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# Selected Repertoire for the Tenor Voice

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FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Miami, Florida

SELECTED REPERTOIRE FOR THE TENOR VOICE

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF MUSIC

by

Scott Terence Tripp

2012

To: Dean Brian D. Schriener  
College of Architecture and the Arts

This thesis, written by Scott Terence Tripp and entitled Selected Repertoire for the Tenor Voice, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgment.

We have read this thesis and recommend that it be approved.

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Date of Defense: March 29, 2012

The thesis of Scott Terence Tripp is approved.

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Dean Brian D. Schriener  
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Florida International University, 2012

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS  
SELECTED REPERTOIRE FOR THE TENOR VOICE

by

Scott Terence Tripp

Florida International University, 2012

Miami, Florida

Professor Kathleen Wilson, Major Professor

This thesis presents extended program notes for a seventy-minute vocal graduate recital consisting of the following repertoire for tenor: Johann Sebastian Bach's cantata *Ich armer Mensch ich Südenknecht*; two songs from the eighteenth-century Spanish collection *Tonadillas Escénicas*; Gaetano Donizetti's song *La dernière nuit d'un novice*; Francis Poulenc's song cycle *Tel jour telle nuit*; Jake Heggie's song cycle *Friendly Persuasions*; and John Corigliano's *Three Irish Folk Songs for Flute and Tenor*. Spanning four centuries of music and representing four different language traditions, these works are sufficiently representative of the tenor repertoire. The content of this thesis features detailed information on these works through historical study, and musical analysis.

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## Chapter I

### JOHAN SEBASIAN BACH

#### *Ich armer Mensch ich Südenknecht*

Bach's Cantata No. 55, *Ich armer Mensch ich Südenknecht*, was written for the twenty-second Sunday after Trinity. It was written fairly late in his career, in 1726, nearly 20 years after his first cantata. It is part of the third cycle he wrote for the liturgical year during his time at Leipzig. While Bach was cantor in Leipzig, he endeavored to perform each Sunday only cantatas that he himself had composed. On rare occasions, he would borrow cantatas in part or in whole from his Weimar days. In Weimar, he had written several cantatas for the court, many of them now lost. The second aria, second recitative, and final chorus of *Ich armer Mensch* were most likely borrowed from one of these lost Weimar cantatas. (Durr, 618)

*Ich armer Mensch* is written for solo tenor with a short chorale at the end. It consists of Aria 1 – Recitative 1 – Aria 2 – Recitative 2 – Chorale. The form of the arias resembles that of the concerto, from which the cantata is thought to have developed. In fact, the term *cantata* was not used in Bach's time, and these works were often referred to as concerti.

#### **Baroque Sacred Poetry and the Protestant Reformation**

The cantata is the main genre through which J. S. Bach is familiar to choral musicians. His solo cantatas are numerous, but are less well known. The cantata was a musical genre of great importance during Bach's time, the church still being the most important venue for music performance. The German Baroque church cantata differs



considerably from the sacred music that predominated in earlier periods, and this was partly because of the Protestant Reformation.

Martin Luther taught that the Word of God was "dead" unless it was proclaimed to the masses and that it was vital to keep the Bible linguistically accessible. Sacred cantatas, especially those of Bach, embodied that principle by placing importance on their text, specifically by setting the text in a descriptive and impassioned manner. Moreover, these texts, comprised of German verse written expressly for the cantata, served to interpret and reinforce the Gospel reading. Thus, Lutheran cantatas had a didactic function; they served to explicate that day's reading and complement the sermon. In contrast, the polyphonic music used in the Catholic liturgy utilized the Latin (Vulgate) texts. Unlike the Lutheran cantata, the counter-reformation motet did not serve as a hermeneutical conduit, conveying the gospel's hidden message to the congregation. The cantata usually occurred in the church service after the gospel reading, but before the creed. This way, the cantata functions as a sung sermon, in accordance with the teachings of Luther.

Bach employed a number of different librettists, many of whom he would work with for long periods of time. The librettist for this particular cantata is unknown, but he clearly is writing for that Sunday's Gospel reading, making several allusions to its parable of the unfaithful steward. This parable contrasts the mercy of God with the sinful nature of man. The subject of this cantata is that very contrast.

## Musical Allegory

James Day writes in *The Literary Background of Bach's Cantatas*, "A musical pattern cannot be said to *mean* anything extra-musical by itself, but in *conjunction with its text*, an emotional association developed which coloured the significance of a particular musical phrase" (Day 1962, 82). This chapter focuses primarily on Bach's idea of musical drama, the tools he used to convey drama in his cantatas, and how he applied those ideas to this particular work. All musicians are familiar with melodic patterns that seem to mimic or reflect the meaning of the words to which they are set. This technique is often referred to as "text painting" or "musical allegory." For example, composers might use repeated arpeggiated figures to represent waves, fast scalar figures to reflect fear, and sharply differentiated tonalities to evoke shifting emotional states. These are techniques of which Bach was fond, and he puts them to effective use in this cantata.

The confession of sin, fixation on guilt, and fear of judgment were frequent topics in the sacred works of Bach and many of his contemporaries, again, due largely to the ideas of the Protestant Reformation. According to Arnold Shering, a well-known German musicologist, "[Bach's] tenor cantata 'Ich armer Mensch'...intensifies the pathos of Schütz [an earlier cantata composer] to a confession of sin amounting almost to spiritual self-torture. Hardly ever— not even in Wagner's *Parsifal*— has the nullity of human nature and its need for redemption been expressed so passionately and so acutely as here, with no glimmer of hope or comfort till the end" (Shering, 1930, 1). Indeed, the intensity with which this cantata develops the theme of hopelessness abates only at the very last moment, when a glimmer of possible redemption offers comparative relief to the listener.

Now we will examine how Bach's setting of the text amplifies the self-torture conveyed by this anonymous librettist.

The following is an English translation of the text of the first movement. All translations in this chapter are by Richard D. P. Jones from Alfred Durr's *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, pages 616-618.

I, poor man, servant of sin,  
I go before God's Presence  
For judgment with fear and trembling.  
He is just, I unjust.  
I, poor man, servant of sin!

While this is a short text, Bach draws it out to yield the longest movement in the cantata. Before the tenor voice enters, Bach has already established an anguished tone, painting a musical picture of the wretched sinner writhing in pain and fear. Figure 1.1 shows a portion of the opening orchestral ritornello.



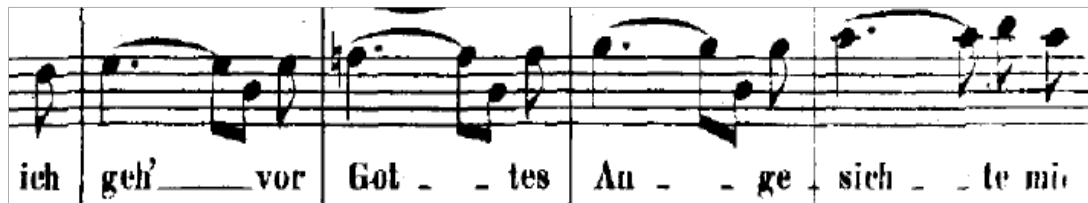
Figure 1.1. Bach: *Ich armer Mensch*, Aria I. Opening ritornello.

Of particular interest is the instrumentation, which makes this cantata unique. There is no viola, and this movement in particular is dominated by the woodwinds: flauto traverso, and oboe d'amore. The woodwinds and the two violins play the rising and falling melody together largely in parallel thirds and sixths, creating a thick texture for much of this movement. Everything about Bach's methods in the opening of this aria evokes that image of the writhing sinner. The rising and falling melody, the parallel voicing, and the top-heavy instrumentation, all combine to paint a very striking picture. When the tenor enters, Bach favors the higher —more difficult and strained—portion of his range, adding a palpable physical dimension to the more abstract musical symbols of suffering. Bach uses musical gestures in the solo tenor line to depict the sinner's fruitless struggle against sin. He makes extensive use of dissonant, non-harmonic tones, such as the neighbor tone on *armer* and the appoggiaturas on *Mensch* and *Sündenknecht*. The tied eighth note on the second iteration of *armer* (in m. 5 of Figure 1.2) forms a dissonant suspension over a dominant chord played by the woodwinds and continuo; its resolution is decorated by an anticipation. Shortly afterwards (mm. 7 and 11 of the figure), rising arpeggiated figures outline dissonant chords on the crucial word *Sündenknecht*; the second of these is approached by a descending diminished-third leap from Eb to C#—an effective emblem of pathos that recurs throughout the aria.



