

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: FOLKLIFE, TRADITIONS, AND
NATIONALISM: INFLUENCES ON
WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC

Thomas Hunter, Doctor of Musical Arts, 2021

Dissertation directed by: Professor Rita Sloan
School of Music

This dissertation performance project seeks to feature music written for the classical concert setting that is inspired by, directly references, or highlights specific and unique aspects of a particular country, culture, tradition, or heritage, that fall outside of typical western classical music. This may present as an arrangement of a folk song, the use or quotation of a distinct folksong melody or popular dance rhythm, an allusion to a piece of folk lore, the inclusion of nationalistic idioms, or mimicked instrumentation.

I wish to demonstrate the impact and fascination many composers had with their own roots or those of another country, and the effect that it had on their music. I suggest that classical music conceived with this perspective has the potential to be particularly gripping. It has a wonderful ability to feel ancient, familiar, and new all at the same time, and can create a meaningful connection to the past while remaining deeply satisfying, intensely modern, and culturally relevant.

In an effort to explore the legacy of this sort of music and the work of composers who found it arresting, I developed three concert programs during which I played music composed with some form of distinct folk, cultural, or nationalist influence. I primarily focused on music of the 20th century with a particular emphasis on American and English music, but by the end of the project, I visited America, England, Ireland, Scotland, Germany, Hungary, Romania, France, Greece, Argentina, Slovakia, and Israel and commissioned a local composer to write a piece that was featured at the last concert.

FOLKLIFE, TRADITIONS, AND NATIONALISM:
INFLUENCES ON WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC

by

Thomas Hunter

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
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Preface

This dissertation was inspired first and foremost by the intrinsic feelings that folk music can convey. The genesis of this project can be traced to many days of my childhood that were spent listening to folk and medieval music, as many of my parents' friends were musicians performing in that genre. Further inspiration came during my time as a student at the Royal College of Music and the Tuesdays evenings spent with a friend at a pub in Hammersmith during which Irish traditional musicians played for hours. Each night would end with *Hard Times Come Again No More*, a song written by Stephen Foster in 1854. With no preface or request for lowered voices, a hush would fall over the room. This was usually around 10 o'clock at night and I like to think it still happens. The people in that pub were connected by common feelings, memories; I was fascinated by this phenomenon.

Acknowledgements and Dedications

Thank you to the outstanding musicians who collaborated with me. I could not have done this without you.

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Thank you to Audrey Andrist, who expertly guided my preparation for the first recital as Prof. Sloan was on sabbatical.

Thank you to Lev Polyakin, who generously coached Zach and I during our preparation of *Four Souvenirs*.

Thank you to my dissertation committee, who graciously set aside time to study this music with me.

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Thomas Hunter, piano with
Tonya Burton, Viola; Gal Kohav, Mezzo-Soprano
Shari Feldman, Soprano; Gilbert Spencer, Baritone

Johannes Brahms - Zwei Gesänge, Op. 91

- I. *Gestillte Sehnsucht* (Satisfied Longing) (1884)
- II. *Geistliches Wiegenlied* (Sacred lullaby) (1863–64)

Béla Bartók - Nyolc magyar népdal (8 Hungarian Folksongs) (nos. 1-5: 1907; nos. 6–8: 1917)

- I. Fekete föld, fehér az én zsebkendőm (Snow-white kerchief, dark both field and furrow show)
- II. Istenem, istenem, áraszd meg a vizet (Coldly runs the river, reedy banks o'erflowing)
- III. Aszszonyok, aszszonyok, had' legyenek társatok (Women, women, listen, let me share your labour)
- IV. Anynyi bánat az szűvemen (Skies above are heavy with rain)
- V. Ha kimegyek arr' a magos tetőre (If I climb the rocky mountains all day through)
- VI. Töltik a nagy erdő útját (All the lads to war they've taken)
- VII. Eddig való dolgom a tavaszi szántás (Spring begins with labour; then's the time for sowing)
- VIII. Olvad a hó, csárdás kis angyalom (Snow is melting, oh, my dear, my darling)

Maurice Ravel - Cinq Mélodies populaires grecques (1904-06)

- I. Chanson de la mariée (The song to the bride)
- II. Là-bas, vers l'église (Yonder by the Church)
- III. Quel galant m'est comparable (What Gallant Compares with Me?)
- IV. Chanson des cueilleuses de lentisques (The Song of the Girls Collecting Mastic)
- V. Tout gai! (Everyone is Joyous!)

Samuel Barber - Excursions, Op. 20 (1942-1944)

- I. Un poco Allegro
- II. In slow blues tempo
- III. Allegretto
- IV. Allegro molto

- Intermission -

Carlos Guastavino - Selected Songs

- I. *Pampa Mapa* (Map of the Plains) from Doce canciones populares (1968)
- II. *La Rosa y el sauce* (The Rose and the Willow) (2.5 minutes) (1942)

Aaron Copland - Selections from Old American Songs (1950 and 1952)

- I. The Boatman's Dance
- II. The Little Horses
- III. The Golden Willow Tree
- IV. Zion's Walls

This recital is being presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Doctorate of Musical Arts in Collaborative Piano Performance. Thomas Hunter is a student of Rita Sloan.

**Gildenhorn Recital Hall
December 20, 2020, 2pm**

**Thomas Hunter, piano
with
Zach Matteson, violin**

Béla Bartók - *Rhapsody No. 1* (1928)

- I. Lassú
- II. Friss

Paul Schoenfield - *Four Souvenirs* (1996)

- I. Samba
- II. Tango
- III. Tin Pan Alley
- IV. Square Dance

- Intermission -

Lecture

This recital is being presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Doctorate of Musical Arts in Collaborative Piano Performance. Thomas Hunter is a student of Rita Sloan.

Gildenhorn Recital Hall
May 12, 2021, 8pm

Thomas Hunter, piano
with
Nicole Boguslaw, cello
Amy Broadbent, soprano
Tong Li, violin

Ralph Vaughan Williams - *Six Studies in English Folk Song* (1926)

Shulamit Ran - *Soliloquy* (1997)

Bohuslav Martinů - *Variations on a Slovakian Theme for Violoncello and Piano* (1959)

- Intermission -

Florence Price - selections from *Forty-Four Art Songs and Spirituals*

- *Bewilderment* (1930)
- *Dawn's Awakening* (1936)
- *Hold Fast to Dreams* (1945)
- *I'm Goin' to Lay Down My Heavy Load* (c. 1940)
- *Sympathy* (1943)

William Kenlon - *The Hag* (2021) (World Premiere)

Benjamin Britten - Selected folksong arrangements

- *Sail on, sail on* (1957)
- *The Bonny Earl o' Moray* (1940)
- *Avenging and bright* (1957)
- *The last rose of summer* (1957)

This recital is being presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Doctorate of Musical Arts in Collaborative Piano Performance. Thomas Hunter is a student of Rita Sloan.

Recording Track Listing

First Dissertation Recital - CD 1

Johannes Brahms - Zwei Gesänge, Op. 91

[CD 1, Track 1] Gestillte Sehnsucht (Satisfied Longing)

[CD 1, Track 2] Geistliches Wiegenlied (Sacred lullaby)

Béla Bartók - Nyolc magyar népdal (8 Hungarian Folksongs)

[CD 1, Track 3] Fekete főd, fehér az én zsebkendőm (Snow-white kerchief, dark both field and furrow show)

[CD 1, Track 4] Istenem, istenem, áraszod meg a vizet (Coldly runs the river, reedy banks o'erflowing)

[CD 1, Track 5] Aszszonyok, aszszonyok, had' legyenek társatok (Women, women, listen, let me share your labour)

[CD 1, Track 6] Anynyi bánat az szűvemen (Skies above are heavy with rain)

[CD 1, Track 7] Ha kimegyek arr' a magos tetőre (If I climb the rocky mountains all day through)

[CD 1, Track 8] Töltik a nagy erdő útját (All the lads to war they've taken)

[CD 1, Track 9] Eddig való dolgom a tavaszi szántás (Spring begins with labour; then's the time for sowing)

[CD 1, Track 10] Olvad a hó, csárdás kis angyalom (Snow is melting, oh, my dear, my darling)

Maurice Ravel - Cinq Mélodies populaires grecques

[CD 1, Track 11] Chanson de la mariée (The song to the bride)

[CD 1, Track 12] Là-bas, vers l'église (Yonder by the Church)

[CD 1, Track 13] Quel galant m'est comparable (What Gallant Compares with Me?)

[CD 1, Track 14] Chanson des cueilleuses de lentisques (The Song of the Girls Collecting Mastic)

[CD 1, Track 15] Tout gai! (Everyone is Joyous!)

Samuel Barber - Excursions, Op. 20

[CD 1, Track 16] Un poco Allegro

[CD 1, Track 17] In slow blues tempo

[CD 1, Track 18] Allegretto

[CD 1, Track 19] Allegro molto

Carlos Guastavino - Selected Songs

[CD 1, Track 20] Pampa Mapa (Map of the Plains) from Doce canciones populares

[CD 1, Track 21] La Rosa y el sauce (The Rose and the Willow)

Aaron Copland - Selections from Old American Songs

[CD 1, Track 22] The Boatman's Dance

[CD 1, Track 23] The Little Horses

[CD 1, Track 24] The Golden Willow Tree

[CD 1, Track 25] Zion's Walls

Recording Track Listing

Second Dissertation Recital - CD 2

Béla Bartók - Rhapsody No. 1

[CD 2, Track 1] Lassú

[CD 2, Track 2] Friss

Paul Schoenfield - Four Souvenirs

[CD 2, Track 3] Samba

[CD 2, Track 4] Tango

[CD 2, Track 5] Tin Pan Alley

[CD 2, Track 6] Square Dance

[CD 2, Track 7] Lecture

Recording Track Listing

Third Dissertation Recital - CD 3

[CD 3, Tracks 1-6] Ralph Vaughan Williams - Six Studies in English Folk Song

[CD 3, Track 7] Shulamit Ran - Soliloquy

[CD 3, Track 8] Bohuslav Martinů - Variations on a Slovakian Theme

Florence Price - selections from Forty-Four Art Songs and Spirituals

[CD 3, Track 8] Bewilderment

[CD 3, Track 9] Dawn's Awakening

[CD 3, Track 10] Hold Fast to Dreams

[CD 3, Track 11] I'm Goin' to Lay Down My Heavy Load

[CD 3, Track 12] Sympathy

[CD 3, Track 13] William Kenlon - *The Hag* (2021) (World Premiere)

Benjamin Britten - Selected folksong arrangements

[CD 3, Track 14] Sail on, sail on

[CD 3, Track 15] The Bonny Earl o' Moray

[CD 3, Track 16] Avenging and bright

[CD 3, Track 17] The last rose of summer

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About the project

Folk music is an evocative term that may conjure a variety of images or ideas depending on to whom you are speaking. These might be informal gatherings, communities, people playing instruments, and perhaps more people singing than not. This scene may be in an otherwise-quiet pub, someone's living room, a backyard, or these days, even a concert hall. The line between audience and performer may be difficult to spot, if it exists at all.

