works by his father at an early age. The second musical work young Richard saw was *Die Zauberflöte*.⁴⁸ Strauss penned a letter to his childhood friend, Ludwig Thuille, reading:

At the moment I'm very diligently playing the Mozart piano concertos from our Mozart edition, and I can tell you it's wonderful, it's giving me enormous enjoyment. The abundance of the ideas, the harmonic richness, and yet the sense of proportion, the marvelous, lovely, tender, delightful ideas themselves, the delicate accompaniment. Yet one can't play anything like that anymore...Mozart, with few means, says everything a listener

⁴⁴ Holden, *Richard Strauss: A Musical Life*, 6.

⁴⁵ Holden, *Richard Strauss: A Musical Life*, 6.

⁴⁶ Holden, *Richard Strauss: A Musical Life*, 6.

⁴⁷ Holden, *Richard Strauss: A Musical Life*, 7-8.

⁴⁸ Holden, *Richard Strauss: A Musical Life*, 10.

could desire to be refreshed and truly entertained and edified, the others use all the means at their disposal to say absolutely nothing, or hardly anything. The world is crazy! To blazes with it! But I've made a vow, when I appear at an important concert for the first time...I will play a Mozart concerto.⁴⁹

While on a three month stay in Berlin, Strauss, like the young Poulenc, had the fortune to meet many of his contemporaries. This would drastically alter his future. He familiarized himself with the leading concert halls, theatres and salons where he met such noted people as violinist Joseph Joachim, composer Johannes Brahms, pianist Eugen d'Albert, impresario Hermann Wolff, the publisher Hugo Bock, and Hans von Bülow, perhaps the most influential person in his life.

Hans von Bülow, a conductor, pianist and student of Liszt, was a very prominent musician in Munich. He was a protégé of Wagner, though that quickly ended because of Wagner's extra-marital relationship with his wife. Bülow was criticized and publically destroyed by the media because of Wagner's involvement with his wife, whom he separated with not long after. He moved on with his life, never fully healing from the public embarrassment. Georg II, Duke of *Saxe-Meiningen*, employed Bülow as the *Hofkapelle* giving him full artistic license with no limitations regarding repertoire choices or other matters. This freedom led Bülow's programming of Strauss's music, leading to a personal meeting and life-long mentorship. Bülow personally arranged Strauss's appointment as *Hofmusikdirektor* at the Grand Duchy of *Meiningen* in October 1885. "As Bülow's assistant, he was required to teach piano to the Duke's daughter, Princess Marie, perform as a chamber musician, take orchestral rehearsals and direct the local choral society."⁵⁰ Most importantly Strauss was able to observe Bülow's conducting techniques and overall rehearsal etiquette. "The reverence Strauss had for Bülow was life-long and in maturity he always maintained that his mentor's influence was the 'most decisive factor' in his career."⁵¹ Bülow resigned in 1885, allowing Strauss to take full charge of the orchestra, which would propel his conducting career to the enormity it would become.

⁴⁹ Willi Schuh, *Richard Strauss: A Chronicle of the Early Years, 1864-1898* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1982), 31.

⁵⁰ Holden, *Richard Strauss: A Musical Life*, 16.

⁵¹ Schuh, *Chronicle of Early Years*, 31.

Richard Strauss married Pauline de Ahna on September 10, 1894. She was the daughter of Major General Adolf de Ahna. Pauline, an emotional woman, never let her emotions get in the way of her work as a soprano. Pauline became his muse and encouraged and positively influenced him for his musical life. They had one child together. Strauss died at the age of beighty-five on September 8 1949, two days before his fifty-fifth wedding anniversary. Strauss is considered one of the greatest composers of the early twentieth cenury, being one of the most significant contributors to the history of opera since Wagner. Richard Strauss enriched everything he could and the musical world has benefited immensely from his contributions.