**Figure 1.2 Bach: *Ich armer Mensch*, Aria I. Ornamentation of the solo line.**

Bach repeats these same figures again after moving from G minor to D minor, after which he moves to the next line of text, “Ich geh vor Gottes Angesichte mit Furcht und Zittern zum Gerichte.” Here, the sequence shown in Figure 1.3 sounds almost sluggish when compared with the quicker, more melodically interesting figures the tenor sings everywhere else in the movement. This sluggishness, along with the rising pattern of the sequence, represents the hesitation and rising anxiety felt by the sinner as he approaches the judgment seat.



**Figure 1.3 Bach: *Ich armer Mensch*, Aria I. Rising melodic sequence.**

Perhaps the most interesting section in the aria coincides with Bach’s setting of the words *Furcht und Zittern* (fear and trembling). First, the word *Furcht* features a prominent chromatic escape tone, and then the word *Zittern* is sung on an elongated wavering figure featuring dissonant lower neighbor tones, with the final cadence occurring on the word *Gerichte* (judgment). (See Example 1.4)

Furcht und Zit - - - tern zum Ge - rich - te;

i      vii° <sup>4</sup>/<sub>iv</sub>      iv<sup>6</sup>      V<sup>5</sup> <sup>6-7</sup>      i      ii<sup>5</sup> <sup>6</sup> V<sup>7</sup>      i

**Figure 1.4** Bach: *Ich armer Mensch*, Aria I. *Furcht und Zittern*

The musical allegory, however, is not limited to the melodic figures. The harmonic rhythm speeds up considerably, as the orchestra moves quickly through a complex chord progression. Then, when the tenor repeats the words “Ich armer Mensch,” he is doubled by the violins to demonstrate the intensity of his words (Figure 1.5).

Immediately thereafter, for the repetition of “Ich geh vor Gottes Angesichte,” the entire orchestra drops out, with the exception of the continuo. Here, the tenor repeats several by now familiar melodic patterns—including the diminished-third leap mentioned above—and then moves into a dramatic cadence via a chromatic descent from tonic to dominant on the words *Furcht und Zittern*, all highlighting the singer's fear and hesitation. The tenor's chromatic descent imitates the bass line at a distance of half a

measure. The chromatic descending tetrachord from scale degree 1 to scale degree 5 was a common Baroque musical *locus topicus*, the so-called *passus duriusculus*, which signified lament or suffering (see Rosand 1979 for the roots of this musical topos in the works of Monteverdi and other representatives of the early Italian Baroque. Perhaps Bach's most famous use of this topos is his setting of *Crucifixus* in the Credo of the B-minor Mass.)

The harmonic progression in the “Furcht und Zittern” passage is complex and leaves the listener without a clear sense of the tonal center until the cadential arrival itself. For example, the resolution of the diminished-seventh chord in m. 5 of Figure 1.5 is elided, the bass C# passing directly to C-natural instead of moving first to D and *then* passing to C. Such elisions were considered startling effects; Baroque theorists deemed them more appropriate to theatrical music (the *stylus theatralis*) rather to church music.<sup>1</sup> The arrival of the dominant is obscured at first by a triple dissonance in the melody: the tenor arpeggiates D–Bb–G# over the bass A in (see m. 7 of Figure 5). This dissonant formation can be understood as a triple suspension from the chromatic dominant preparation on G# in the previous measure. (Note that, once again, the tenor's melody incorporates the plaintive diminished-third leap, Bb–G#.)

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<sup>1</sup> It was a contemporary of Bach's, the theorist and composer Johann David Heinichen (1683–1729), who, in his 1728 treatise *Der Generalbass in der Composition*, classified the various types of complex dissonant treatment typical of the theatrical style—that is, of the style of music heard above all in opera. Whereas in the stricter style associated with sacred polyphony (the *gebundene Stil*, or “bound style”), dissonances had to be prepared and resolved according to a limited number of strict conventions, the freer textures associated with the theatrical style permitted a variety of temporal displacements—elisions, anticipations, and so on. (Heinichen would have classified the elision I have identified in the Bach as an *anticipatio transitus*—the anticipation of a passing tone.) Heinichen's treatise is an indispensable source for understanding how composers of Bach's time understood their craft. For a translation, see Heinichen 1986.

The passage as a whole, upon reflection, does make perfect tonal sense: mm. 1–3 of Figure 5 prolongs iv, inflecting it to a bII6 (the so-called Neapolitan) by means of a 5–6 motion over the bass in m. 3. Then, a linear descent in the bass from G3 to G#2 connects this Neapolitan harmony to a V<sup>6/5</sup>-of-V, which resolves to V. The passage is based on the following standard progression:

	5—b6		6/5	6/4	7
Bass:	G	[octave descent]	G#	A	D
Harmony:	IV bII		V/V	V	I

Figure 1.6 shows how the passage elaborates this basic tonic–subdominant–dominant syntax, a syntax obscured by the passing, mostly chromatic bass line in mm. 4–6 of Figure 1.5 and the piling up of suspensions and other dissonant figuration in the tenor melody. The drama is at its height here with all these allegorical devices.

6 6 6 7 5 b6 7-6 7 6 7 5 6 7-6 7 7-6-5 9 8 4 3

iv — V/iv iv bII (II V — i) V/V V I

iv<sup>5</sup> — b6 #IV<sup>7</sup> V I

**Figure 1.5** Bach: *Ich armer Mensch*. Chromatic “Furcht und Zittern” passage.



The image shows a handwritten musical score for a passage from Bach's "Ich armer Mensch". It consists of two staves, treble and bass clef. The treble staff contains a melodic line with various notes, accidentals, and fingerings. Above the treble staff, circled numbers 2, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 are written, likely indicating fingerings or specific notes. Below the staves, there are figured bass notations: IV, bII, {II, V, I, V, V, I and IV<sup>5</sup>, -5, V, I. The notation is handwritten and includes various symbols like flats, sharps, and braces.

**Figure 1.6** Bach: *Ich armer Mensch*. Analytical graph of “Furcht und Zittern” passage.

New material follows with the next line of text: “Er ist gerecht, ich ungerecht.” In this section Bach concentrates on highlighting the contrast between *gerecht* and *ungerecht* (just and unjust). Large intervals in the melodic line proclaim God’s justice. For each proclamation of *Er ist gerecht*, the tenor is alone with the continuo. The orchestra then enters when the melody arrives at the long note on *ungerecht*. (See Figure 1.7)



**Figure 1.7 Bach: *Ich armer Mensch*, Aria I. Just and Unjust**

This short phrase occurs happens twice in this section. In both instances, the first note in the melodic figure is tonicized, and the repetition in different major tonalities is used to move to the key of C minor. The sustained note on *ungerecht* (unjust) falls both times on an unstable Eb, which forms successive dissonances with the A, F#, and D in the bass (locally, it forms a flat ninth with the dominant of G minor). The harmonic contrast between *gerecht* and *ungerecht* is very interesting here, with the former given consonant, triadic support.

The movement continues for another forty-two measures, using the same allegorical techniques, and concludes by reprising the orchestral introduction. Examining Bach's toolbox of allegorical devices reveals the extent to which Bach exploits them to intensify this short text. This is what makes Baroque music in general so exciting.

There is a long recitative before the next aria. In the baroque sacred cantata, the recitative serves that same expositional purpose with which we are familiar in opera. This recitative has a lot of text, and is the most extreme example in the cantata of the self-torture to which Arnold Shering refers.

I have acted against God,  
And that path  
Which he prescribed for me  
I have not followed.  
Where now? Shall I choose the wings of the morning?  
For my flight,  
Which would take me to the uttermost sea?  
Then the hand of the Most High would still find me.  
And chastise me with the rods of sin.  
Ah yes! Even if hell had a bed  
For me and my sins,  
The wrath of the Highest would still be there.  
The earth does not protect me:  
It threatens to devour me, an object of horror;  
And if I would leap up to heaven,  
There dwells God, who pronounced judgment on me.