This dissertation performance project seeks to feature music written for the classical music concert setting that is inspired by, directly references, or highlights specific and unique aspects of a particular country, culture, tradition, or heritage. When planning this dissertation, I debated using the terms "folk music" and "folk song," because in recent years, there has been some debate over the usage of such terms, making their use occasionally challenging. Other more specific words such as "nationalist" and "traditional" may be more accurate and attractive, depending on the case. I did not design this project to be a vehicle in which to enter this debate, but wished to acknowledge this continued semantic discussion, as the terms folk music and folk song will be used frequently in this document.

Folk music is primarily distinguished from classical music by the way it spreads. Western classical music is usually notated to an exacting degree, while jazz and popular music genres frequently at least use a lead sheet to outline a song's melody and other details. Folk music, on the other hand, is traditionally transmitted orally. This has some important implications: for example, the only way to learn these songs would be to actively participate in community functions, so an outsider wouldn't know the songs.

Folk music was also traditionally performed by amateurs and frequently accompanied social or religious events and work environments. This has led to many forms and variations of a song or melody, as well as fascinating stories surrounding them.

Differences were typically slight, perhaps just a word or two, or in some cases a melody may have been used with completely different lyrics. See appendix I for an example of three folk songs noted by Ralph Vaughan Williams that feature ostensibly the same melody but with three different titles and sets of lyrics.

Many composers in the western classical tradition wrote arrangements of folk songs or folk music and clearly indicated the source material they were using, such as in Copland's *Old American Songs* or Ravel's *Cinq Mélodies populaires grecques*. Song arrangements such as these were immediately considered for inclusion in one of the concert programs for the dissertation, however, not wanting to present solely folk song arrangements, another avenue that music found its way into this project was by clearly conveying some identifying aspect of a given culture. This includes, but is not limited to, the use or quotation of a distinct melody, the use of a popular dance rhythm, an allusion to a piece of folk lore, the inclusion of nationalistic idioms, or mimicked instrumentation.

Background Information

The term “folk music” has its roots in the work of Johann Gottfried Herder, who wrote about *volkslied*, or folk song, in his 1778-9 book, *Stimmen der Völker in Liedern* (Voices of the People in Songs). For many years, folk music did not influence western art music mostly because it was simply not well known in urban societies, but this began to change towards the end of the 19th century, particularly in England. There, folk song

became a source of national voice, even among already well established composers. In London, The Folk-Song Society¹ was formed in 1898 by four joint vice-presidents, Hubert Parry, Charles Villiers Stanford, John Stainer, and Alexander Mackenzie, all of whom were already successful composers during a time when England was emerging from a period of German musical dominance.² The Royal College of Music was founded just fifteen years earlier in 1883, with Parry and Stanford serving on the faculty. Gustav Holst, and Ralph Vaughan Williams were some of the first students at the college, and came to be among the most prominent composers to incorporate folk music into their work. English pastoral music became a springboard with which they could break away from Germanic traditions. With it, they set out to create music that used qualities they had learned from English folk music: beautiful melodies and themes, free time signatures, irregularity of rhythm, and the use of modes.³ The music they composed would thus inspire the next generation of English composers in their use of folk music, such as Percy Grainger, George Butterworth, and Gerald Finzi.

Interestingly, this was not the first time a major composer had written with English or British folk songs in mind. Some examples of folk songs found in the work of Joseph Haydn were famously Hungarian or Croatian in origin, but Haydn also wrote hundreds of arrangements of Welsh, Irish, and Scottish folk songs.⁴ These have only recently been available in publication; as of 2005, G. Henle Verlag publishes the

¹ Now the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS)

² Graebe, Martin. "Gustav Holst, 'Songs of the West', and the English Folk Song Movement." *Folk Music Journal*, vol. 10, no. 1, English Folk Dance + Song Society, 2011, p. 6.

³ Sharp, Cecil J., and Lucy E. Broadwood. "Some Characteristics of English Folk-Music." *Folklore*, vol. 19, no. 2, [Folklore Enterprises, Ltd., Taylor & Francis, Ltd.], 1908, p. 134-144

⁴ Gilbert, Henry F. "Folk-Music in Art-Music--A Discussion and a Theory." *The Musical Quarterly*, vol. 3, no. 4, Oxford University Press, 1917, p. 583.

complete set. They tend to be on the simpler side and do not always specify a particular instrumentation, suggesting that they may have been intended for amateur performers.



Haydn, *O let me in this ae Night*, after a poem by Robert Burns, Vienna: Universal Edition, 1921

Some of the same publishers, the Scottish publisher James Thompson for example, would commission other composers like Ludwig van Beethoven, who wrote a startling amount of folk song arrangements between 1807 and 1820. The most well known of these, perhaps because it is the only group to have an opus number, are the ‘Twenty-five Scottish Folk Songs’, Op. 108, for voice and piano trio. However, these are not all Scottish nor are they definitely all folk songs.⁵ Nevertheless, it is fascinating to



Beethoven, WoO 158a, Breitkopf & Härtel, 1941

consider these in the context of Beethoven's other works of this time. They were written in 1818, not long after the song cycle, *An die ferne Geliebte*, and around the same time as the *Hammerklavier* piano sonata.

With the continued work of folklorists who collected and published folk songs, folk music found its way to the ear of romantic-era composers such as Johannes Brahms, Robert Schumann, Edvard Grieg, Antonin Dvořák, Mikhail Glinka, Franz Liszt, Frédéric Chopin, and Bedrich Smetana, among many others. For example, note the melodies found in the *Hungarian Rhapsodies* of Franz Liszt, the Serbian folk song in Tchaikovsky's *Marche Slav*, the use of hymn and folk melodies in Smetana's *Má vlast*, or the Polish dance forms found in the majority of Chopin's music.

The First Recital: February 15, 2020, 2pm

The first of my dissertation recitals, performed just prior to the COVID-19 shutdown, featured vocal repertoire and solo piano music. This program was an attempt to represent a range of countries and influences while still programming some full song cycles and multi-movement works.

Zwei Gesänge, Op. 91

Folk song was a lifelong interest for Johannes Brahms, beginning with his use of the melody from *Verstohlen geht der Mond auf* in his first piano sonata, written in 1853 when the composer was just twenty years old.

11

Andante
(Nach einem altdeutschen Minneliede)

Ver - stoh-len geht der Mond auf, blau, blau Blü - me - lein; durch Sil-ber-wölk-chen

führt sein Lauf; blau, blau Blü - me - lein, Ro - sen im Tal, Mä - del im Saal, o schön-ste

Ro - - sal

Andante (nach einem altdeutschen Minneliede) from Johannes Brahms' Piano Sonata No. 1 in C major
Henle, 2014

In 1894, towards the end of his life, Brahms wrote another arrangement of the same song. Brahms admired the rhythmic and melodic simplicity of German folk songs,

and as a result, 144 out of the roughly two hundred songs he wrote were folk song settings, or were at least composed in a folk style. Brahms would also utilize Hungarian influences, such as in the *Zigeunerlieder* or his immensely popular Hungarian Dances.

The first recital began with Johannes Brahms' *Zwei Gesänge*, Op. 91, written in 1884. This pair of songs is written for mezzo soprano, viola and piano. Like much of Brahms' music, it was written for the violinist, Joseph Joachim, who also played viola, as well as Joachim's wife, Amalie. The first movement is a setting of a poem by Friedrich Rückert titled *Gestillte Sehnsucht* (Stilled Longing) while the second movement, *Geistliches Wiegenlied*, (Sacred Lullaby) features the tune of the 14th-century Christmas carol, *Resonet in laudibus*. However Brahms probably knew this tune as *Joseph, lieber Joseph mein*, a traditional German song that uses the melody from the carol, *Resonet in laudibus*. Performing these songs was a way to pay homage to the many romantic-era composers who were quite taken with folk music. It served as an excellent introduction, though the main focus of this dissertation was on music of the 20th and 21st century.

Nyolc magyar népdal

We next performed *Nyolc magyar népdal*, BB 47, a cycle of Eight Hungarian Folk Song Arrangements by Béla Bartók. Béla Bartók was a Hungarian composer and pianist who lived from 1881 to 1945. He is equally regarded today as the most famous song collector of the twentieth century. He lived most of his life in his native Hungary but as a staunch opponent of the Nazi Party, he emigrated to the US in 1940. He became an American citizen in 1945, shortly before his death due to leukemia. Around 1908 when Bartók was twenty-seven, he and his friend and fellow Hungarian composer, Zoltan

Kodaly, began collecting songs primarily from Hungarian, Slovak, Romanian, and Bulgarian cultures. He recorded, notated, and arranged music from rural communities, and from that point forward, incorporated elements of these styles into his own compositions. His work would serve to establish the field of ethnomusicology, which is defined by the Society for Ethnomusicology as “the study of music in its social and cultural contexts.”

The individual songs in *Nyolc magyar népdal* are fairly brief and while they were not initially conceived as a cycle of eight songs, each song leads to the next smoothly. This, along with the overall dramatic balance and variety of fast, slow, intense, and subtle songs contributes to a compelling trajectory when performed cover-to-cover. The Hungarian influence is clear from start, with the arresting, sweeping arpeggios of the opening song, *Fekete föld, fehér az én zsebkendőm*. They remind the listener of a cimbalom, a traditional instrument found in many eastern european countries that may have been plucked, struck, or both, depending on the region and style.

Nyolc magyar népdal was composed over two periods. The first five songs were collected from Csik County around 1906-07, which Bartók referred to as Szekeler Songs. Csik County was at the time a part of the Kingdom of Hungary, but is now in central Romania. About a decade later, Bartók collected the last three songs from some Hungarian soldiers.⁶ He began considering these for publication in 1918, and at that point he had intentions of adding to the set and publishing the volume with ten to twelve songs. However, he abandoned this idea and they were published as an eight-song set in 1921 by Universal Edition.⁷ Bartók’s own copy of the original Universal Edition publication was

⁶ Lampert, Vera, Somfai, László, et al. Essays in Honor of László Somfai on His 70th Birthday : Studies in the Sources and the Interpretation of Music. Scarecrow Press, 2005, p. 397.