Richard Strauss is perhaps best known for his symphonies and operas; however, his art songs must not be forgotten. Many scholars believe his *lieder* was influenced by Wagner. His ability to text paint rivals his contemporaries, Wolf, Brahms and others, fixated mostly with the positive views of love and sentimentality. In 1885 Strauss burst onto the *lied* stage with Op. 10 including such noted songs as *Zueignung* and *Allerseelen*. Opus 10 revealed “unprecedented musical maturity and include several mainstays of the recital repertory”.⁵² Strauss wrote a *lieder* opus every year until 1891. Unlike his contemporaries Strauss did not use high literary quality poems, but rather texts he and Pauline both liked. In 1894 he wrote Opus 27, *Vier Lieder*, for his wedding to Pauline. Together they performed recitals all over the world mismatching many songs from many different opuses, which reinforces the fact that Strauss did not intend for his opuses to be performed as a unit.⁵³ Strauss’s *lieder* should be performed with piano, unless it has been orchestrated. He orchestrated his *lieder* for such noted singer as Elisabeth Schumann, his wife Pauline and a few others. Strauss composed *lieder* throughout the rest of his life, setting many poets from different periods of German history. Strauss set his contemporaries as well as the greats of the past, not differentiating by author, but by substance and prose.⁵⁴

⁵² Bryan Gilliam, “Strauss, Richard, 8: Lieder and choral music,” In *Grove Music Online*, Accessed February 4 2014, *Oxford Music Online*.

⁵³ Gilliam, “Strauss, Richard, 8: Lieder and choral music.”

⁵⁴ Gilliam, “Strauss, Richard, 8: Lieder and choral music.”

Zueignung, Nichts, and Cäcilie

Opus 10, which includes *Zueignung*, *Nichts*, *Die Nacht* and *Allerseelen*, is the first group of *lieder* to which Strauss assigned an opus number, though he had written over forty songs by this point in his life. The poetry is by Hermann von Gilm zu Rosenegg, a nineteenth-century poet who is mainly remembered because of Strauss's settings.⁵⁵ Love is the basic theme present throughout the opus incorporating flashes of nature, night life, and flowers. One should note Opus 10 is a collection of songs; not a cycle. Strauss was very sparse in his interpretive markings, wanting the performers to make the appropriate decisions. The vocal lines throughout Strauss's *lieder* are difficult and explore wide ranges and quick interval leaps. It is this melodic trait and harmonic accompaniments that make his works so memorable.

⁵⁵ Lorraine Gorell, *The Nineteenth-Century German Lied* (Amadeus Press, New Jersey, 1993), 328.

Zueignung

Ja, du weißt es, teure Seele,
Daß ich fern von dir mich quäle,
Liebe macht die Herzen krank,
Habe Dank.

Einst hielt ich, der Freiheit Zecher,
Hoch den Amethysten-Becher,
Und du segnetest den Trank,
Habe Dank.

Und beschworst darin die Bösen,
Bis ich, was ich nie gewesen,
Heilig, heilig an das Herz dir sank,
Habe Dank.

Dedication

Yes, you know it, dearest soul,
How I suffer far from you,
Love makes the heart sick,
Have thanks.

Once I, drinker of freedom,
Held high the amethyst beaker,
And you blessed the drink,
Have thanks.

And you exorcised the evils in it,
Until I, as I had never been before,
Blessed, blessed sank upon your heart,
Have thanks.

Zueignung especially presents a positive view of love. This song spans an octave and a fourth, the minimum range requirement for singing the opus in its entirety. Strauss uses this range to bring out the text painting so prevalent throughout the piece. *Heilig* (holy) is placed on the highest note of the piece closely followed by the lowest note of the piece placed on the word *sank* (sank). The dramatic leap plays on the meaning of the word *sank*, and is an indicative method used by Strauss throughout his *lieder*. The pianist should note that the pedaling is carefully marked throughout. *Habe Dank* acts as a unifying element throughout the song occurring after each strophically variant section. Strauss eventually orchestrated this piece in 1940 for the Czech soprano Viorica Ursuleac.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Gorell, *The Nineteenth-Century German Lied*, 324.