The recitative is intended to resemble speech. Because the solo voice in recitatives is accompanied only minimally by the basso continuo, there is little opportunity for musical allegory anywhere but in the melodic line. Because the text in a declamatory, speech-like style, there are no textual repetitions and therefore no opportunities for repeated motives or gestures. Bach does, however, accomplish some exciting text painting in this section with the solo line alone. For example, he uses a very quick, rising pattern on “Soll ich der Morgenrote Flugel, zu meiner Flucht erkiesen,” shown in Figure 1.8, to represent the attempted flight of the soul. The dramatic climax at the end of the recitative, when the sinner arrives in heaven only to find God's vengeance

awaiting him, is marked by the highest notes in the movement, the apex occurring on the word *Gott*. (Figure 1.9)

The image shows a musical score for a recitative. The title is "RECITATIVO." The top staff is for the Tenore (Tenor) and the bottom staff is for the Continuo (Cello/Bass). The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 12/8. The lyrics are: "Wo - hin! soll ich der Morgenrö - the Flügel zu meiner Flucht erkie - sen,". The Tenore part features a melodic line with various intervals and accidentals, while the Continuo part provides a harmonic accompaniment with a long note at the end.

Figure 1.8 Bach: *Ich armer Mensch*, Recitativo I. The wings of the morning

The image shows a musical score for a recitative. The top staff is for the Tenore (Tenor) and the bottom staff is for the Continuo (Cello/Bass). The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 12/8. The lyrics are: "und will ich mich zum Himmel schwingen, da wohnt Gott, der mir das Ur - theil spricht." The Tenore part features a melodic line with various intervals and accidentals, while the Continuo part provides a harmonic accompaniment with a long note at the end.

Figure 1.9 Bach: *Ich armer Mensch*, Recitativo I. Dramatic climax

The focus in the second aria moves from guilt and self-torture to one of repentance and pleading for mercy.

Have mercy!  
Let my tears soften You,  
Let them reach Your Heart;  
For Jesus Christ's sake,  
Let Your jealous fury be stilled!  
Have mercy!

This is following the normal progression of cantatas on sin and repentance. The aria stands in complete contrast to the first, and Bach uses a different set of allegorical tools. The orchestration is lighter, using only flute and continuo. He uses the appoggiatura frequently as a sighing or pleading gesture, as shown here in Figure 1.10.



Figure 1.10 Bach: *Ich armer Mensch*, Aria II. Appoggiatura

Bach uses some variant of this motive whenever the phrase *Erbarme dich* (have mercy on me) recurs. These words are always repeated, with one iteration always elongated to emphasize the pleading tone (see Figure 1.11).



Figure 1.11 Bach: *Ich armer Mensch*, Aria I. Extended “erbarme Dich”

The beautiful solo flute sections in this aria evoke the same kind of tone. The sections in this aria that stand in contrast to the “erbarme dich” verses occur during the words “lass die Tränen dich erweichen (let my tears soften you)” and “lass um Jesu Christi Willen (for Jesus Christ’s sake).” For the former, Bach uses a descending melodic

line to highlight the image of falling tears. Furthermore, to achieve a sobbing feeling, he places the two long notes in this figure on the two strong beats of the measure, within a descending scale. He arrives at a high note on the downbeat of the measure, and quickly descends into another arrival on the third beat, creating a sound remarkably similar to natural sobbing. (Figure 1.12)



**Figure 1.12 Bach: *Ich armer Mensch*, Aria I. Falling tears**

When the sinner reaches his most desperate state, the dramatic highpoint of the aria, he invokes Christ's intercession. Shown in Figure 1.13, Bach employs a sequence featuring a dramatic melodic leap of a sixth. Bach uses the sequence to build tension as the sinner becomes increasingly desperate, and modulating quickly from G minor back to the original key of D minor. The sequence ends on IV of the original key, and, after a brief musical pause, the sinner seems to have collected himself and returns to the original theme with an authentic cadence in the original key.

Lass, um Je - su Christi Wil - len, dei - nen Zorn des Ei - fers stil - len; er - bar - - me dich,

gm V7 CM V7 DM V7 IV V7 i

Figure 1.13 Bach: *Ich armer Mensch*, Aria I. Sequence

In the final recitative in C minor, the sinner has at last been redeemed, again according to the typical progression of these kinds of works.

Have mercy!  
 However now  
 I am comforted,  
 I will not stand before judgment  
 and rather before the throne of grace  
 I go to my holy Father.  
 I hold His Son up to Him,  
 His Passion, His Redemption,  
 how He, for my guilt  
 has paid and done enough,  
 and pray Him for mercy,  
 from henceforth I will do no more.  
 Then God will take me into His grace again.

The recitative is followed by a light-hearted chorale—one that should come as a great relief to the listener, for the unrelenting intensity of this cantata does not abate until the last two measures of the recitative leading into the chorale. The sinner vehemently proclaims that he will never sin again, landing at the word *tun* (commit) on a iii chord in the home key of C minor, which Bach uses to pivot into Bb major, in which key he cadences three times in a light-hearted coda that leads pleasantly into the final chorale.

**Figure 1.14 Bach: *Ich armer Mensch*, Recitative II. Coda**

The final chorale is very light-hearted, and typical of a Bach chorale. Like the second aria and recitative, it was not originally composed for this cantata. It serves as the final and much delayed happy ending to the cantata. It calls for a four-part chorus (soprano, alto, tenor, bass), joined by the full orchestra.

Although I have been separated from You,  
 yet I return again;  
 even so Your Son set the example for us  
 through His anguish and mortal pain.  
 I do not deny my guilt,  
 but Your grace and mercy  
 is much greater than the sin  
 that I constantly discover in me.



## Chapter II

### SPANISH SONG IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

#### La tonadilla escénica

La *tonadilla escénica* was a Spanish art form similar to the Italian *intermedio* from the previous century. The *intermedio* was a mature musical genre in the seventeenth century, but by the mid-eighteenth century, it had evolved in Spain into the *tonadilla*. Like the *intermedio*, the early *tonadilla* was a short event, occurring between the acts of a play or other theatrical production. For the latter half of the century no theatrical presentation in Madrid was without an accompanying *tonadilla*. Although the word *tonadilla* is translated “little song,” these works were most often full theatrical events themselves, featuring singing, acting and dancing. The word *escénica* is added to distinguish the theatrical *tonadillas* from the purely musical ones. *Tonadillas escénicas* were always comical or satirical in nature, less than thirty minutes in duration, and usually completely unrelated to the action of the play in which they were housed.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, *tonadillas* had evolved into complex dramas that resembled short operas, and on occasion they were even performed as stand-alone works calling for more than ten performers. The growing complexity of the genre is the most probable reason for its extinction. As *tonadillas* became longer and more elaborate, the genre outgrew its function as an interlude, and found itself without a venue in the evolving romantic theater (Alier).

## Two songs

José Subirá was professor of piano and composition at the University of Madrid and an accomplished musicologist. He is responsible for most of the scholarly research on the *tonadilla* genre. Subirá compiled a collection of songs extracted from various *tonadillas* that are representative of the genre. These two songs are from that collection. Subirá gave titles to the excerpted songs and edited the songs slightly to give them what he calls “conclusive form,” as many of them are not easily extractable from the larger work (Subirá 1956).

*Canción contra las madamitas gorgoritedoras* is translated “Song Against Warbling Madames.” The song is from a tonadilla by Antonio Rosales, *El recitado*, that satirizes Italian recitative. The tonadilla was written in 1775. In the text of the song, a gentleman harshly condemns fickle women, especially those who warble, but praises the elegant one who sings in Italian and wears all the latest fashions. An often repeated melismatic passage mimics the warbling women.



Figure 2.1 Rosales: *Canción contra las madamitas gorgoritedoras*. Warbling

“Canción contra los violetistas” is from *La Necedad*, a tonadilla written in 1790 by composer Mariano Bustos. The song title is translated “Song Against the False Ones.” It

is a comical text in which a simpleton character criticizes scholars and philosophers as sterile, false drones. Their arrogance irritates him. He makes fun of the manner in which philosophers debate each other and insists that they are “living examples of the fact that stupidity abounds in this world” (Subirá, 1956). The song features a long piano introduction that leads into a strophic verse.

These two songs represent the *tonadilla* repertoire well. They are both strophic, simple in form, structure, and harmony, and are set to satirical texts. The music is light-hearted and pleasant, appropriate for its function as an interlude within a more serious work.