⁷ Ibid., 387.

personally edited and these changes found their way to the Boosey and Hawkes edition used for this performance.

Bartók, an accomplished performer, got considerable use out of these songs during concerts in Budapest, Szeged, Transylvania, London, and Paris in the decade before their publication, though he never performed the full set of eight, and never performed them in the order in which they are published. As a result, there are a multitude of surviving manuscripts, most of which have notes and edits from the composer that allow these copies to serve as a roadmap for the evolution of this set from collection to publication.⁸ At the time of publication, Bartók had made changes to all of the songs, ranging from completely rewriting one song to slight tweaks in others. For example, the fifth song, by far the most challenging in the set, was completely rewritten in 1921 or 1922, making it the last song of the set in terms of date of composition.⁹ The fourth song also got significant changes, most notably the shift from 3/4 time throughout to alternating between 3/4 and 2/4 time. Bartók also significantly expanded the harmonies in this song, taking what was initially mostly tame triads, to widely-set expressive seventh and ninth chords with frequent suspensions. This provided much more dissonance between the piano and vocal part as well as many more expressive possibilities for the pianist.¹⁰ The first song also had the peculiar change of the note values being doubled and tempo indication halved, but this may have been to prevent the need for 32nd notes in the piano's introductory arpeggios.¹¹ Aside from these examples, most of the changes Bartók made were relatively minimal and generally served to thin

⁸ Ibid., 388.

⁹ Ibid., 390.

¹⁰ Ibid., 394.

¹¹ Ibid., 395.

out the accompaniments. The earlier songs were the most changed, in an effort to keep all of the songs in a similar compositional style. Bartók also transposed some of the songs to keep them all in the same register.

Regarding the order of the pieces, Bartók made the decision to publish them in order of when they were written. So, the first five songs, which were arrangements of songs collected in 1907, were placed first and the later group are nos. 6-8. The fifth song, despite being rewritten in 1921, remained in its original position as the fifth Szekeler song. Many existing copies, evidence of performances, and recordings give insight into the order in which Bartók performed these songs. A few orders he tried were: 2635, 26375, 86325, 4523, 1452, and 14235.¹² From this, we can conclude that Bartók favored starting with the second song, and perhaps did not like performing the seventh. It also appears that he liked performing the second, sixth, and third as a unit, and closing with the fifth song. I was unaware of these performance records when I performed this set, however, I maintain that the order in which they are published is satisfying. It is interesting however, to try out Bartók's orders and important to retain that Bartók did not mean to imply any fixed order by publishing them in the order he did. Presumably, this would apply to his other song cycles as well.

Cinq Mélodies populaires grecques

Maurice Ravel's *Cinq Mélodies populaires grecques*, or *Five Greek Folk Songs* ended the first half of this concert. Whereas Bartók looked to his own heritage for inspiration, Ravel and others would also find fascination in music from other cultures. Ravel had already written the middle-eastern-influenced piece for voice and orchestra,

¹² Ibid., 396.

Shéhérazade, and would later produce arrangements of Scottish, Hebrew, French, Spanish, and Italian songs, as well as find inspiration in American blues music.

The origin of Ravel's *Five Greek Folk Songs* are well documented. They were something of a collaboration between Ravel, the writer and critic, Michel-Dimitri Calvocoressi, and the musicologist, Pierre Aubry. Ravel and Calvocoressi first met in 1898 when they were 23 and 21 years old, respectively. At the time, Ravel was studying under Gabriel Fauré at the Paris Conservatoire, while Calvocoressi was studying harmony with Xavier Leroux. The two struck up a close friendship while studying composers whose work they both enjoyed, though they had minimal contact for a handful of years before they started collaborating on the Greek songs.¹³

Ravel in fact wrote nine settings of Greek songs, however he felt that three of them were too brief and discarded them; these are now sadly considered lost. The first five of these were written in 1904 over a period of just thirty-six hours and were used to illustrate a lecture given by Pierre Aubry on Greek folk song at which they were sung by Louise Thomasset. Of these, *Quel galant m'est comparable* and *Chanson des cueilleuses de lentisques* survived and are featured in the published form of *Cinq Mélodies populaires grecques*.¹⁴

Ravel did not collect these songs, nor did Calvocoressi or Aubry for that matter. However Calvocoressi did select and translate them to French. Some of the songs were collected in their native form in 1898-99 by Hubert Pernot, a linguist and professor of modern Greek at the Sorbonne. He had been sent by the French Ministry of Education to study and collect recordings of speech and songs on the island of Chios, which is located

¹³ Calvocoressi, M. D., and Maurice Ravel. "Ravel's Letters to Calvocoressi: With Notes and Comments." *The Musical Quarterly*, vol. 27, no. 1, Oxford University Press, 1941, p. 1.

¹⁴ Orenstein, Arbie. *Ravel: Man and Musician*. Columbia University Press, 1975, p. 41.

off the coast of Turkey.¹⁵ While Pernot was not a musician, he succeeded in preserving the songs on wax cylinders, which were later stored at the Sorbonne. Fortunately, Pernot had a colleague, Paul le Flem, a composer and music critic educated at the Schola Cantorum, who transcribed them for publication in 1903.¹⁶ This volume was titled *Mélodies populaires de l'île de Chio, recueillies au phonographe* (Popular melodies from the island of Chio, collected on phonograph). This edition apparently had a number of errors owing to the fact that le Flem had no experience with the intricacies of Greek folk music or the Greek language. A second edition was published by Marcos Dragoumis, a specialist in Balkan folk music, with substantial corrections and alterations in 2006. He corrected melodies, ornamentation, and rhythms, particularly for songs in 7/8 or 9/4 time signatures. He also transcribed the songs into keys that would require minimal accidentals.¹⁷ The remainder of the songs Ravel arranged came from Pericles Matsa's *Chansons*.¹⁸

Calvocoressi was evidently impressed with Ravel's work for the Aubry lecture, noting that:

They suggest the atmosphere so aptly that [the] vocal part and instrumental part seem to have grown together. I can think of no earlier example of so thorough and felicitous a fusion, all the more remarkable considering that he had never turned his mind to folk songs before, and that he did the work at very short notice.¹⁹

¹⁵ Vlagopoulos, Panos, Tambakaki, Polina, et al., editors. *Music, Language and Identity in Greece: Defining a National Art Music in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2020, p. 114.

¹⁶ Pernot, Hubert Octave. *Mélodies populaires grecques de l'île de Chio*. E. Lerous, 1903.

¹⁷ Romanou, Katy. "Pernot Hubert, Paul Le Flem: Folk Melodies from Chios: New Simplified and Corrected Notation by Marcos Ph. Dragoumis, The Friends of the Musical Ethnological Archive of Melpo Merlier." *Muzikologija*, Jan 1, 2007, p. 347.

¹⁸ Arbie Orenstein, p. 41.

¹⁹ Calvocoressi, M. D. "When Ravel Composed to Order." *Music & Letters*, vol. 22, no. 1, Oxford University Press, 1941, pp. 55-56.

Calvocoressi presented a similar lecture the following year and asked Ravel to write three more songs for the occasion. These were sung by Marguerite Babaïan, and Ravel was so taken with her performance that he later wrote one last setting of a Greek folk song for her, *Tripatos*.²⁰ It is stylistically similar to the songs in *Cinq Mélodies populaires grecques* and at about one and a half minutes long, would make for a fabulous encore if not simply added to the older songs.

Excursions, Op. 20

The second half of the concert began with Samuel Barber's *Excursions, Op. 20*, for piano solo. In Barber's own words:

These are 'Excursions' in small classical forms into regional American idioms. Their rhythmic characteristics, as well as their source in folk material and their scoring, reminiscent of local instruments are easily recognized.²¹

This four-movement work uses various American idioms and forms, each one with clear melodic and rhythmic motifs throughout. Barber wrote the first Excursion in 1942, which has many defining features, including an ostinato bass indicative of the boogie-woogie style, the opening melodic motive, and periodic disruptions of three, five, or seven beat measures. It features extensive use of variation and modal shifts, with interspersed e-flats and e-naturals suggesting both c-major and c-minor harmonies throughout. With its motoric bustle, bursts of color, and occasional bout of obnoxiousness, is reminiscent of a cityscape and perhaps the people within.

²⁰ Arbie Orenstein, p. 41.

²¹ Heyman, Barbara B. Samuel Barber : The Composer and His Music. Second edition, Oxford University Press, 2020, pp. 267.

The first performance of Excursion I was in 1944, when Jeanne Behrand played it on WQXR radio. Shortly after he had completed Excursions II and IV, Barber wrote to Behrend and expressed his admiration for her performance, and incorporated some of her markings and suggestions into the final version of Excursion I. Later in the summer of 1944, Barber gave Excursions I, II, and IV to Vladimir Horowitz who performed them in 1945 generally to critical acclaim, though the second movement was slightly less well received in New York.²²

The second *Excursion* is also born from the blues but it is in a more subdued and improvisatory seeming way. It has a basically typical twelve-bar blues harmonic framework and while I thoroughly enjoyed playing it, it is admittedly perhaps the least outstanding of the four movements. The third *Excursion* is a striking theme and variations on the ballad made famous to American audiences by Marty Robbins, *Streets of Laredo*. A joy to play, its intricacies and challenges can be discreet, particularly from a rhythmic perspective, but they contribute to a rich and complex soundscape. *Streets of Laredo* refers to Laredo, Texas, and was also known as the *Cowboy's Lament*. Tracing this back further, *Streets of Laredo* itself was based on a song called *The Unfortunate Rake*, which has its own interesting history replete with numerous versions. In brief, it first appeared in Ireland around 1790, and has popped up in various forms ever since.²³ The last movement of Excursions captures the feeling of a barn dance. It mimics the melodic patterns of fiddle players, and with its block chords and strong usage of tonic and subdominant harmonies, it is reminiscent of the harmonic capabilities of a harmonica

²² Barbara Heyman, pp. 264-266.