Nichts

*Nennen soll ich, sagt ihr,
meine Königin im Liederreich?
Toren, die ihr seid,
ich kenne Sie am wenigsten von euch.*

*Fragt mich nach der Augen Farbe,
Fragt mich nach der Stimme Ton,
Fragt nach Gang und Tanz und Haltung,*

Ach, und was weiß ich davon!

*Ist die Sonne nicht die Quelle
Alles Lebens, alles Lichts?
Und was wissen von derselben
Ich, und ihr, und alle? -- Nichts.*

Nothing

I should name, you say,
my queen in the realm of love?
You are fools,
for I know her less than you do.

Ask me about the color of her eyes;
ask me about the sound of her voice;
ask me about her gait and posture, and
how she dances;
ah, what do I know about it?

Is not the sun the source
of all life and all light?
And about this, what do I and you and
everyone know? -- Nothing.

Nichts is the second song in Opus 10, very much contrasting the first number, *Zueignung*. This piece is marked *vivace* and is in 3/4 time, with further detail instructing the singer to ‘render freely’ and the accompanist to play ‘with humor,’ the only style indicators throughout the piece. The accompaniment is based on a motif, with the vocal line remaining legato, especially in the third stanza of text. The accompaniment ends with the same motif it started with, while the vocalist is very insistent that he knows nothing, *nichts*.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Alan Jefferson, *The Lieder of Richard Strauss* (Praeger Publishers Inc, New York, 1971), 44-45.

Cäcilie

*Wenn du es wüßtest,
Was träumen heißt von brennenden Küssen,
Von Wandern und Ruhen mit der Geliebten,
Aug in Auge, Und kosend und plaudernd,
Wenn du es wüßtest, Du neigtest dein Herz!*

*Wenn du es wüßtest, Was bangen heißt
in einsamen Nächten, Umschauert vom Sturm,
da niemand tröstet Mildes Mundes die
kampfmüde Seele,
Wenn du es wüßtest, Du kämest zu mir.*

*Wenn du es wüßtest, Was leben heißt,
umhaucht von der Gottheit Weltschaffendem
Atem,
Zu schweben empor, lichtgetragen, Zu seligen
Höhn,
Wenn du es wüßtest, Du lebstest mit mir!*

Cecilie

If you only knew
what it's like to dream of burning kisses,
of wandering and resting with one's beloved,
eye turned to eye, and cuddling and chatting
if you only knew, you would incline your heart
to me!

If you only knew what it's like to feel dread on
lonely nights, surrounded by a raging storm,
while no one comforts with a mild voice your
struggle-weary soul -
if you only knew, you would come to me.

If you only knew what it's like to live,
surrounded by God's world-creating breath,
to float up, carried by the light, to blessed
heights -
if you only knew, then you would live with me!

Cäcilie is part of Opus 27, *Vier Lieder*, which Strauss wrote for his wife Pauline as a wedding present. He composed this piece on September 9, 1894, the day before the wedding. This song became a constant in the couple's many concerts given throughout Europe. He would later orchestrate this piece in 1897 in the key of E-flat. This setting is *durchkomponiert*, through-composed, which appropriately shows the never ending and always changing passion of its content. The first strophe is in a major key and uses passionate words to intensify the emotion of the verse. The second strophe switches to minor tonality showing the darker sides of love, worry, lonely nights and isolation. The second strophe does return to major tonality at the end foreshadowing the budding ray of light offered at the end of the piece. *Höhn* (heights) is placed on a high note and held allowing for the sonority of the voice to create the feeling of height. The longest and most difficult phrase is the last line of the poem. *Lebstest* (live) is 12 beats of a lengthy extension of a three-note arpeggio that requires breath control and the purest vowel to achieve vocal sonority necessitating a *crescendo* to *ff* and the ultimate climax of the piece.