### Chapter III

#### GAETANO DONIZETTI

##### Donizetti in Paris

In the early nineteenth century, Italian *bel canto* opera was wildly popular, not only in Italy, but also in France. Many Italian composers spent a great portion of their careers in Paris, the so-called “capital of the nineteenth century,” writing and producing operas for the Parisian public. Noting the incredible success in Paris of Bellini and Rossini, Donizetti was eager to win a commission from Paris. After two failed attempts, he finally had the chance to begin his Parisian career when he made his first visit in 1834, accepting a commission by Rossini to write an opera for the Théâtre-Italien, the center of Italian opera in France. *Marino faliero*, an opera based on the drama by Lord Byron from the previous decade, was premiered in 1835 to mixed reviews but significant public approval. After Donizetti returned to Naples, his fame continued to grow with the incredible success of his most famous opera, *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Donizetti's success in Italy, however, came at the cost of great frustration, as he battled against harsh censorship. According to Julian Budden and Mary Anne Smart, “Almost all of Donizetti's serious operas in the 1830s were in some way affected by censorship. *Lucrezia Borgia* was banned in Naples, thanks to a dénouement in which five characters are murdered and to its depiction of a historical figure who had living descendants; in most other cities, the opera could be performed only in elaborate disguises, under titles such as *Eustorgia da Romano* or *Elisa Fosco*” (*Grove Dictionary On-line*). Tragic endings and any references to members of the current regime were prohibited by the Italian censorship machine. It

was this increasing difficulty, along with a series of personal tragedies including the loss of his wife Virginia, that eventually prompted Donizetti to leave his native Italy altogether. He arrived in Paris in 1838, where he spent the majority of the remainder of his career. It was during this period that he began to write many songs and operas in the French language, including two of his most notable and long-lived works, *La Fille du Regiment* and *La Favorite*, both from 1840. In the final ten years of his life, Donizetti's setting of French texts became incredibly fluent, although his style remained distinctly Italian, as forward-looking French composers like Berlioz were quick to point out: "The score of *La fille du regiment* is not at all one that either composer or the public takes seriously. There is some harmony, some melody, some rhythmic effects, some instrumental and vocal combinations; it is music, if one will, but not new music" (Ashbrook, 234).

### ***La dernière nuit d'un novice***

*La dernière nuit d'un novice* was not dated when published, but given the fluent setting of the French text, and the publication of a German-language song in the same set, it was almost certainly composed after his visit to Vienna in 1843 and before 1846, when illness caused his output to decline dramatically. Most of Donizetti's songs, of which there are more than 250, were written in the style of the Italian opera aria and were often published in sets in the manner of Rossini's *Soirée musicales*. This particular song belongs to a set simply called *Sept Arie*. The seven songs are set to German, Italian, and French texts and are unrelated except for their shared Italian aria style, and their joint publication.

The text is by Adolphe Nourrit, a French poet with whom Donizetti often collaborated. It details the last night of a novice monk before he takes his final vows, including vows of silence and of celibacy. The novice is both eager and anxious; he prays that his good angel will let him sleep and hasten the dawn. Sleep, however, does not bring him the hoped-for relief. He is plagued in his dreams by “le Malin Esprit (The Evil Spirit),” who at first simply tempts him with the vain pleasures of the world, but later torments him with the image of a beautiful young girl whose heart is broken by a young man. In the dream, the spirit tempts the novice to go and comfort her, but the novice resists out of faithfulness to his religious commitment, or perhaps out of fear. It becomes clear to the reader, after the novice has been terrified by images of hell, that the protagonist himself is the man who broke the young girl's heart. Now he is desperately seeking peace by committing his life to the church.

The simple accompaniment is a common characteristic of Donizetti's work. The most striking feature of this song is the contrast between the characters of the Novice and the Evil Spirit, and the song's form is governed by their alternation. Each distinct section coincides with a change of character, clearly marked in the score. The introduction and each of the dream sequences are musically unique, but a repeated theme pervades each of the waking sections, when the novice begs his guardian angel for the peace he so desperately craves.

The introduction (Figure 3.1) immediately reveals the opera aria style with its recitative-like monologue. With a beginning tempo marking of *larghetto*, the slow,

recitative passages are broken up by short, allegro outbursts featuring dotted rhythms that betray the novice's conflicting emotions of anticipation and anxiety.

The image shows a musical score for the introduction of Donizetti's opera. It consists of two staves: a vocal line for CANTO and a piano accompaniment for piano (8). The tempo starts as *Larghetto* (♩ = 63) and changes to *Allegro*. The lyrics are: "De-main, quand sonne-ra l'heure de la pri-è-re, je franchi-rai les marches de l'au-tel." The score includes dynamic markings like *p* and *f*, and a section marked *ALLEGRO*.

Figure 3.1 Donizetti: *La dernière nuit d'un novice*. Introduction

Beginning in m. 27, the repeated *bon ange* theme makes its first appearance. In each instance of the theme, the novice appeals to his guardian angel for strength. The introduction of this theme is harmonically identical in each repetition, and it is the most harmonically interesting passage in this relatively simple piece. The melody and the bass line move stepwise in contrary motion, leading from B major to a dramatic arrival in G (Figure 3.2).

The image shows a musical score for a modulation section. It features a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Et toi descends, ô mon bon an-ge, viens me di-re dans mon som-meil cet-te iné-fa-ble paix." The score includes a *cresc.* marking and a fermata over the final note of the vocal line.

Figure 3.2 Donizetti: *La dernière nuit d'un novice*. Modulation

By the end of each *bon ange* section, the novice has fallen asleep. In the second and third instances, he falls asleep while reciting the Latin Angelus Dei, the traditional Catholic prayer to the guardian angel. The Angelus Dei is replaced in Donizetti's Italian version of the song with the Ave Maria, which demonstrates his acquired sensitivity to French culture, where the Virgin Mary was not as religiously central as in Italy.

Each of the three *Malin Esprit* sections is musically unique. Each section begins with a recitative that gives way to a different charming melody in which the spirit tempts the novice. The melody then gives way to an agitated invitation to follow the spirit. In its third appearance, the spirit invites the novice to give in and love the poor dying girl (“Suis-moi, viens, viens!”).

Each successive appearance of the two different characters is more intense and agitated than the previous one, illustrating the growing conflict between the novice's conscious and unconscious mind. In each of the novice's appearances, this terraced intensity is achieved musically through increased ornamentation of the same melody and greater complexity of the accompaniment. In each of the spirit's appearances, there appears a different melody altogether, but the terraced intensity is achieved simply by faster tempi and louder dynamics.

This song is considerably longer than many of his others, but Donizetti's brilliant dramatic pacing makes up for the unusual length. It was this gift for music drama that captured the hearts of Donizetti's French audience. The Italian *bel canto* style was at the height of its popularity in France during Donizetti's residency in the 1840's. Despite the



contempt of many of his French professional colleagues, the Parisian public was delighted by Donizetti's marriage of their language to his native style.

## Chapter IV

### FRANCIS POULENC

#### A Poet's Composer

Francis Poulenc was one of the most famous French composers of the twentieth century. He is regarded by many as the “last great proponent of [French art song]” (Kimball 1996, 205). His fame was easily achieved on the merits of his music alone, although his personality was also memorable. Sir Lennox Berkeley said of Poulenc's writing, “A composer who uses the traditional idiom in such an individual manner that you can recognize the music as his within the first few bars, may possess more true originality than one who adopts a startling and revolutionary language” (Bernac 1977, 37).

Poulenc's music is distinctly French, and yet it is distinctly his own. He was member of *les six*, a group of composers whose eclectic style was polemically conceived as a response to Wagnerian and impressionistic styles. Poulenc wrote for practically every imaginable medium, but his most numerous works, and perhaps his most famous, are his *mélodies*, of which he wrote at least 146 (anecdotal evidence suggests that he may have destroyed some of his own completed works). He had a special appreciation for poetry and, likewise, poets had a special appreciation for Poulenc's settings. Poulenc had a keen understanding of the poetry that he set, and he always managed to enhance its meaning, never to alter it. Poulenc said, “The musical setting of a poem should be an act of love, never a marriage of convenience” (Bernac 1997, 267), an analogy that had special meaning for Poulenc. He was drawn to poetry that reflected conflict or contrast, perhaps because of the many conflicts that he endured in his personal life. He was

described by a critic as “half bad-boy, half monk” (Ivry 1996, 8). Much of his work was influenced by his relationships with close friends and lovers. Two significant friendships, with the poet Paul Éluard and the singer Pierre Bernac, led to the creation of one of Poulenc's most famous works, the song cycle *Tel jour, telle nuit*.