²³ Lodewick, Kenneth. "The Unfortunate Rake' and His Descendants." *Western Folklore*, vol. 14, no. 2, Western States Folklore Society, 1955, p. 98.

and proves a rousing end to the set.²⁴ *Excursion III* was the last movement of *Excursions* composed and was therefore not performed by Horowitz. The first complete performance occurred on November 21, 1947 at Carnegie Hall, with Nadia Reisenberg at the piano. Jeanne Behrend also performed the whole piece the following year, alongside a number of other American composers' music.²⁵

Selected songs by Carlos Guastavino

All of the music on this concert at this point was either American or European in source material. Wishing for some variety, we turned to the Argentinian composer, Carlos Guastavino (1912-2000). He is not surprisingly frequently compared to Ginastera, Argentina's most famous composer. However, while Ginastera composed for all genres, Guastavino is mostly known for his vocal and piano music, though Guastavino did write a fair amount of instrumental, choral, and chamber music. His work in the art song genre garnered him the nickname "the Argentine Schubert," and some estimate he wrote as many as 600 songs, though only 162 of these are published.²⁶

Guastavino was an excellent pianist, as is evident by the immensely comfortable accompaniments. Similarly, his vocal parts are lush and memorable, surely shaped by his years of accompanying in the studios of voice teachers.²⁷ Guastavino occupies an interesting place in the Argentine musical landscape, one in which he straddles the line between *Música Culta* (literally translates to cultured music, but essentially classical music) and *Música Popular* (Popular music). This combination contributes to the overall

²⁴ Barbara Heyman, p. 268.

²⁵ Barbara Heyman, p. 266.

²⁶ Kulp, Jonathon Lance. *Carlos Guastavino: A Study of His Songs and Musical Aesthetics*. 2001. The University of Texas at Austin, PhD dissertation, pp. 42-43.

²⁷ Kimball, Carol. *Song : A Guide to Art Song Style and Literature*. Revised ed., Hal Leonard Corporation, 2006, p. 524.

nationalist feeling to his music, even in some early cases where there is no actual direct nationalist influence.²⁸

La Rosa y el Sauce (1942) falls into this subset - it does not have any nationalistic source material, though it is highly evocative of Argentine pastoral scenes, with lush lyrics by the Argentine poet, Francisco Silva. *La Rosa y el Sauce*'s immense popularity in Argentina in both popular and classical environments has elevated it to a stature where many regard it as something of a national anthem or folk song, despite its origin being confined to Guastavino's mind. Kulp articulates this point well:

La rosa y el sauce" ... is one of the most beloved songs in the art music repertoire of Argentina, a cornerstone in Argentina's "national music." ... The Argentine public's affinity for a song like "La rosa y el sauce" seems all the more natural. It is music with which Argentines identify, and therein lies its argentinidad.²⁹

In other words, *La rosa y el sauce* was not nationalist music but it became nationalist music, hence its inclusion in this project.

Pampamapa, (Map of the Pampas, or sometimes translated as Map of the Plains) is an exciting foray into the *huella*, a type of gaucho dance with characteristic harmonic and rhythmic patterns. (In fact, *Pampamapa* is subtitled, *Aire de huella*.) Guastavino takes a few liberties with the style, and deviates from the traditional harmonic pattern of i-VI-III-V7-i, instead using the progression, i9-iv9-v9-i9.³⁰ Guastavino approximates the rhythmic characteristics of the *huella* with some modifications. The *huella* features alternation between 6/8 and 3/4 meters, and guitar accompaniment with the *rasgueado* technique, a method of quick strumming common to flamenco guitarists. It consists of

²⁸ Jonathon Lance Kulp, p.42.

²⁹ Jonathon Lance Kulp, pp.72-73.

³⁰ Jonathon Lance Kulp, p. 56.

downstrokes with the four fingers and an upstroke with the thumb, as well as hitting the strings with the nail side of the finger rather than the fleshy side. Furthermore, the vocal part of a *huella* has the interesting quirk of starting phrases on the second beat of the 6/8 measure. Guastavino writes *Pampamapa* in 2/4 and uses triplet figures to simulate the feeling of 6/8. He maintains the second beat aspect of the vocal rhythm and uses a broken chord motif to suggest the presence of a guitar.

Old American Songs

This program ended with selections from Aaron Copland's *Old American Songs*.

The Old American Songs are more than sets of audience-pleasing folksy ditties. Rather, they offer a portrait of the composer's struggle with a theme that preoccupied him for much of his career - the nature of American music and its relationship to the American people - across a period in which the network of political and ideological associations attached to those ideas became ever more charged.³¹

Copland wrote two sets of five songs, the first published in 1950 and the second in 1954. The first set was premiered by Peter Pears and Benjamin Britten at the Aldeburgh Festival in Suffolk, England, while the second set was premiered by baritone William Warfield, with Copland himself at the piano.³² The earliest sketches of this work are dated June 9th, 1941 and were titled "Three American ~~Folk~~ Fette Melodies." The word "folk" was crossed out due to poor connotations with the word at the time. Cassandra Hartford writes in depth about these songs in context of early cold-war America, an engaging topic that falls outside the scope of this document.³³

³¹Hartford, Cassandra. "A Common Man for the Cold War: Aaron Copland's 'Old American Songs.'" *The Musical Quarterly*, vol. 98, no. 4, Oxford University Press, 2015, p. 314.

³² Cassandra Hartford, p. 313.

³³ Cassandra Hartford, p. 314.

For these sets, Copland arranged lullabies, children's songs, Shaker tunes, hymns, minstrel songs, and ballads, and made use of a variety of sources. For example, *The Boatman's Dance*, *Long Time Ago*, and *Ching-A-Ring Chaw* came from the The Harris Collection of American Poetry and Plays from Brown University. *Simple Gifts* was found in *Shaker Rituals, Songs, and Dances* by Edward D. Andrews, *The Little Horses* was found in *Folk Song USA*, and *The Dodger* came from *Our Singing Country*, a volume of folk songs and ballads by John and Alan Lomax. *At the River* was in many hymn collections, and Copland learned *I bought me a Cat* from Lynn Riggs, who had sung it as a boy in Oklahoma. *Zion's Walls* is a revivalist song and was found in Down-east spirituals, a collection of folk songs, spirituals, hymns, and ballads, and finally, *Golden Willow Tree* is a traditional English ballad that Copland found at the Library of Congress.³⁴

While Copland was generally faithful to the source materials and wrote accompaniments that reflect aspects of the original songs, he uses both parts to introduce new ideas such as subtle meter shifts, tempo changes and lyric revisions. He also uses the accompaniment to reflect what is happening in the text, to introduce counter melodies, and to imitate instrumentation, such as the banjo in *The Boatman's Dance*. These slight changes would serve to provide interest for the listener and also solve some concerns Copland had with a song potentially being construed as racist, which I will expand on below.³⁵ Some characteristic aspects of Copland's style shine through, with use of extreme registers, open octaves and widely spaced chords, parallel fifths and octaves, and a general rhythmic drive.

³⁴ Kennedy, Mary A. "Copland and the Folk Song: Sources, Analysis, Choral Arrangements." *The Choral Journal*, vol. 39, no. 10, American Choral Directors Association, 1999, p. 18.

³⁵ Kassandra Hartford, p. 331.

I selected four songs from the Old American Songs for this concert, including *The Boatman's Dance*, *The Little Horses*, *Zion's Walls*, and *The Golden Willow Tree*. Copland generally did not make significant changes to melodies or lyrics when arranging these songs, but there are examples where he changed rhythms to emphasize certain beats, or paired down longer songs by only setting certain stanzas. In *The Boatman's Dance*, Copland used the first, third and sixth stanza from *De Boatman's Dance*, a minstrel song by Dan Emmett, and he translated the dialect to make the lyrics more politically correct. ("De, ebry, ting, den" became "the, every, thing, and then" respectively.) Copland also broadened the refrains, which gives the song an overall sense of nobility while maintaining the rhythmic energy of the original song during the verses.³⁶

Copland enacts a similar treatment to some of the lyrics of other songs, such as *Ching-a-ring Chaw*, for which he significantly rewrote the lyrics in effort to diminish any connection to its minstrel history.³⁷ *The Little Horses* got a bit of this treatment as well. Copland found this song in *Folk Song USA*, a compilation of songs by John and Allan Lomax. In the Lomax's publication, they included two versions of the song that reflect the song's history in both southern-white and African-American culture. The second verse in the latter version reads:

Way down yonder
In de medder
Lies a po' lil' lambie:
De bees an' de butterflies
Peckin' out its eyes,
De po' lil' thing cried, "Mammy!"³⁸

³⁶ Mary Kennedy, p. 19.

³⁷ Kassandra Hartford, p. 333.

³⁸ Kassandra Hartford, p. 334.

Some of Copland's sketches of *The Little Horses* feature this verse, but they were later crossed out.

So, while *The Boatman's Dance* has significant changes, the overall body of the songs feels faithful to the original. *The Little Horses* on the other hand, is a less straightforward arrangement. Copland freely manipulated rhythm, tempo, form, and lyrics, repeating lines when it fits the narrative he envisioned. The vocal part stays in 4/8 time throughout the song but the piano drifts between 2/8, 3/8 and 4/8 during wispy interludes between verses. He also raises the pitch on the word "coach" by a major second the last time it is sung which when combined with the elongation of this pitch and brief flourish in the piano, create a memorable climax.

The Golden Willow Tree, a thunderous maritime story, is both the longest and most intense song of the set. Exhilarating and engaging to play, *The Golden Willow Tree* tells the story of a ship under attack and a carpenter boy sent by the captain to bore holes into the enemy ship. The captain promises the boy gold and the fairest of his daughters, however upon the cabin boy's return, the captain refuses to allow him back on board. The boy threatens to sink his own ship if not for the love he had for the men aboard and the boy dies in most versions of the story. Its climax in G-flat major³⁹ is the most tonally adventurous moment of either set and occurs when the captain declares, "Oh no, I won't take you on board, nor do unto you as good as my word, though you sank 'em in the low land lonesome low." For this song, Copland adapted a children's ballad, *The Golden Vanity* found in volume four of *The Traditional Tunes of the Child Ballads* by Bertrand Harris Bronson. More specifically, Copland studied a variant sung by Justus Begley of Hazard, Kentucky that featured banjo accompaniment and was recorded by Alan and

³⁹ G-flat major, if performing in the original key. This moment was in E-major in my case.

Elizabeth Lomax.⁴⁰ Benjamin Britten also wrote an arrangement of this song, though his version is for five boy voices with piano and lasts around twenty minutes.