Chapter 4 - Giacomo Puccini, The End of a Musical Dynasty

Giacomo Puccini, born December 22, 1858, reigns from a musical dynasty that was very unfamiliar to the nineteenth century. Lucca, a city on the banks of the river Serchio in Tuscany, was deeply rooted in sacred music allowing the Puccini dynasty to prosper, culminating with the greatest champion of the family, Giacomo Antonio Domenico Michele Secondo Maria Puccini.

Giacomo is one of seven children born to Michele Puccini and Albina Magi. His great, great-grandfather, of the same name, established the Puccini dynasty over a century prior to his birth. Young Giacomo, suffering deeply as the result of Michele's death in 1864, was fortunate enough to have a very determined mother who was able to keep up their middle-class appearances and steer the family down the paths already laid down by their heritage. He first took lessons with his uncle, Fortunato Magi, studying beginning keyboard lessons and how to be a chorister. "Whenever he [young Giacomo] sang out of tune Magi would kick him sharply on the shin, with the result that for the rest of his life Puccini was unable to hear a lapse of pitch without imaginary twinges of pain."⁵⁸ Magi was a wicked man, talented, but wicked only yielding to his nephew with a testimonial to the Milan Conservatory.⁵⁹

Puccini was admitted to San Michele as a youngster and moved to the cathedral, very befitting of one predetermined for the career of an organist. Puccini was a very distracted student and generally did not apply himself in his studies, though his keyboard skills increased at a rapid pace. He eventually entered the *Instituto Pacini*, where his keyboard skills were put to test throughout the area as an organist, "...the fingers had acquired sufficient skill for him to deputize as organist at various parishes in the neighborhood, notably the summer resort of *Mutigliano*, where he would scandalize the faithful by weaving operatic hits into his voluntaries".⁶⁰ Puccini first studied composition with Carlo Angeloni. His success was noted only a year later receiving the *Primo Premio Lucca del Palazzo Comunale* (First prize of Lucca City Hall). This year also saw his first

⁵⁸ Julian Budden, *Puccini: His Life and Works* (Oxford University Press, New York 2002), 5.

⁵⁹ Budden, *Puccini*, 5.

⁶⁰ Budden, *Puccini*, 7.

accredited composition, *A te*, a song for mezzo-soprano and piano. Puccini had a few uneventful years before his mother, Albina, started wanting him to get into the conservatory. After exhausting the application process for government help she turned to two friends of her deceased husband, the Duchess Carafa and Marchesa Pallavicini, the Queen's lady-in-waiting. The Duchess, supported by Pallavicini, suggested asking Queen Margherita for one of the royal bursaries available to musicians born into needy families. The money was given and Puccini found himself on the way to the conservatory.

Puccini's attendance at the Milan Conservatory was an exception to the policies, as he was much older than most students admitted. His placement exam at the conservatory was astounding and they passed him right into the senior class, overlooking his age. Classes at the conservatory went much like his classes did as a child; he did not do his work, detested studying his lectures and ultimately tried to make deals with the academic council to get out of taking certain classes.⁶¹ Puccini eventually came to study with Amilcare Ponchielli, who taught and shared the same talent of writing orchestral postludes based on the most memorable theme of the aria. It was under Ponchielli that Puccini first enjoyed the company of fellow student, Pietro Mascagni. They would become lifelong friends, rooming together for the duration of their stays at the conservatory. Puccini's final year at the conservatory saw the emergence of songs he later recycled for use in his later operas, *Edgar* and *Le Villi*. Puccini graduated with honors midsummer of 1883 after composing his thesis, *Capriccio sinfonica*. This piece propelled his reputation and would lead the way for his operatic compositions that would occupy the next three decades. Puccini wrote many great operas over the next three years ending with *Turandot*. His private life was unhappy and consisted of a lot of marital drama caused by his infidelity, which ironically started his marriage. Puccini stayed out of politics, having little interest though he was an honorary member of the fascist party under Mussolini.