### **Poulenc and Bernac**

One of Poulenc's longest friendships was with famous French baritone Pierre Bernac. The two collaborated for twenty-five years, with Poulenc writing specifically for Bernac on several occasions. Poulenc appreciated Bernac's ability to interpret his work with little to no guidance. Over the years, Bernac became a musical consultant and a close friend. Around Christmas of 1936, Poulenc was playing a new setting of Jean Cocteau poetry for Bernac and seeking his approval. When it became clear that Bernac did not care for the new music, Poulenc immediately tossed the manuscript into the lit fireplace, and soon began work on a new cycle that would become *Tel jour, telle nuit*.

### **Poulenc and Éluard**

The surrealist Paul Éluard was one of the most successful French poets. In the words of Pierre Bernac, “no other has sung more eloquently of love- both human love and love of humanity” (Bernac 1977, 92). Poulenc was attracted to the surrealist movement and particularly to Éluard's poetry, with its frequent use of love as a theme. Poulenc said of Éluard, “I had a weakness for Éluard right away, because he was the only surrealist who tolerated music” (Ivry 1996, 96). Their collaboration, which began in 1935, produced 34 songs and several choral works. In *Tel jour, telle nuit*, Poulenc used

poems from Éluard's collection, *Les yeux fertiles*. He was drawn to these as love poems and titled his nine-song cycle *Tel jour, telle nuit* (*What a Day, What a Night*), the contrasting images of the masculine day and the feminine night being central to Éluard's poetry. Perhaps Poulenc was most drawn to these poems because he related to their depiction of the coexistence of opposites.

### *Tel jour, telle nuit*

Francis Poulenc was renowned for his extraordinary understanding of poetry. It is his understanding and enhancement of Éluard's poetry that makes this one of his most famous vocal works. Bernac says of Poulenc's treatment of surrealist poetry, "These modern poems are often rather obscure, but his musical setting always clarifies them. Through his music they are given their correct punctuation (for most of the poems are without punctuation, which can involve the reader in serious misconceptions)" (Bernac 1977, 39). Poulenc carefully structured the cycle, and individual songs should therefore not be extracted for performance. True to Éluard's intentions, the less important poems are set in songs that serve a connective role in the cycle. Poulenc calls these connecting poems *mélodies tremplins*, or trampoline songs.

The first song, "Bonne journée (Good Day)" opens the cycle calmly, with hints of both happiness and melancholy. The composer gives detailed instructions, keeping the singer subdued to a soft *mp* until the final eleven measures when dawn arrives suddenly and by surprise. Figure 4.1 shows the series of hairpin crescendo culminating in *f* at the

vocal climax on a-flat; the dynamic and registral climax are calibrated not only to each other but to the moment of epiphany at dawn's arrival.

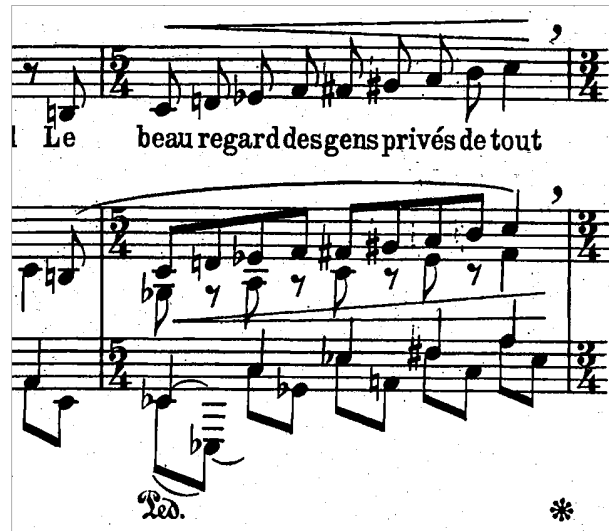
Mais qui sou - dain — trem - pée d'au - ro - re M'en - tra dans le , cœur par sur - pri -

**Figure 4.1 Poulenc: *Tel jour, telle nuit, "Bonne journée."* Dynamic and registral climax**

A good day which began mournfully  
 dark under the green trees  
 but which suddenly drenched with dawn  
 entered my heart by surprise.

(Translations from Pierre Bernac's *The Interpretation of French Song*, 40-45)

Although the composer keeps the singer emotionally subdued for the most part, the pervasiveness of ascending scales betrays a hint of happiness or optimism. Poulenc exploits both the diatonic and octatonic collections. Each stanza begins with an ascending Lydian scale (a scale with a raised fourth scale degree). The second stanza also features a complete ascending octatonic scale (Figure 4.2).



**Figure 4.2 Poulenc: *Tel jour, telle nuit, "Bonne journée."* Octatonic scale**

Poulenc's instructions for the second song, "Une ruine coquille vide," are "very quiet and unreal." This song may confuse the listener, as sadness seems to characterize the poetry, while the music does not sound particularly dreary. It helps to consider Éluard's title for his poem, which Poulenc does not use. In fact, Poulenc does not use any of the original literary titles in these songs. Éluard's title, "Je croyais le repos possible" is translated "I thought rest was possible." In light of the literary title, the poem takes on a new meaning.

A ruin an empty shell  
 weeps into its apron  
 the children who play around it  
 make less sound than flies

it is midnight like an arrow  
 in a heart within reach  
 of the lively nocturnal glimmerings  
 that gainsay sleep

Éluard's poetry is ambiguous, but perhaps this poem is at least in part a reflection on insomnia. The poem juxtaposes opposites, a common theme in this collection, with the contrast between the ruined empty shell, and the playing children. The piano remains at *pp* throughout the song, with the voice, in contrast, reaching *mf*.

“Le front comme un drapeau perdu” is a “trampoline song,” serving a connecting purpose between the serenity of songs 1 and 2, and the drama that begins in song 4. The song begins in violence with a quick pace, loud dynamics, and sharp articulation. The character of the loved one appears for the first time. A brief legato period marks “Je ne veux pas le lâcher tes mains claires et compliquées.”

I do not want to let them go  
your clear and complex hands  
born in the enclosed mirror of my own

These are the same hands that the poet grasps in the final song. The faster pace and agitation in this connecting song enhance the surreal darkness of the following song through contrast.

Poulenc's instructions for “Une roulotte couverte en tuiles” are “very slow and sinister.” This poem, which Éluard titled “Curtain,” is strange and dark.

a gypsy wagon roofed with tiles  
the horse dead a child master  
thinking his brow blue with hatred  
of two breasts beating down upon him  
like two fists  
this melodrama rips  
reason from our hearts.

The title “Curtain” implies “the recall of a distant image,” or the “dramatization of a memory” (Buckland and Chiménes 1999, 166). The slow tempo, simple chordal accompaniment, and speech-like vocal line create a somber mood. Bernac advises the performer to take great care in preserving the legato (Bernac 1997, 294).

The second “trampoline song” is no. 5, “A toutes brides” (“Riding full tilt”). As the title suggests, the song, marked *prestissimo*, takes off “riding full tilt.” The poetry aggressively asserts that the woman's insatiable desires are not imagined. The poet invites her to “give way to the fire that drives you to despair.”

riding full tilt you whose phantom  
prances at night on a violin  
come and reign in the woods

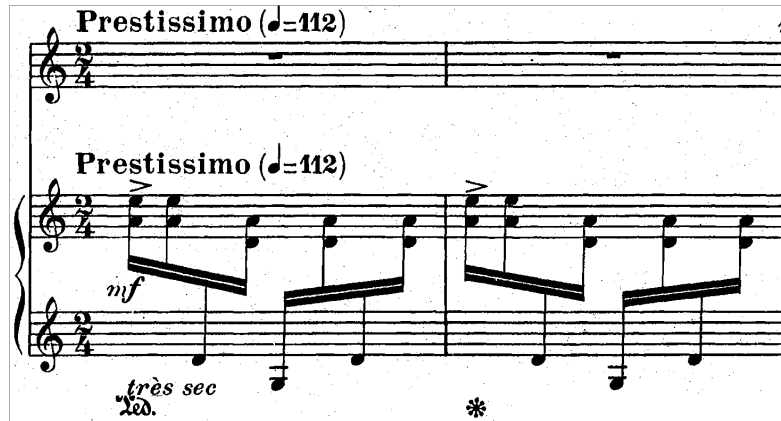
the lashings of the tempest  
seek their path by way of you  
you are not among those whose desires are imagined

your thirsts are more contradictory  
than those of the drowned

come then and drink a kiss here  
give way to the fire that drives you to despair.