We ended the concert with *Zion's Walls*, a revivalist song written in 1853 that was credited to John G. McCurry, compiler of *The Social Harp*, a collection of 222 (mostly folk song) pieces written by McCurry and others in Hart County, located in northeast Georgia. Copland's changes to this song included adding an interlude in A-flat major, an original countermelody in F, and changing the original use of "Jesus" in the lyrics to "Zion."⁴¹

⁴⁰ Mary Kennedy, p. 19.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

The Second Recital: December 20, 2020, 2pm

First Rhapsody (Folk Dances)

Returning to the music of Béla Bartók, the second event, a lecture recital, began with his *First Rhapsody* for Violin and Piano. Like much of Bartók's work, the *First Rhapsody* is based on Eastern-European folk music that he recorded and collected in the field. This piece features six dance melodies: four are Romanian, one is more generally from the Transylvanian region, and one is Hungarian.⁴² Bartók didn't always preserve the original instrumentation of a collected melody, but the melodies used for this piece were in fact originally played on the violin. The rhapsody as a whole follows the form of a *verbunkos*, which is a type of instrumental Hungarian dance used to glorify military life for recruitment purposes during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In fact, the word *verbunkos* is derived from the German word, *Werbung*, which means advertising or recruitment.⁴³ A *verbunkos* typically features dotted rhythms in duple meter, and consists of two movements: a *lassú* (slow section) that is followed by a *friss*. (fast section)⁴⁴

The *lassú* is characterized by a steady beat and precedes a series of faster dances in the *friss*. In addition to this basic tempo outline, a *verbunkos* is usually in 2/4 or 4/8 time and features two particular accompaniment styles called the *dűvő* and *esztam*. *Dűvő* roughly means "two times" and refers to a string instrument articulating two portamento chords of equal value with one portamento bow stroke. *Esztam* is a variation on *dűvő* that is thought to have developed to facilitate playing the *dűvő* accompanimental style at a

⁴² Bayley, Amanda. *The Cambridge Companion to Bartók*. Cambridge University Press, 2001, p. 141.

⁴³ Schneider, David E. "'Gypsies,' Verbunkos, and Bartók's Debt to the Nineteenth Century." *International Journal of Musicology*, vol. 9, Peter Lang AG, 2000, p. 141.

⁴⁴ Leong, Daphne. "Bartók's Studies of Folk Rhythm: A Window into His Own Practice." *Acta Musicologica*, vol. 76, no. 2, International Musicological Society, 2004, p. 254.

faster tempo. It “is characterized by a quick alternation of single notes between two accompanying string instruments, most often a viola or second violin and bass.”⁴⁵

Basically, *esztam* is *dűvő* but the pitches are played by alternating instruments, usually a bass and a higher instrument. Schneider notes the orchestrated version of the *First Rhapsody* as an excellent example, as it illustrates both concepts in the same excerpt.⁴⁶

Other rhythmic figures that feature prominently in the *First Rhapsody* are *iambus*, *alla zoppa*, and *choriamb*. These common figurations are popular in Hungarian folk music as they mimic aspects of Hungarian speech.⁴⁷



Both the first and the *Second Rhapsody* were written for the violinist, Joseph Szigeti and pianist, Zoltán Székely. In writing these pieces, Bartók set out to capture the style of Eastern-European fiddle playing but present it in the context of western classical music. To that end, he insisted that Szigeti listen to the original field recordings, to assist him in capturing the style which he was meant to emulate.⁴⁸ Both the violin and piano

⁴⁵ David E. Schneider, “‘Gypsies,’ Verbunkos, and Bartók’s Debt to the Nineteenth Century.” p. 144.

⁴⁶ See appendix III

⁴⁷ Schneider, David E. *Bartók, Hungary, and the Renewal of Tradition: Case Studies in the Intersection of Modernity and Nationality*. University of California Press, 2006, p. 21.

⁴⁸ Amanda Bayley, p. 141.

part are highly virtuosic and feature double and triple stops and harmonics in the violin, complex rhythms, and frequent tempo variations that were vital for capturing the vernacular style of the piece.

While the *First Rhapsody* is certainly violin-driven, I do not mean to suggest that the piano part is at all easy. The entire piece demands a precise touch, careful attention to rhythms and an acute sense for balance and pacing, due to frequent *rallentandos* and *accelerandos*. The second movement in particular presents frequent virtuosic passages with fast leaps, ornamentation, layered voices, and precise articulations. This said, the piano frequently presents as complementary to the violin rather than as a soloistic voice.⁴⁹

Similar to the songs performed on the first recital, which Bartók never performed as a complete set, Bartók did not require both movements of the *First Rhapsody* to always be performed together.⁵⁰ He did however write two different endings that were to be used depending on if the second movement was performed alone or with the first. Today, most performers typically play both movements and use the shorter second ending, which results in 151 total measures of music in the second movement as opposed to 180.⁵¹ This was also apparently Bartók's preference as well.⁵² The first ending revisits some material from earlier in the *friss* but reprises the opening melodies of the *lassú*. Interestingly, Bartók stipulated that the second ending is obligatory if the second movement was played alone.⁵³

The *First Rhapsody* uses six folk melodies as melodic source material that are combined in a 'chain form,' a method Bartók used to simulate the folk practice of

⁴⁹ Amanda Bayley, p. 142.

⁵⁰ Cooper, David. *Béla Bartók*. Yale University Press, 2015, p. 232.

⁵¹ Walsh, Fiona. "Variant Endings for Bartók's Two Violin Rhapsodies (1928-1929)." *Music & Letters*, vol. 86, no. 2, Oxford University Press, 2005, pp. 237.

⁵² *Ibid*, p. 239.

⁵³ *Ibid*, p. 239.

stringing a series of dance tunes together.⁵⁴ Bartók collected three of them in December, 1912. Two of these, *Judecata* and *Crucea* were played by a Romanian fiddle player, Patru Mos, while the third, *Pre loc*, was collected from an anonymous player. Two years later, Bartók collected two more tunes from a man named Ion Popovici in April, 1914: *De ciuit* and *Cuieșdeanca - fecioresc*. The sixth tune used in the *First Rhapsody* was the only one not collected by Bartók himself. This was *Árvátfalvi kesergő*, which had been collected from János Balog in March 1900 by Béla Vikár, another pioneer in Hungarian folk tune collection.⁵⁵ In the following paragraph, I will point out examples of Bartók's use of these folk songs in the *First Rhapsody*. In an effort to keep this text less convoluted in appearance, figures containing actual musical excerpts will be placed in appendix II.

The *lassú* features two of the six folk songs, with the opening melody derived from *De ciuit*. This dance tune in fact does not actually correspond to a specific dance. Rather, it is a *calling* to dance, hence its logical position as the first theme. *De ciuit* does however exhibit typical qualities of dance music.⁵⁶ A striking difference between the original song and Bartók's use of it, is the shift from G-major in the original song to g-minor in the *First Rhapsody*. The other folk song used in the *lassú* is *Árvátfalvi kesergő*, or *Lament from Arvátfalvi*, which is first heard in measure thirty-eight.

The *Friss* begins with *Judecata*, a joyous tune that translates to *Judgement*. This song is first presented in its entirety and has two distinct phrases. Bartók proceeds to expand his arrangement of this song, incorporating double stops in the violin and parallel-sixth passages in the piano. *Judecata* gets progressively more embellished, culminating in an *accelerando* with melodies derived from the third measure of the

⁵⁴ Fiona Walsh, p. 237.

⁵⁵ David Cooper, pd. 232.

⁵⁶ Bartók, Béla. *Rumanian folk music, Vol. I*. Edited by Benjamin Suchoff, Martinus Nijhoff, 1967, p. 41.

second phrase of the original song. Bartók begins a new section at measure twenty-six with *Crucea*, or *The Cross*. This coincides with a shift in character and texture from thick and celebratory to thin with an ominous and improvisatory sound, contributed to by frequent tempo changes and sustained trills. This gives way at measure thirty-six with a return to a jubilant atmosphere and challenging, intricate writing for both players. Furious wide passages with harmonics in the violin against an *esztam*-style accompaniment end this section. Transitional material sets up the next song, *Pre loc*, or *Stamping Dance* at measure fifty-three. Bartók achieves quite a different sound in this passage with a change in key and harmonic style, as well as through the use of a *dűvő* accompaniment pattern. The last song to appear in the *First Rhapsody* is *Cuieșdeanca - fecioresc* in measure seventy-one. At this point, Bartók has finished introducing new songs and circles back to ones he had used earlier, but with increasingly agitated and bombastic material as he heads towards the climax. For example, he returns to *Pre loc* at measure ninety-nine for the climax of the piece and *Judecata* at measure 118 during a relaxed period before the finale.

Four Souvenirs

I want musicians to sweat while
learning and performing my works.⁵⁷

So writes Paul Schoenfeld⁵⁸ about his music, and as anyone who has ever had the pleasure of playing his music can attest, this is an exceptionally accurate statement. Paul Schoenfeld was born in 1947 in Detroit, Michigan and began taking piano lessons at the

⁵⁷ Janczyk, Kristie Annette. *Paul Schoenfeld and His Four Souvenirs for Violin and Piano (1990)*. 2015. Arizona State University, PhD dissertation, p. 4.

⁵⁸ Some sources list his name as Schoenfield, an Americanized spelling of his name. Scheonfeld has relatively recently reverted to the traditional spelling of his last name that is without the letter *i*.

age of six and started composing at seven. His mentors included Ozan Marsh, Julius Chajes, Rudolf Serkin, and Robert Muczynski, and he eventually completed degrees from Converse College, Carnegie Mellon University, and the University of Arizona, where he completed his DMA. Schoenfeld held a teaching appointment for a short time in Toledo, Ohio, but left to live on a kibbutz in Israel. After that period, he enjoyed equal success as a pianist and composer and performed across the United States at festivals such as Music from Marlboro. He also recorded the complete works for Violin and Piano by Bartók with Sergiu Luca, including the *Rhapsody* performed earlier on this recital. Schoenfeld entered his current post as Professor of Composition at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor in 2008. His compositional style frequently combines aspects of popular and folk music with classical mediums and genres, and given the composer's skill as performer and attitude towards the difficulty of his music, his work typically involves complex and virtuosic instrumental parts.

Four Souvenirs was commissioned by Lev Polyakin, a former member of the Cleveland Orchestra who would later be appointed assistant concertmaster in 1999. A jazz player and enthusiast, Polyakin frequented clubs in Cleveland which led to the idea of commissioning a violin piece in a jazz idiom. Polyakin wanted a piece that would complement his classical training while sounding at home in a jazz club. After hearing a memorable tune in Schoenfeld's Concerto for Piccolo Trumpet and Orchestra, Polyakin thought to ask Schoenfeld to write a duo for violin and piano. The resultant piece would eventually be adapted as the third movement of *Four Souvenirs: Tin Pan Alley*. *Four Souvenirs* was premiered in 1994 by Polyakin with the composer at the piano.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Kristie Annette Janczyk, p. 5.