Puccini took his last breath November 29, 1925, just months prior to Mussolini's takeover in Italy. His entire life consisted of smoking cigars and cigarettes leading to a

⁶¹ Budden, *Puccini*, 25.

very aggressive form of throat cancer. He tried radiation therapy in Brussels only to die the next day from a heart attack. He is buried at the Puccini villa at *Torre del Lago*.⁶²

Edgar

Giulio Ricordi, head of the publishing company **G. Ricordi & Co** was very much impressed by Puccini's first opera *Le Villi* so he commissioned a second opera, *Edgar*. Puccini would again collaborate with Ferdinando Fontana, though not with the success of their first pairing. The original score consisted of four acts, though Puccini, after many revisions, cut it to three, which is how it is performed today. Premiering April 21, 1889, *Edgar* received lukewarm response and required a major defense from Ricordi in the newspapers criticizing the libretto and librettist, while still praising the compositional genius Ricordi saw in Puccini.⁶³

Ferdinando Fontana, a literary figure of the late nineteenth century, had elementary success with two plays *La Pina Madamin* and *La Statôa del sciôr Incioda*. This would draw the attention of Ricordi and lead to the eventual collaboration with Puccini on *La Villi* and *Edgar*. Though praised to be a prodigy, the public and Ricordi saw otherwise. Unfortunately for Fontana, Ricordi blamed *Edgar's* failure on thirty-eight year old Fontana and the rest of his career would be stamped out by his commitment to the socialist party and eventual flight to Sweden until his death in 1919.⁶⁴

Upon Puccini's revision of *Edgar* and the disassociation with Fontana, the opera saw some success and it played at other houses around Italy. Puccini would revise *Edgar* three times in 1890, 1891 and 1901. The fifth and definitive edition was finally set in 1905 at the performance in Buenos Aires, Argentina, which he attended. Puccini eventually came to detest *Edgar* noting on a score sent to his English friend Sybil

⁶² Gabriella Biagi Ravenni and Michele Girardi, "Puccini, 10: The Last Experiment, " In *Grove Music Online*, accessed February 20, 2014, *Oxford Music Online*.

⁶³ Mosco Carner, *Puccini: A Critical Biography*, (Holmes & Meier Pub, Teaneck 1959), 49.

⁶⁴ Francesco Cesari, ed. by Johannes Streicher. *Scapigliatura & Fin de Siècle. Libretti d'opera italiani dall'Unità al primo Novecento - Scritti per Mario Morini: Ferdinando Fontana librettista*, (Sonia Teramo e Roberta Travaglini, Ismez, Rome 2007), 325–344.

Seligman, “*E Dio ti Guardi da quest’opera!*” (‘And God preserve you from this opera!’).⁶⁵

The opera is set in Flanders in 1302; Act I takes place in a village square. Sleeping outside his house, Edgar is awakened by the pure and innocent Fidelity. Tigrana laughs at his infatuation with Fidelity, and reminds him he once had very different desires. Frank, who has always loved Tigrana, enters the scene, berates her and then sings *Questo amor, vergogna mia*. Assembling at a church, the villagers are harassed by Tigrana through song. They threaten to attack, but Edgar defends her. As they leave Frank bars their way and they duel, leaving Frank wounded. Act II is set on the terrace of a palace. Edgar regrets his new life with Tigrana and misses Fidelity terribly. Frank passes, heading a group of soldiers, and Edgar decides to join him in service of his country. Act III begins with a military funeral for Edgar, who all believe has fallen in battle. Behind the coffin Frank and a nameless monk stand joined by Fidelity, mourning the death of her only love. The funeral proceeds and Fidelity reassures the audience that her love is true and Edgar is no monster. Tigrana enters and is in deep mourning at Edgar’s coffin, but the monk and Frank bribe her with jewels to denounce him before the crowd as a traitor. She does and the people rush the coffin only to find it empty. The monk reveals he is Edgar. He embraces Fidelity saying he has been reborn, only to have the moment shattered by Tigrana’s murder of Fidelity. Edgar weeps over Fidelity’s body, Tigrana is arrested and the crowd prays.⁶⁶