Carol Kimball points out that the G, D, A, and E in the piano's first few measures depict the tuning of the poet's violin (Figure 4.3) (Kimball 2005, 228). This song presents stark contrasts to the two that surround it, the sinister “Une roulette” and the pure “Une herbe pauvre” through contrast. While those two songs may evoke opposing emotions, they share the same slow pace and surreal atmosphere, so Poulenc juxtaposed the connective “A toutes brides” between them.





**Figure 4.3 Poulenc: *Tel jour, telle nuit*, “A toute brides.” Tuning violin**

“Une herbe pauvre” depicts the fleeting nature of life’s pleasures. Poulenc enhances Éluard’s poetry brilliantly with an exceedingly simple and exquisite accompaniment and melody. Poulenc's instructions are “clear, sweet and slow.” A blade of grass peeks up from snow but, as quickly as it is seen, it fades.

Scant grass  
 wild  
 appeared in the snow  
 my mouth marveled  
 at the savor of pure air it had  
 it was withered

The voice and piano begin *p*, crescendo as the blade of grass appears, but returns *subito p* when it withers. Upon repeating the first two lines, the voice and piano are hushed to a *pp*.

Regarding “Je n'ai envie de t'aimer,” Poulenc instructed Bernac, “This charming poem of happy love must be sung in a single curve, a single impulse.” Bernac warns, however, that it “must never give a feeling of agitation” (Bernac 1977, 104). The poet

has folded his lover into his solipsistic solitude, filling the void in his life with his image of her.

To see nothing more in your eyes  
than what I think of you  
and of a world in your likeness  
and days and nights determined by your eyes.

Stark dynamic contrasts are clearly indicated. The song ends on a strangely sad sounding minor chord, which gives way to the sudden violence of the next song.

“Figure de force brûlante et farouche” is the final “trampoline song” of the cycle. The violence and agitation of the song, with its dramatic final chord, heighten the intimacy of at the beginning of the next and final song. For the first time in the cycle, real anger is unleashed. Éluard “sees this rigid, unyielding negation of life as the ultimate place of trapped enclosure—a prison” (Buckland and Chimères 1999, 169). In Figure 4.4, Poulenc creates a strikingly sudden dynamic and textural contrast at the line, “Aux veines des temples (To the veins of the temples).” The variable meter adds to the sense of unbridled anger.

The image shows a musical score for the song "Figure de force" by Francis Poulenc. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line starts in 4/4 time with the lyrics "Dans un lit ja-mais par-ta-gé" and then changes to 6/4 time with the lyrics "Aux vei-nes des tem-pes". The tempo is marked "Lent (♩=66)" and the dynamics are "pp morne". The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line. The second system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment, maintaining the 6/4 time signature and "Lent (♩=66)" tempo. The dynamics remain "pp morne". A bracket labeled "8" spans the first two measures of the second system. The piano accompaniment continues with the same eighth-note bass line.

Figure 4.4 Poulenc: *Tel jour, telle nuit*, “Figure de force.” Textural contrast

Image of fiery wild forcefulness  
black hair wherein the gold flows  
on corrupt nights  
engulfed gold tainted star  
in a bed never shared

to the veins of the temples  
as to the tips of the breasts  
life denies itself  
no one can blind the eyes  
drink their brilliance or their tears  
the blood above them triumphs for itself alone

intractable unbounded  
useless  
this health builds a prison

Following the final dramatic chord in “Figure de force brûlante et farouche,” the last song of the cycle projects us into an utterly different world. “Nous avons fait la nuit (We made the night together),” considered one of Poulenc’s finest, is a love song of unrivaled lyricism and beauty. The cycle is rounded out by an instantly recognizable relation to the first song, shown in Figure 4.5. The melodic ascending scale and the octave duple figures in the piano link this song to the first. The poetry depicts two lovers falling asleep together. As the poet’s lover falls asleep, he marvels at the stranger that she becomes; all that he loves about her is forever new. By incorporating abrupt dynamic changes while maintaining a consistent texture and tempo, Poulenc echoes one of the pervasive themes in Éluard’s poetry, the unity of opposites. The long and beautiful postlude has provoked comparisons to the endings of two earlier, famous song cycles, Schumann’s *Dichterliebe* and Schubert’s *Die Winterreise*. The final measures of the postlude return to both the key and the tempo of “Bonne journée”, bringing the cycle to a satisfying conclusion.

Très modéré, sans traîner pourtant (♩=60)  
*p très lié*  
 Nous a - vons fait la nuit — je

Très modéré, sans traîner pourtant (♩=60)  
*p*

**Figure 4.5 Poulenc: *Tel jour, telle nuit*, “Nous avons fait.” Resemblance to “Bonne journée”**

Francis Poulenc was one of the most famous and most successful composers of art song of his time. His love of poetry and sensitivity to its interpretation gave him a great advantage over other composers but, more than this, it was his relationships that shaped him as a composer. His friendships with Paul Éluard and Pierre Bernac forever altered the course of his life, and his interactions with others close to him inspired the creation of other timeless works. These relationships will be further examined in the next chapter, as they are the focus of Jake Heggie's *Homage to Poulenc*.

## Chapter V

### HOMAGE TO POULENC

#### Jake Heggie and His Idol

Jake Heggie is an American composer from Florida who has been very successful recently as a writer of opera and art song. Heggie's most famous works include the operas *Dead Man Walking* and *Moby-Dick*. One of his more recent compositions is a song cycle for tenor titled *Friendly Persuasions*. In 2008, Malcom Martineau, a British pianist approached Jake Heggie to ask him about the possibility of writing a song cycle as an exploration of the music of Francis Poulenc. Heggie, who idolizes Poulenc, was immediately taken by the idea. (“Poulenc is one of my gods” says Heggie, cited in Wylie 2011, 14).

Heggie decided not to use existing poetry, but rather to commission a new work, based on Poulenc's life and experiences. “I went to Gene [Scheer] for advice. He had read a biography of Poulenc, and what struck him were the seminal relationships and friendships in Poulenc’s life that changed his way of thinking. These were the people that persuaded him to look at the world in a different way” (Wylie 2011, 14). Heggie commissioned Gene Scheer to write the poetry for the cycle and titled it *Friendly Persuasions: Homage to Poulenc*. It is a four-song cycle in which each song is named for an influential person in Poulenc's life and captures a defining moment in that relationship. Wanda Landowska, the famous harpsichordist and close friend and confidant of Poulenc, is the subject of the first song. The song “Pierre Bernac” narrates the incident prior to the composition of *Tel jour telle nuit* when Poulenc tossed a

completed manuscript into a fire. The loss of his dear friend Raymonde Linnossier is the subject of the eponymous third song, and the final song focuses on Poulenc's friendship with Paul Éluard. The original version for tenor and piano was premiered by Malcom Martineau and John Mark Ainsley in 2008. Soon afterward, a chamber version for tenor, flute, oboe, cello, and harpsichord was premiered in Los Angeles.

### **Wanda Landowska**

In 1928, Poulenc proposed marriage to Raymonde Linnossier. It was to be a marriage of convenience, as Poulenc was by now an openly gay man. Raymonde declined the offer, to Poulenc's great disappointment. This happened during an emotionally conflicted period in Poulenc's life, when the composer had begun to fall in love with the young painter Richard Chanlaire. Wanda Landowska was a close friend of Poulenc, who often sought her counsel on personal matters. Landowska was a brilliant harpsichordist, credited with reviving the instrument. She asked her friend to write for her a concerto, and Poulenc happily agreed. His personal preoccupations, however, and specifically with Richard Chanlaire, delayed the completion of the concerto. While the sympathetic Landowska acted as a "fairy godmother presiding over his relationship with Chanlaire" (Ivry 1996, 69), she did not appreciate the delayed completion of her concerto. Gene Scheer quotes Landowska: "My God, my God!" she said, 'whatever shall I do? My concerto, why are you so late?'" (Heggie 2008, 1). When Poulenc complained of his difficulties with Chanlaire, Landowska replied, "Stop wasting time! Go and get him! Do it now. And then, for God's sake, finish my concerto!" (Heggie 2008, 10).