Four Souvenirs is a four-movement work, three of which highlight a different dance genre, including the samba, tango, and square dance. *Samba* features a near constant stream of eighth notes at an ambitious tempo and highlights aspects of the Brazilian dance music genre. There is a huge variety in rhythms found in the samba genre, but Schoenfeld's



use seems to be most similar to that of the *son clave* rhythm, though the bars without dotted quarter notes tend to have a “four-on-the-floor” rhythm, as opposed to the rests and quarter notes pictured above.



Examples of samba rhythm in *Samba*, mm. 12; 13; 56; 85, Migdal Publishing, 1990

Samba is second only to the final movement in terms of complexity and difficulty. The left hand of the piano bears a lot of the responsibility for presenting the samba rhythm while also keeping the tempo consistent, a constant battle between not dragging or rushing. This is no small feat in this movement due to the constant melodic dialogue and duels between the right hand of the pianist and the violin. Much of the movement also features a somewhat easier to maintain four-on-the-floor rhythm, wherein the pianist must achieve a portamento articulation similar to that of an upright bass player, though the frequent use of the dotted samba rhythm keeps the players on their toes. The pianist

also dabbles in some other styles, such as in two challenging passages that mimic a stride piano style.



Stride piano in *Samba*, mm. 145-8, Migdal Publishing, 1990

A fifteen bar introduction begins the second movement as preface to *Tango*. This movement presents a typical tango rhythm and builds on some of the concepts found in *Samba*. For example, it requires a precisely flexible and consistent rhythm and therefore



Tango, mm. 16-7, Migdal Publishing, 1990

demands knowledge of that rhythm and style. The musicians must know where to slightly stretch notes and where to consistently whip back into tempo. Similarly they must not let the sentimentality of the movement overly influence use of rubato. There are key moments that Schoenfeld marks with indications such as *rubato*, *ritardando*, and *espressivo*, but aside from these, the

movement benefits from steady pacing. *Tango* is somewhat more violin driven than *Samba*, but this is not to say that the piano does not have melodic moments. They do however tend to be concurrent with and feel subservient to melodies in the violin. Other notable aspects of this movement are the prominent double stops in the violin, and occasional quick rhythmic figures in the piano that contribute rhythmic punch and break up the long



Tango, m. 39, Migdal Publishing, 1990

stretches of the tango rhythm. A brief coda ends the movement, notable because it is the only time in the movement that the piano gets to play the initial theme.



Ending of *Tango*, mm. 88-9, Migdal Publishing, 1990

The third movement, *Tin Pan Alley*, is a charming reference to the geographical center of popular music in New York during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century. Specifically, it was the block on West 28th Street between Fifth and Sixth Avenues. Many American publishing houses were located there and performers known as song pluggers, including a young George Gershwin, would perform songs for customers.

At first glance, *Tin Pan Alley* appears to be the easiest movement of *Four Souvenirs* and indeed it is the “easiest,” but it should not be taken lightly. Its subtle complexities only reveal themselves after some study and like much of *Four Souvenirs*, the challenges in this movement boil down to the tempo indication and rhythm. For



Tin Pan Alley, mm. 25-7, Migdal Publishing, 1990

example, at a slower tempo than indicated, the left hand of the piano part is not difficult.

In fact, even when considered by itself at the correct tempo, it is not terribly challenging. However, the right hand is placed high in the treble range of the piano, meaning that the pianist's attention must spread across a wide spatial area. It is difficult to look at both what the right hand is doing while also keeping tabs on the left hand's leaps, so much of this piece must be played by "feel" rather than by sight. On top of this, the pianist and violinist must strive for great precision when the main theme, with its dotted figures, enters in measure nine. This figuration is pervasive throughout the movement and the danger lies in that they can easily sound like a swung rhythm, when they in fact should be played as true dotted-eighth and sixteenth notes.

The last movement, *Square Dance*, can carry many adjectives, such as barn dance, tour de force, hootenanny, and boisterous, and returns to the dueling nature of *Samba* with violin and piano lines frequently right on top of each other. However, with analysis and thoughtful rehearsal, there is usually a clear player who should stand out at any given moment. Frequently, the pianist can aid in this process by maintaining a generally light touch, even in occasions of large chords. This naturally helps with balance but it also makes the piano part simply easier to execute. From the start, Schoenfeld manipulates time signatures much more than in previous movements in this piece. The majority of the movement is in the initial time signature of 2/4 but by the end of the first page of the full score, Schoenfeld has also used 3/8 and 5/8, and uses 3/4 later in the piece. These meter shifts not only serve to provide rhythmic interest, they are a vehicle with which to manipulate where prominent beats occur. Schoenfeld can precisely delay or expedite momentous moments by adding or subtracting beats. After a passage

reminiscent of foot stomping, Schoenfeld writes a breathless coda that is exhilarating, a bit scary, and above all, a satisfying end to this entertaining piece.



Time signature shifts in *Square Dance*, mm. 167-8, Migdal Publishing, 1990

An Interlude

My original plan for the second recital had a different pair of pieces accompanying the lecture, both of which combine piano and percussion. However, this plan did not expect a global pandemic that made performing music with large chamber ensembles impractical. These pieces were initially moved to my third concert, but ultimately taken out of the series entirely due to the continued impracticalities and safety issues inherent in joining six people in close quarters during the pandemic. I have left in some discussion of these pieces however, as they represent interesting facets of the topic.

The inclusion of percussion instrumentation in a chamber music context is an intriguing combination seldom seen before Igor Stravinsky's *A Soldier's Tale* and Béla Bartók's *Sonata for two pianos and percussion*, in 1918 and 1937 respectively, though it is becoming more common. The piano is a sort of percussion instrument itself, so percussion instruments and the piano are similar in that they produce sound in such a way that it is basically either on or off. Achieving precision in this combination is a fantastic challenge, but it is worth the effort as it provides some unique tonal possibilities and combinations.

Spiral

Spiral, (1987) by Cambodian-American composer Chinary Ung, is scored for cello, piano, and percussion, and reflects the composer's career-long focus on combining music of the west and east. In his own words, "If East is yellow and West is blue, then my music is green."⁶⁰ Chinary Ung came to the United States in 1965 to study clarinet and conducting. He eventually turned to composition and received his Doctor of Musical Arts

⁶⁰ Chinary Ung, et al. "Spiral VI." Chinary Ung: Seven Mirrors, New World Records, 2005.

from Columbia University in 1974 where he studied with Chou Wen-chung. Ung's early work was guided by his goal of reconnecting with the Cambodian musical traditions that he knew as a child but had been separated from due to the 1968-75 Cambodian civil war and resultant Khmer Rouge government in power from 1975-1979. The composer won the Grawemeyer Award for music composition in 1989 for his choral work, *Inner Voices*,⁶¹ and would go on to teach at Northern Illinois University, Connecticut College, the University of Pennsylvania, and Arizona State University, before settling at the University of California at San Diego in 1995.⁶²

Spiral, like much of Ung's work, employs recurring modal melodies reminiscent of traditional Cambodian music. Its extensive percussion set-up, including marimba, xylophone, gongs, tubular bells, among others, creates sounds evocative of East-Asian musical instruments, such as a Cambodian instrument similar to the xylophone called the *roneat-ek*. *Spiral* has a quiet, playful, and thoughtful character. Though at times highly rhythmic, intense and energetic, it is never aggressive or uncomfortably dissonant. It is defined by its fragmented melodic motifs, instrumentation, and unmetered rhythm, and transports the listener to exotic soundscapes. *Spiral* does not appear to be a direct commentary on the Cambodian civil war, rather it is reaching back to Ung's childhood, a time before political unrest in his home country.

The *Spirals* series indicates a self-referential artistic project where one seeks spiritual strength and inspiration through meditation and quiet contemplation, traits of Buddhist spiritual exercises.⁶³

⁶¹ "1989 – Chinary Ung." Grawemeyer Awards, 1989, grawemeyer.org/1989-chinary-ung.

⁶² "Chinary Ung." Columbia University, www.columbia.edu/cu/china/Chinary.html. Accessed 27 Sept. 2021.

⁶³ "---." UC San Diego, music-cms.ucsd.edu/people/faculty/regular_faculty/chinary-ung/index.html. Accessed 27 Sept. 2021.

The pianist contributes to the exotic atmosphere by using extended techniques throughout the piece, which the composer notates in various ways. For example, the pianist must pluck the piano strings with their fingernails or some sort of plectrum, and at other times dampen the strings with their hand in order to create percussive effects when the key is depressed. Furthermore, while fully notated and through-composed, *Spiral* does not adhere to a strict sense of rhythm, creating an improvisatory atmosphere quite distinct from typical western music.

Murder Ballades

Bryce Dessner's *Murder Ballades*, scored for piano, percussion, and strings, references a subgenre of ballad commonly found in particularly American and English folk genres. The composer is being clever with this title, alluding to the similarity between two words, ballade and ballad. A ballad is a narrative song, and murder ballads are a subset of these. Their lyrics describe the events leading up to, during, or after a crime, but typically a murder, as one might expect. A ballade by distinction, generally has two definitions within the realm of classical music, depending on the time period. During the 18th century, ballade referred to a form of narrative poetry that was frequently set to music, notably by composers such as Johann Friedrich Reichardt, Carl Friedrich Zelter, and Johann Rudolf Zumsteeg. So, this wasn't actually very different from a folk ballad of a couple centuries later. In the 1830s and 40s, Frederic Chopin wrote four relatively long pieces that he called *Ballades*. These, like most of Chopin's music, were for solo piano. Thus, the use of the term ballade here was more an indication of temperament, rather than

an attempt to fit into a past genre or an allusion to a literary source. These would spur later composers such as Brahms, Liszt, Grieg, Faure, and Franck to write ballades.

Desner's *Murder Ballades* are purely instrumental like Chopin's, but were inspired by well known Appalachian ballads. It features seven movements, was composed in 2013, and revised in 2015. Three of the movements are Dessner's interpretations of famous murder ballads that appear in the repertoire of many musicians: *Omie Wise*, *Young Emily*, and *Pretty Polly*. *Brushy Fork* is an arrangement of a Civil War-era fiddle tune, *Brushy Fork of John's Creek*, which is thought to commemorate a battle in Kentucky, one of the last of the Civil War.⁶⁴ The remaining movements, *Dark Holler*, *Wave the Sea*, and *Tears for Sister Polly*, are original to the composer, but are influenced by or a reaction to the traditional songs.

Eighth Blackbird performed an expanded version of the suite in 2016 at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, for which Dessner provided the following program note:

When eighth blackbird asked me for a piece, I immediately knew what to do: let great American folk music inspire a great American new-music ensemble. The murder ballad has its roots in a European tradition, in which grisly details of bloody homicides are recounted through song.