Questo amor, vergogna mia shows Puccini’s use of ternary form. Puccini splits this aria into three sections. The first section consists of three phrases in the key of F Major. The second section, contrasting to both the first and third sections, consists of two phrases utilizing the mediant, a minor, and dominant, C Major, harmonies. Using an accustomed practice of the time, Puccini reprises the first section with minor melodic changes, bigger orchestration and a much more definitive cadence.

⁶⁵ Budden, *Puccini*, 69.

⁶⁶ Julian Budden. "Edgar," In *Grove Music Online*, accessed February 20, 2014, *Oxford Music Online*, 2014.

Questo amor, vergogna mia,
Io spezzar, scordar vorrei;
Ma d'un' orrida malia
Sono schiavi i sensi miei...
Mille volte al ciel giurai
Di fuggirla!...
E a lei tornai!

Ella ride del mio pianto,
Ed io, vil, col cuore infranto,
Ai suoi piedi mi prosterno...
E lei sola io sogno, io bramo!
Ah sventura!...
Io l'amo!

This shameful love of mine,
I wish to forget;
but by a horrible spell
my emotions are enslaved.
A thousand times to heaven I swore
to flee from her!
And to her I returned!

She laughs at my tears
Of my indignation she sneers
And I, a coward, with a crushed heart
At her feet I lay prostrate
And of her alone I dream, I desire!
Ah misfortune! I love her.

Translation by Bard Suverkrop⁶⁷

Chapter 5 - Jason Robert Brown, A Rising Star

Jason Robert Brown, one of the leading composers on Broadway and of Musical Theater, was born June 20, 1970, and grew up in Mosney, New York. He became enthralled with music at the age of four, started taking lessons at five, and gave his first piano recital at six, where he “started chatting with the audience”.⁶⁸ A natural entertainer and fabulous pianist, Brown saw his break through in 1995 with *Songs For a New World*, launching his career as a Broadway star.

Brown attended Eastman School of Music for two years, studying composition with Samuel Adler, Christopher Rouse, and Joseph Schwantner. During his summers he attended the French Woods Festival of the Performing Arts in Hancock, New York. Not long after Brown was invited to see a new Sondheim musical by Stephen Sondheim himself. Brown ended up embarrassing Sondheim at dinner afterwards and was reprimanded by Sondheim.⁶⁹ His career began as a pianist for William Finn’s *A New Brain* and as a pianist at several nightclubs and piano bars in the city, eventually leading to *Songs For A New World*, directed by Daisy Prince,

⁶⁷ Bard Suverkrop, "IPA Source - Questo Amor, Vergogna Mia" In *IPA Source - International*, accessed February 20, 2014.

⁶⁸ Bruce Weber, “If Only the Cool Kids Could See Him Now (at Least Hear His Songs),” *The New York Times*, October 1, 2008, accessed March 3, 2014.

⁶⁹ Jason Robert Brown, "Nicely done, schmuck," *The Sondheim Review* (Sondheim Review, Inc.), XVI (4): 26–27.