The quick figures at the beginning and end of the song in the harpsichord (shown in Figure 5.1) part are reminiscent of the *Concert champêtre* that Poulenc eventually finished for Landowska. The fast pace of the song slows for the middle section, when Landowska stops yelling in order to comfort her friend. The texture in the accompaniment lightens and the tempo slows as the singer portrays the sympathetic Landowska. The quick, arpeggiated harpsichord figures return *accelerando* upon Landowska's final exclamation, “finish my concerto!”

Figure 5.1

**Figure 5.1: Friendly Persuasions “Wanda Landowska.” Opening measures**

### Pierre Bernac

Poulenc's collaboration with Pierre Bernac was one of the most important of his career. Poulenc wrote many songs specifically for Bernac and involved the singer intimately in the composition process. He valued Bernac's opinion so highly that, on at least one occasion, he destroyed an almost completed work upon Bernac's disapproval. This song depicts that event as Pierre Bernac recalls it in his book, *Francis Poulenc: The Man and His Songs*.

During the 1936 Christmas season, Poulenc was writing a cycle for Bernac based on *Plain-Chant*, a collection of poems by Jean Cocteau. The two had a recital approaching in February. As Poulenc played the new cycle for Bernac, the singer's

disapproval must have been apparent despite his silence, because his friend instantly threw the manuscript into the fireplace. Bernac was horrified, but Poulenc reassured him that he would write something better. (Bernac, 1977, 39).

The busy opening orchestral accompaniment suggests a working environment. The tenor in this song assumes the character of Poulenc, who narrates the event. Beginning in m. 12, Heggie changes the accompaniment altogether to mimic style of a French *mélodie* as Poulenc plays for his friend Bernac. The harmonic rhythm slows to one chord per measure, and the flowing legato of the pseudo-Poulenc melody set to Cocteau's poetry contrasts sharply with the rest of the song. Heggie abandons this song-within-a-song at the moment when Poulenc notices Bernac's uncomfortable disapproval. He tosses the song on the fire and begins to compose again. Heggie depicts Poulenc's return to the piano by once again briefly mimicking the French composer's style, while the tenor, still assuming Poulenc's character, sings the words "Tel jour telle nuit," reminding us that out of this strange incident came one of Poulenc's most heralded achievements.

### **Raymonde Linnossier**

Poulenc and Linnossier had been friends since childhood. He proposed to her not directly but in a letter to her sister Alice. In the letter, he explained that it would be an open marriage, and she would be free to visit Japan whenever she wanted to meet with her lover, who lived there. He hoped that since her lover was in Japan, and he had no sexual desire for women, their marriage would be convenient for both of them.



Raymonde, however, refused his proposal, despite which the two remained close friends for years. Raymonde died suddenly and unexpectedly in 1930. Poulenc was devastated and would never completely recover. In a letter to Raymonde's sister, Poulenc said, "All my youth departs with her, all that part of my life that belonged only to her" (Ivry 2006, 74). In Heggie's song, Gene Scheer paraphrases this letter. The tenor again assumes the character of Poulenc, who mourns, "Raymonde Linnossier, all of my youth departed with you. Part of my life will always belong to you" (Heggie 2008, 23). For the rest of his life, Poulenc carried with him mementos to remember her by: her cigarette case and a picture of her that he would place on his nightstand wherever he was staying.

This song is exceedingly lyrical and singable, in contrast to the other three. Heggie uses different tonal areas to structure the song (an ABAB form), differentiate between different forms of address, and to capture the idea of loss. The A section melody begins somberly in Bb minor, as the singer refers to Raymonde in the third person, comparing her to a green leaf that falls from its tree too soon. When the metaphor is broken and the tenor-as-Poulenc addresses his departed friend directly, as if she were still alive, the tonality abruptly shifts to the brighter C major. The major tonality marks the arrival of the B section, which contains the song's main theme. The final iteration of the words "part of my life" in the B melody is tonally ambiguous, both in the melodic line and in accompaniment; only the bass line suggests the final C-major V-I cadence of the middle section. The presence of D-flats, B-flats, and A-flats over this C-major cadence foreshadows the return of the A section, once again in the key of Bb minor. At m. 63, Heggie inserts another brief, tonally ambiguous passage on the text "yearns for

something lost.” This sudden departure from the main tonality temporarily jolts the listener, but Heggie immediately returns to Bb major on the appropriate text, “leads me back to you” (Figure 5.3).

The image shows a musical score for the piece "Raymonde Linnossier" from Heggie's *Friendly Persuasions*. It consists of three systems of staves. The top system contains the piano accompaniment for the first two systems, with dynamics markings *p* and *pp*. The middle system contains the vocal line with the lyrics: "Part of my life will always be long to you." The bottom system contains the piano accompaniment for the third system, with dynamics markings *p* and *pp*.

Figure 5.2 Heggie: *Friendly Persuasions* “Raymonde Linnossier.” Tonal ambiguity

The image shows a musical score for the piece "Raymonde Linnossier" from Heggie's *Friendly Persuasions*. It consists of two systems of staves. The top system contains the vocal line with the lyrics: "and leads me back to you." The bottom system contains the piano accompaniment, labeled "Hpsd." in the first measure.

Figure 5.3 Heggie: *Friendly Persuasions* “Raymonde Linnossier.” Return to B-flat major

The repeat of the B section, like the original iteration, is in a major key, this time Eb major. It too closes with a tonally ambiguous passage, leaving the listener with a sense of unresolved emotion. The final chord has no harmonic function. (Figure 5.4)



**Figure 5.4 Heggie: *Friendly Persuasions* “Raymonde Linnossier.” Final chord**

### **Paul Éluard**

The final song depicts a shared moment between Poulenc and his friend Paul Éluard during the Second World War after the Germans had invaded Paris. While both artists were sympathetic to the resistance, Éluard was far more vocal, and Poulenc was silenced by fear. Poulenc's anti-war works were not published until the war was over. Poulenc admired his friend's courage and was also shamed by it. In the song, the tenor again assumes the role of Poulenc as narrator. He composes as Éluard listens. Poulenc agonizes over his fear, but draws strength from Éluard's words and the music that is born from them.

The song is in a rondo from (ABACA). Heggie creates stark contrasts between each section, highlighting the contrast between Poulenc's fear and Éluard's bold poetry. The song begins with a simple but violent-sounding accompaniment, with an equally severe melody. Heggie dispenses with any legato, marking the music “Stark” and writing a harpsichord part that beats time in alternating octaves (Figure 5.5). Poulenc, again as narrator, describes the war that rages in Europe and in the poetry of Éluard alike. He states that the Germans have taken Paris and then sits at the piano to play. The music immediately calms as the legato of Poulenc's playing takes over, but the protagonist-cum-narrator is jerked back to reality in m. 15 with the abrupt, stark return of the main theme, when the focus of the text again returns to Éluard (Figure 5.6). In the C section, the legato articulation returns as Poulenc cowers in fear, awaiting the unknown. The main theme returns abruptly again, as Poulenc is inspired by Éluard's poetry: “Each phrase born from Resistance... finally touches the clean, clear north of me” (Heggie 2008, 37).



**Figure 5.5 Heggie: *Friendly Persuasions* “Paul Éluard.” Opening measures**



Figure 5.6 Heggie: *Friendly Persuasions* “Paul Éluard.” Textural contrast

### Contrasts in Heggie's *Homage* and *Tel jour telle nuit*

Poulenc's *Tel jour telle nuit* is a study in contrasts; the “trampoline” songs differ in tempo, texture, and mood from the songs they connect. Heggie's *Friendly Persuasions* also takes advantage of contrast to enhance the moods of his songs. These contrasts are always sharp and abrupt to capture the listener's attention. In “Wanda Landowska,” he uses contrasts in tempo and texture to highlight Landowska's impatience and Poulenc's ennui (Figure 5.7).



Figure 5.7 Heggie: *Friendly Persuasions* “Wanda Landowska”

In *Pierre Bernac*, contrasts in style and harmonic rhythm evoke the chaos of Poulenc's creative process, as well as the calm serenity of the compositions themselves.