When this tradition came to America, it developed its own vernacular, with stories and songs that were told and retold over generations. In *Murder Ballades*, I reexamine several of these old songs, allowing them to inspire my own music. "Omie Wise," "Young Emily," "Pretty Polly," and "Down in the Willow Garden" are classic murder ballads, tales of romantically charged killings that are based on real events.

"Hocket," "Dark Holler," "Lewisburg," and "Underneath the Floorboards" are my own compositions, of which

⁶⁴ "Brushy Fork of John's Creek." TuneArch.Org, 2019, [tunearch.org/wiki/Annotation:Brushy_Fork_of_John%27s_Creek_\(1\)](https://tunearch.org/wiki/Annotation:Brushy_Fork_of_John%27s_Creek_(1)).

“Dark Holler” is loosely modeled on the clawhammer banjo style that would have accompanied many of these early folk songs. “Brushy Fork” is a Civil War-era murder ballad/fiddle tune, and “Wave the Sea” and “Tears for Sister Polly” are original compositions woven in the depths of the many months I spent inhabiting the seductive music and violent stories of these murder ballads.⁶⁵

Murder Ballades is scored for violin, cello, flute, clarinet, one percussionist, and piano. Its premiere recording on the album, *Filament*, by Eighth Blackbird, won a Grammy in 2016.

⁶⁵ From program provided in appendix II

The Third Recital: May 12, 2021, 8pm

When it became obvious I would not be able to perform the above pieces, due to the covid-19 pandemic, I replanned the third concert such that it consisted of music for logistically-simpler combinations of piano and strings and piano and voice.

Six Studies in English Folk Song

Ralph Vaughan Williams' *Six Studies in English Folk Song* for cello and piano now began the concert. These were written in 1926 for a friend of Vaughan Williams', the cellist May Mukle.⁶⁶ In addition to being a wonderful piece, the six studies seem to have acted as a prototype for later orchestral works such as the *Fantasia on Sussex Folk Songs*, and he used some of the same folk songs in his *Norfolk Rhapsody No. 2* in D minor. The *Six Studies* found further life through arrangement for other instruments, including the clarinet, viola, and tuba, among others. It was first performed by May Mukle with Anne Mukle playing the piano at the Scala Theatre in London during the English Folk Dance Society Festival on June 4, 1926.⁶⁷

Five of the songs in the *Six Studies* are relatively slow and gentle, but the last song is, as Michael Kennedy puts it, a "rum-ti-tum affair."⁶⁸ Vaughan Williams decided to simply provide a tempo indication at the beginning of each movement rather than also including the title of the folk song he based them on, perhaps because they were not being performed by a singer. However, each movement is a mostly accurate rendition of a

⁶⁶ Kennedy, Michael. *A Catalogue of the Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams*. Rev. ed., Oxford University Press, 1982, p. 196.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 509.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 217-18.

particular song and can be traced back to a song Vaughan Williams collected in the early 1900s.

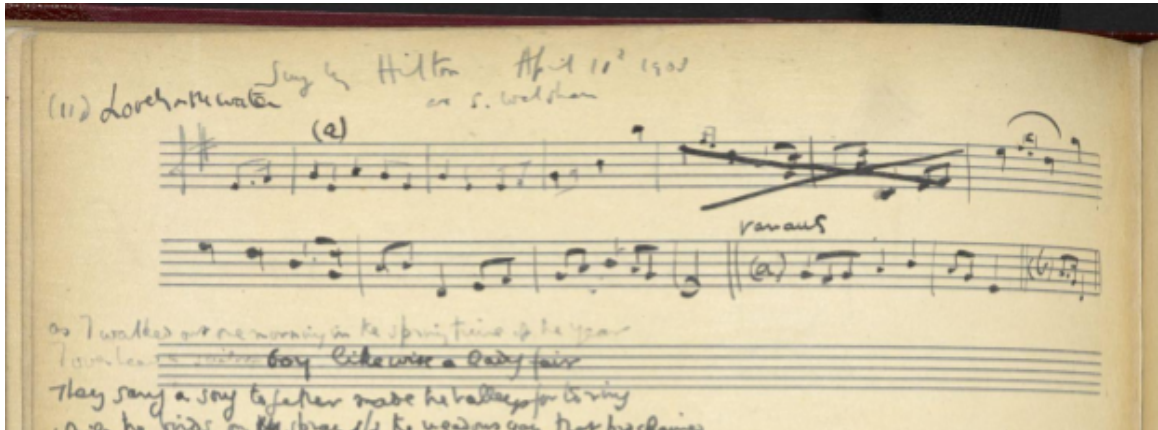
- I. Adagio - *Lovely on the Water*
- II. Andante sostenuto - *Spurn Point*
- III. Larghetto - *Van Diemen's Land*
- IV. Lento - *She Borrowed Some of Her Mother's Gold*
- V. Andante tranquillo - *The Lady and the Dragoon*
- VI. Allegro vivace - *As I walked over London Bridge*⁶⁹

In writing about the music of this dissertation project, I have typically been most interested by tracing and explaining the historical ties and roots of the music. This is particularly true in this case because musically speaking, most of these movements can be described in similar ways: they are short, beautiful vignettes that are faithful to the style which they study. Care and attention must be given by the pianist to avoid covering the cello lines, particularly in the second and fourth songs, but Vaughan Williams knew a heavy touch would detract from the “vocal” parts so he kept the accompaniments light and transparent. The accompaniments consist of relatively spare structures, even when they are widely spaced or feature quick rhythms. Furthermore, Vaughan Williams writes mostly triadic harmonies and rarely ventures into dissonance. In this lies a remarkable aspect of this composition. These songs appear simple, yet there is a deft hand in their construction. They are lush, satisfying, and a lovely way to begin a concert.

I attempted to locate and share the original tunes as collected by Vaughan Williams, handwritten by him when possible so as to remain as close to the “just collected” form as possible. I was able to locate all but one, thanks to the resources of the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library, which is part of the archives of the English Folk Dance and Song Society. This turned out to be challenging in some cases where more

⁶⁹ Michael Kennedy, p. 510.

than one melody or tune was associated with the above titles. Occasionally the reverse was true; some melodies were found under different names than above, despite most references agreeing on the above titles.



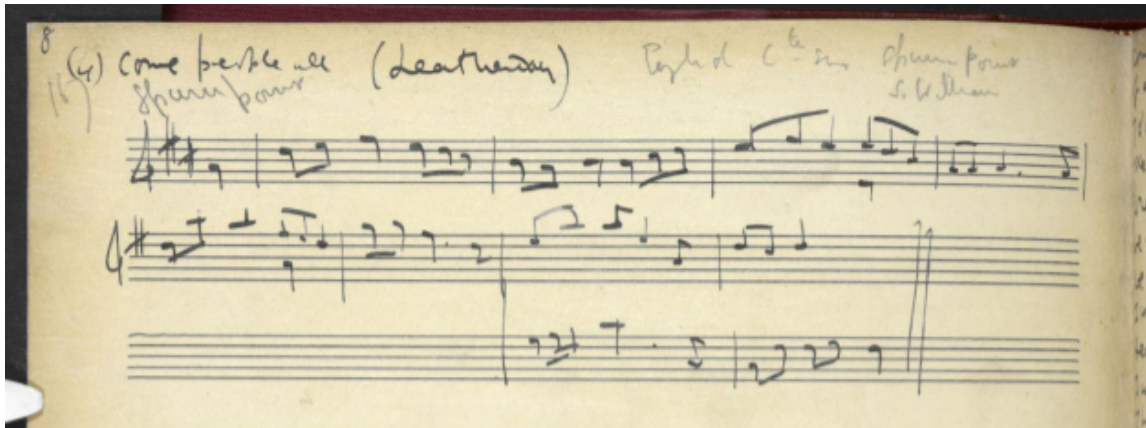
Lovely on the Water - <https://www.vwml.org/record/RVW2/1/75>

Lovely on the Water begins the set with a gentle unfolding of the melody in a style reminiscent of a vocalise. The opening phrase in the cello presents the entire melody sung to Vaughan Williams by a Mr. Hilton on April 12, 1908, in South Walsham, Norfolk, England.⁷⁰ Vaughan Williams manipulates the theme and presents it in various forms, either simplifying the rhythms, or extrapolating further melodic invention. Vaughan Williams would later use this melody again in a choral arrangement, with the title *The Springtime of the Year*. The reason for the change in title comes down to the verses Vaughan Williams set for the choral version. He notes on the publication of this arrangement that he finds the ballad uninteresting past the first two verses and that the further verses did not have much to do with the first two.⁷¹ When reading the full set of lyrics, this position is difficult to understand in my opinion. The poem continues to tell

⁷⁰ Vaughan Williams Memorial Library RVaughan Williams 2/1/75

⁷¹ Stainer and Bell

the story set out in the first two verses and does not seem to dip in quality. In any case, the first verse contains the line, “In the springtime of the year,” and it isn’t until the third verse that the line “For it’s lovely on the water” appears, so the change in title does make sense from that regard.

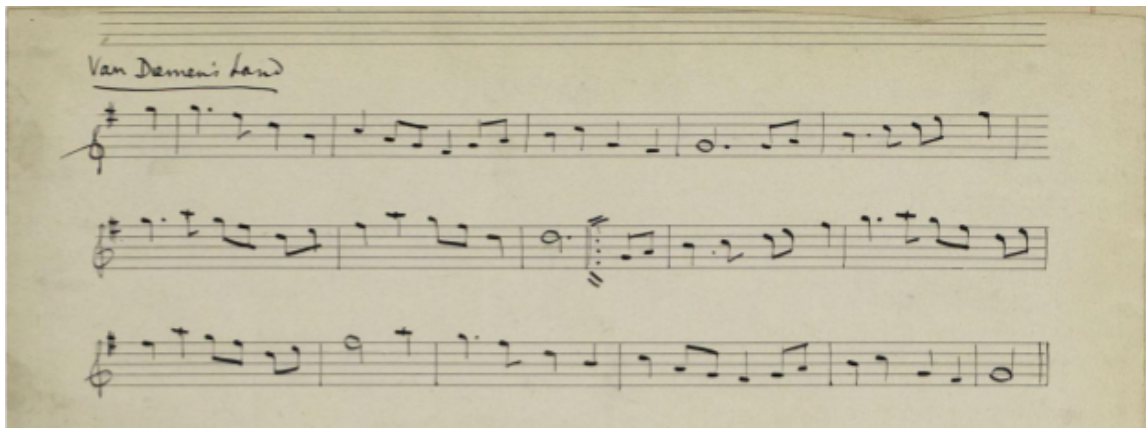


Spurn Point - <https://www.vwml.org/record/RVW2/3/78>

Vaughan Williams collected *Spurn Point* from a Mr. Leatherday on January 9, 1905, in King’s Lynn, Norfolk.⁷² The full title of the song is *Industry off Spurn Point*, the Industry being a ship that was stranded on Spurn Point, a strangely tropical-looking peninsula in Yorkshire.⁷³ Vaughan Williams lists the title as “Come People All” in the above image with “Spurn Point” added later, likely because the first line in the song as he recorded it is: “Come all you people pray listen a while.” The wistful melody played by the cello is presented simply at first with much of the opening phrase fitting within a major sixth. In the fifth measure the melody leaps upward, only to longingly deflate by an octave two measures later. When combined with the gentle trickle of parallel thirds and thin but widely spaced chords, this song communicates a kind of melancholy that is befitting the lyrics.