daughter of director/producer Hal Prince. This show featured twenty-five year old Brown's popular rock-influenced song cycle, with *Stars and the Moon* becoming the most known song from the show, and possibly all of Brown's compositions. Because of his collaboration with Daisy Prince, Brown eventually collaborated with Hal Prince and wrote the score for *Parade*, winning his first Tony Award for Best Original Musical Score. *The Last Five Years* saw Brown again collaborate with Daisy Prince, for which he wrote both the book and music. Ms. Prince reminisced, "Jason plays for his life, he's a notorious piano-string breaker. That was sort of the first thing I noticed. And I love that kind of playing."⁷⁰ The next two decades would see such workings as *John and Jenn* (orchestrations 1995), *The Waverly Gallery* (Off-Broadway 2000), *Urban Cowboy* (Broadway 2003), *Wearing Someone Else's Clothes* (Brown's solo debut album 2005), *Chanukah Suite* (choral fanfare 2005), *13* (Broadway 2008-2009), *Honeymoon in Vegas* (stage adaptation 2012), and currently *The Bridges of Madison County* (stage adaptation 2014). Currently Brown is on faculty at University of Southern California where he teaches Music Theater Performance and Composition.⁷¹ Brown has said in many interviews that his largest musical influences in life are pianists Elton John and Billy Joel, so evident in his style of playing.

The Last Five Years

This one act, Drama Desk award winning musical, stars a two-person cast telling the same story with drastically different perspectives. The show debuted at the Northlight Theater in Illinois in 2001 starring Lauren Kennedy and Norbert Leo Butz. The show would see three more stateside productions moving to an Off-Broadway opening at Minetta Lane Theatre (March 3, 2002), a regional showing in Florida (2012), and an Off-Broadway revival at the Second Stage Theater in 2013. The show has played in France and England and is currently in the post-production stages of being made into a major motion picture.⁷²

⁷⁰ Weber, "See Him Now."

⁷¹ _____, "Jason Robert Brown," (*American Theater Wing*, http://americantheatrewing.org/biography/detail/jason_robert_brown), accessed March 3 2014), May, 2011.

⁷² Kenneth Jones, "Marriage Dissected: Brown's Musical, Last Five Years, Opening May 23 in IL," (Playbill.com, accessed March 3, 2014), May 23, 2001. <http://www.playbill.com/news/article/60312-Marriage-Dissected-Browns-Musical-Last-Five-Years-Opening-May-23-in-IL>

Brown poured his heart and soul into this musical, as it was inspired by his failed first marriage. Brown's compositional style, affected by his emotions, usually rage, is often reflected in both the piano and vocal parts.

It's the same angst that comes out in all my stuff, I've never been particularly good at explaining or even understanding what this sort of rage is that is so accessible to me. I'm not an out-of-control person, but I can access in my work very easily a feeling of real fury. Thank goodness I've channeled it into my work, I guess.⁷³

As the story begins, Jamie Wellerstein, a rising novelist, is at the beginning of the five-year relationship, while Cathy Hyatt, a struggling actress, is at the end of the relationship. With scenes woven together, the audience watches Jamie move forward in time as Cathy moves backwards.

Cathy has found a note from Jamie ending their marriage, reflecting with the ever-popular, slightly overdone *Still Hurting*. Five years earlier, Jamie, just meeting Cathy, soars from the ethereal feelings as if she is the one for him, *Shiksa Goddess*. Cathy, moving backwards, is hopeful that their marriage can heal, as both she and Jamie are making sacrifices to make this work in the work *See I'm Smiling*. Jamie, just returning home from their first date, receives a phone call from a literary agent, who is interested in his work. From this point on the 23-year-old Jamie's career starts to soar and he decides it's time to move in with Cathy as epitomized in the song *Moving Too Fast*.⁷⁴ Moving forward to the middle of the musical finds Jamie proposing to Cathy in central park as they sing together for the first time in the song *The Next Ten Minutes*. The rest of the musical takes the audience through various emotions. The truth between the two stories finally emerges in the dichotomy seen at the beginning, only the exact opposite. Brown uses various musical genres throughout the show, with orchestrations using piano, guitar, fretless bass, cello, celesta, violin, and cymbal.

Songs For A New World

This work would end up being the foundation of Brown's career, though classified as a song cycle, it pushes those parameters to the limit. This cycle uses sixteen songs written for various projects on a theme realized by Ms. Prince.