Disjunct, detached melodic figures accompany the dialogue, while legatos and ties characterize Poulenc's composition. (Figure 5.8)

The image shows two systems of musical notation. The first system is for a tenor (T.) and harpsichord (Hpsd.). The tenor part has a dynamic marking of *mp* and the lyrics "Don't wor - ry, I say, it's as it's meant to be." The harpsichord part has a dynamic marking of *sub. p*. The second system is also for a tenor and harpsichord. The tenor part has a dynamic marking of *mf* and the lyrics "Tel\_ jour. Telle\_ nuit." The harpsichord part has a dynamic marking of *f*. Both systems show disjunct, detached melodic lines for the voice and more legato, tied notes for the harpsichord.

**Figure 5.8 Heggie: *Friendly Persuasions* “Pierre Bernac”**

In *Raymonde Linnossier*, contrasts in tonality separate reality from fond memory (Figure 5.9). Minor tonality accompanies Poulenc's memory of Linnossier, while abrupt shifts to major keys mark Poulenc's crying out to her directly.

The image shows a musical score for a tenor and harpsichord. The tenor part has a dynamic marking of *pp* and the lyrics "a - way like\_ dew. Ray - mon - de\_ Lin - os - sier." The harpsichord part has a dynamic marking of *pp*. The score shows a key signature change from minor to major, reflecting the contrast between reality and memory described in the text.

**Figure 5.9 Heggie: *Friendly Persuasions* “Raymonde Linnossier”**

Finally, in “Paul Éluard,” dynamic and stylistic contrasts separate Poulenc's fear from the boldness of Éluard's poetry (Figure 5.10).

T. *p* Ger-mans have tak-en Par-is. *mp* I sit at the pi-ano and play my songs.

Hpsd. *p*

**Figure 5.10 Heggie: *Friendly Persuasions* “Paul Éluard”**

### Conclusion

While Heggie does not imitate Poulenc's compositional style in his homage, except to depict Poulenc at the piano, he may have borrowed from Poulenc the technique of using musical contrast to set textual oppositions in relief. Though he may not have intended to capture the style of Poulenc's composition, he certainly succeeded in capturing the frantic and passionate style of Poulenc's life.

## Chapter VI

### JOHN CORIGLIANO

#### Three Irish Folksong Settings

John Corigliano is a popular American composer whose music is eclectic, ranging from neo-classical to serial; in his refusal to espouse any one style and his refashioning of a variety of historical styles, he may be called a post-modernist. His *Three Irish Folksong Settings for Flute and Tenor* are an experiment in yet another musical idiom, folk music. Corigliano's *Pied Piper Fantasy*, written in 1982 for Sir James Galway, was his first experiment with Irish flute music. In the words of the composer, "Six years later, I tried to explore the more poetic side of Irish flute music in these settings of folk or folk-like texts by W.B. Yeats, Padraic Colum, and an anonymous author" (Corigliano 1991). The work is not only explores Irish flute music but also experiments with counterpoint. The tenor is accompanied only by a flute, and the interplay between the voices is the primary feature of the work. Corigliano requires far more virtuosity of the flutist, the tenor merely singing the folksongs in their original, recognizable form.

In the first song, the flute does not depart far from the tonality established by the singer. Experiments with rhythm in the flute part create a challenge for both performers. The most interesting rhythmic feature is the simultaneity of different meters. The meter of the song is a simple 4/4, but most of the flute part is in a "quasi 7/8," as Corigliano marks it in the score. The flute only adopts the tenor's simple meter twice, during both instances of the text, "She bid me take life easy." Corigliano uses dotted bar lines to aid the performers in coordinating the asymmetrical meter, and presumably, to instruct the



flutist to play each eighth-note figure identically, not placing emphasis on the strong beats of the melody (Figure 6.1). To the listener, the effect is very interesting. The eighth-note figure seems to align with the melody at a slightly different point each time. The difficulty for the performers is to maintain the integrity of the two meters.

The image shows a musical score for two parts: Voice and Flute. The title is "Andante" and the tempo is marked "p" (piano). The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 4/4. The Voice part starts with a whole rest for two measures, then begins with the lyrics "Down by the Salley". The Flute part begins with a "quasi" marking and a "p" marking, followed by the instruction "languorous". The flute part consists of a series of eighth-note figures that are not perfectly aligned with the voice melody. The score is written on two staves, with the Voice staff above the Flute staff.

**Figure 6.1 Corigliano, *Three Irish Folksongs*, “The Salley Gardens.” Simultaneous meters**

The flute introduces the melody of the second song. When the tenor takes over, however, the listener may be confused, as he enters in a key very distantly related to the original. The flute immediately adjusts to join the tenor in his key of E minor (Figure 6.2). This strange juxtaposition of unrelated keys occurs throughout the piece. Each time the flute takes over the melody, the tonality abruptly shifts across the circle of fifths to the key of C#. Rhythmic alignment is a challenge in this song. Ties and dotted triplet figures abound, as well as flourishing figures that give groups of pitches rhythmic value as a group, but no specific value individually. At times, the two voices will continue for multiple measures without lining up at all rhythmically, but when the two parts finally do align, the satisfying effect is akin to the resolution of harmonic dissonance (Figure 6.3).

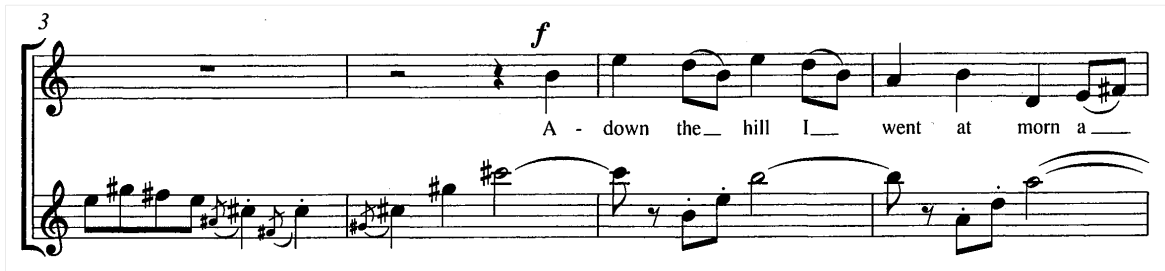


Figure 6.2 Corigliano; *Three Irish Folksongs*, “The Foggy Dew.” Abrupt modulation

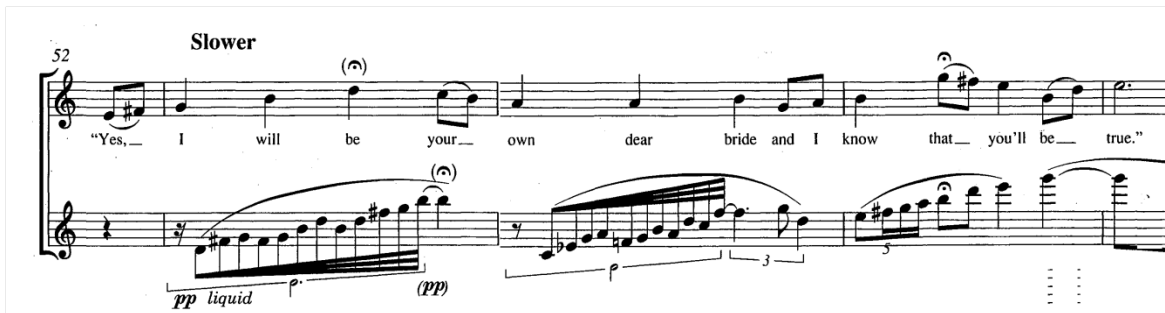


Figure 6.3 Corigliano: *Three Irish Folksongs*, “The Salley Gardens.” Rhythmic alignment

The flute and tenor voices are especially independent in the first verse of the third song. Portions of the flute line are tonally ambiguous, but it does, for most part, remain centered around F, the key of the melody. Rhythmic alignment is scarce in the first verse, with the flute often defying the compound meter through the use of ties, triplets, and quadruplet figures. In most of the second verse, by contrast, the flute doubles the tenor two octaves higher. Compromise is reached in the third verse, when the flute neither doubles nor defies the melody, but complements it (Figure 6.4).

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Two staves of music in G minor (one flat). The melody is written on a treble clef staff. The lyrics are: Last night she came to me, she came soft - ly. The music features a mix of eighth and quarter notes, with some phrases connected by slurs.

Figure 6.4 Corigliano: *Three Irish Folksongs*, “She Moved Through the Fair”

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