⁷³ Weber, "See Him Now."

⁷⁴ Music Theater International, *The Last Five Years*, accessed March 3, 2014.
http://www.mtishows.com/show_detail.asp?showid=000240

The theme is the moment of decision, the point at which you transition from the old to the new. The change may be geographical, emotional, professional or marital but things are different than they were before. The result is neither musical play nor revue, it is closer to a theatrical song cycle, a very theatrical song cycle.⁷⁵

The musical genres of this show range from country to gospel, including pop riffing and many different vocal colorings. The opening number, written last, is a power opener setting the bar high for the rest of the show. It is the unifying element of the entire production exploring briefly all of the show to come. The best phrase to describe this show is used in the lyrics themselves, “I don’t want to philosophize, I just want to tell a story.”

“The River Won’t Flow” is a rock inspired piece, simple to understand; yet Brown chooses to vocally challenge each voice part, taxing the tessitura and expression of each voice. In “The River Won’t Flow” four characters are introduced who believe not in God, but the complete absurdity and total unpredictability of the world. There are a few underlying themes, all related to the want of adventure in life, whether by money or the natural “flow,” people are always searching for an answer. The literal sense of jealousy and greed are presented by the two men in the quartet. They do not understand how some people are lucky enough to have endless wealth and power and resent them for it. This piece never once relents its power driving to the end with a ridiculously fast piano accompaniment intensified by in all four voices singing in the upper tessitura.

Figure 5.1 An example of the upper tessitura singing

The image displays a musical score for the song "The River Won't Flow" from the musical "Songs for a New World". It features four vocal staves, each with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are: "Ri-ver, Ri-ver, Ri-ver, Ri-ver, Flow!". The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first staff has measure numbers 129, 130, 131, and 132. The music consists of a series of eighth and quarter notes, with a final measure containing a long note with a fermata. The lyrics are aligned with the notes, with "Flow!" appearing at the end of the fourth measure on each staff.

⁷⁵ The Guide To Musical Theater, “Songs For A New World,” accessed March 4, 2014. http://guidetomusicaltheatre.com/shows_s/songsforanewworld.htm

“She Cries” is a samba-like song reflecting on a relationship from the man’s point of view, accusing the woman of being crazy and opening the floodgates of emotion at any whim. This frustrating relationship sends the man through myriad emotions, but always coming back to her at the end. Though she is manipulative, he always catches a glimpse of the woman he fell in love with. Again, Brown taxes the range of any baritone, requiring a demand over the upper tessitura, but requiring quick access to the lower tessitura at any moment’s notice.

Chapter 6 - Jonathan Reid Gealt

Jonathan Reid Gealt, a music theater composer whose popularity is ever-growing, grew up in a small upstate area of New York, Queensbury. From there Gealt attended Boston Conservatory, graduating in 2005 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Musical Theater Performance, with a dual emphasis in dance and composition. He moved directly to New York City after graduation and has had much success in his first years there. Gealt’s progress can be measured by the caliber of people he has already performed including, Kelli O’Hara, Liz Callaway, Lauren Kennedy, Soshana Bean, Zak Resnick, Jonathan Groff, and Tituss Burgess. Gealt’s credits include *Forward* (unfinished), *Here for You – Ballads for Broadway Impact* (2013) and his debut album, *Thirteen Stories Down* (2011).⁷⁶ Gealt is a very private composer resulting in minimal access to his life and works.

“September of ’92,” originally performed by Zak Resnick, is from Gealt’s debut album, *Thirteen Stories Down*. This song starts with a man in a dusty diner in the middle of nowhere, where he happens to notice the smile of a waitress that would introduce him to his girlfriend for the next two years of his life. The singer is reminiscing about her smile, and continues to elate in the power of a smile and what such a simple gesture can do for people.

⁷⁶ “Biography,” accessed March 5, 2014, <http://www.jonathan-reid-gealt.com>

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