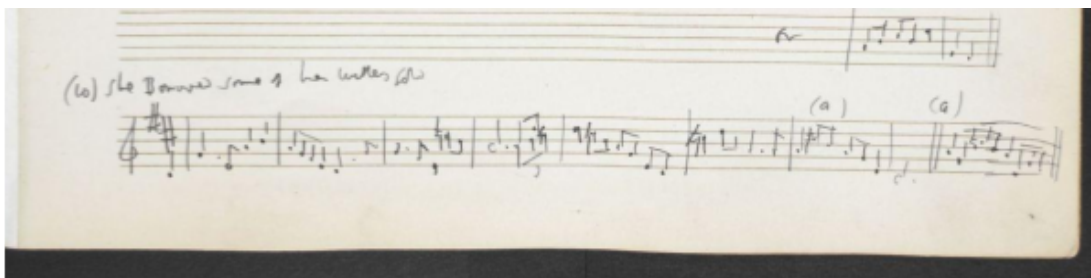
⁷² R. Vaughan Williams 2/3/78

⁷³ Barr 14



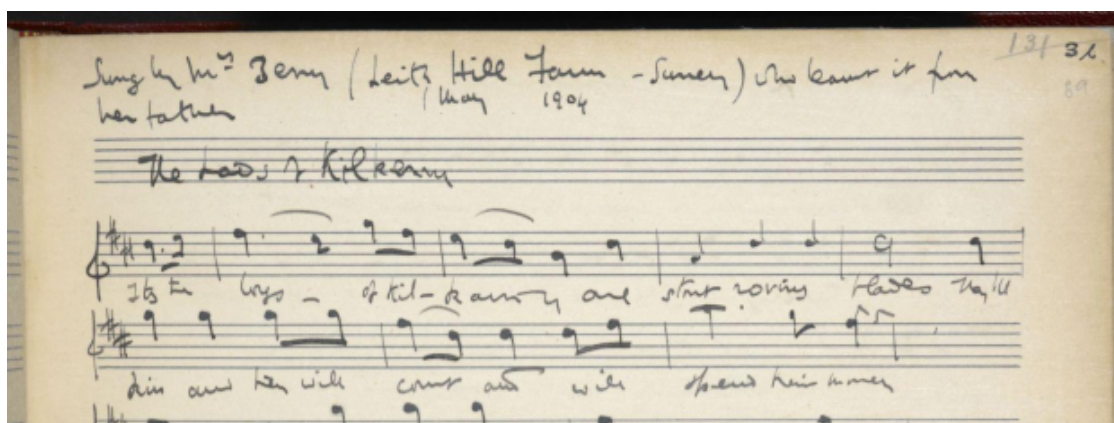
Van Diemen's Land - <https://www.vwml.org/record/RVW2/3/71>

Van Diemen's Land was somewhat hard to locate, due to the sheer volume of songs that seem to all be called *Van Diemen's Land*, which may be because Van Diemen's Land was the first name given to Tasmania in the 19th century. I found this song with the subtitle, *Young Henry the Poacher*, which Vaughan Williams heard from a Mr. Anderson in January 1905, also in King's Lynn, Norfolk.



She Borrowed Some of Her Mother's Gold - <https://www.vwml.org/record/RVW2/4/73>

She Borrowed Some of Her Mother's Gold was collected on the 16th or 18th of April, 1908 in South Walsham from the same Mr. Hilton that had sung *Lovely on the Water* for Vaughan Williams a few days prior.



The Lady and the Dragoon - <https://www.vwml.org/record/RVW2/2/89>

Locating the fifth song proved the most difficult and most confusing. Reference materials suggest the fifth movement is based on a song called *The Lady and the Dragoon*. However, many recordings and reference materials instead present the title as “The Lady and the Dragon.”⁷⁴ Preliminary searches also turned up results for “The Dragoon and the Lady,” adding to my confusion. Further complicating the issue was the existence of a song titled *The Lady and the Dragon* by Custer LaRue, which could potentially have a tenuous connection to the song in the Vaughan Williams set, but not obviously so. Additionally, there are melodies that Cecil Sharp recorded titled “The Lady and the Dragoon” that also don’t appear to be related to the melody used in the *Six Studies*. A dragoon is a type of mounted infantry but conversely, a dragon is a fire breathing scaly beast. These being very different things, I wanted to get to the bottom of this.

The confusion lies in that the melody used for the fifth study appears in multiple songs, such as *Pretty Susan the Pride of Kildare* and *The Lads Of Kilkenny*, the latter of which Vaughan Williams heard from a Mrs. Berry in May, 1904, in Leith Hill, Surrey.

⁷⁴ Hyperion Records CDA68253 and CDA67313, among others

Neither song's lyrics mention a dragoon or a dragon. So, it appears that the title *The Lady and the Dragoon* may come from another set of lyrics which were applied to this melody, which is a curious thing to do when there are no titles or lyrics included by Vaughan Williams for this piece.

54.—AS I WALKED OVER LONDON BRIDGE.

Tune noted by R. Vaughan Williams. SUNG BY MR. DEADMAN,
AT RODMELL, JAN., 1906.



As I walked o - ver Lon - don Bridge one mid - summer's morn - ing ear - ly O
there I spied a fair la - dy la - ment - ing for her Geor - die.

As I Walked Over London Bridge - <https://sussextraditions.org/record/as-i-walked-over-london-bridge/>

As I walked over London Bridge was sung by a Mr. Deadman in Rodmell, East Sussex. Unfortunately I was not able to locate a handwritten example like in the other songs, however its page in the Journal of the Folk-Song Society provides much of the same information. I was hoping to find something that might illuminate why there is a minor inconsistency between measures twelve and thirty-eight, but perhaps this is a slight variation or simply a misprint.

Soliloquy

Influences from the Middle East appear in Shulamit Ran's *Soliloquy*. Shulamit Ran was born in 1949 in Tel Aviv, Israel and is of German descent on her father's side and Russian descent on her mother's side. She showed an affinity for music at an early age and made up songs to poetry she read. She began formal piano lessons at age eight

and later also studied composition while still living in Tel Aviv. She got to hear some of her songs on the radio after her piano teacher transcribed and submitted them to the Israeli Broadcasting System, which cemented her trajectory towards becoming a composer.⁷⁵

Ran came to study in the United States in 1962 when she was fourteen years old, after receiving a piano scholarship from the Mannes College of Music in New York and support from the America Israel Cultural Foundation. While at Mannes, she also studied composition with Norman Dello Joio and in 1963, she performed her *Capriccio for Piano and Orchestra* with Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic. After graduating from Mannes in 1967, Ran continued to perform throughout the United States, Europe, and Israel until 1973, when Ralph Shapey offered her a position on the music faculty at the University of Chicago and she decided to concentrate on composition.⁷⁶ Though, she continued to draw on her experience as a performer, which helped her create approachable, though not necessarily easy, works.⁷⁷

Ran has had a distinguished career and won the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 1991 for her *Symphony*, the second woman to receive that award. She was eventually named the William H. Colvin Professor of Music and later the Andrew MacLeish Distinguished Service Professor at the University of Chicago, until her retirement in 2015.⁷⁸ Her work is deeply connected to her country of birth and her Jewish faith. *Soliloquy* is indicative of this and is based on the opening music from her opera, *The Dybbuk*, (*Between Two Worlds*) which was first performed in Chicago in 1997 and is based on a Yiddish play of

⁷⁵ Fuller, Sophie. *The Pandora Guide to Women Composers : Britain and the United States, 1629-Present*. Pandora, 1994, p. 262

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 262.

⁷⁷ Kelly, Jennifer. *In Her Own Words : Conversations with Composers in the United States*. University of Illinois Press, 2013, p. 28.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

the same name by S. Ansky. This play is a retelling of a Jewish folktale about a woman, Leya, who is possessed by the spirit of her deceased lover, Khonnon.⁷⁹ During *Soliloquy*, we hear a variety of musical effects suggestive of Middle Eastern music, including drones, whole-tone scales, and both improvisatory writing and rhythmic drive.

Ran describes the origination of the work as something of an off-shoot of a particular phrase from this opera.

My compositional point of departure was a musical line which begins the opening soliloquy of Khonnon, the play's (and opera's) protagonist, where his yearning and desire for his beloved Leya is first revealed. In *The Dybbuk*, Khonnon dies when it becomes clear that his love is to remain unrequited. Whereas most similar tales would end right there, Khonnon's death is only the first step in the journey to fulfill the great longing of the doomed would-be lovers.

While the aforementioned phrase (originally a tenor line, played here on the cello) served as the compositional "trigger" for me in *Soliloquy*, its placement in this work differs from its operatic analog in that it appears as the answer (consequent phrase) to *Soliloquy*'s principal theme, a newly-composed violin line. This legato line is loosely based on a whole-tone configuration, a different melodic permutation of which is associated throughout the opera with Khonnon's desire, and which I have come to think of as the opera's "lust motif." The title refers not only to Khonnon's soliloquy, but also to the fact that, although written for a standard piano trio combination, it is, in fact, the violin which serves as the carrier, the "voice" of the piece, and its emotional center.⁸⁰

Ran speaks of balance in her life and work, which is reflected in *Soliloquy*.⁸¹ While it is a single-movement work, it has an ABA form. The two outer sections balance the inner one and are defined by a low "A" drone in the piano. In support of this pitch center, the

⁷⁹ McCutchan, Ann. *The Muse That Sings : Composers Speak About the Creative Process*. Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 114.

⁸⁰ Ran, Shulamit. *Soliloquy : for violin, cello, and piano*. 1997. Theodore Presser, 2003.

⁸¹ Jennifer Kelly, p. 29.

cello's C-string is tuned down to A for the duration of the piece. In the first section, this drone takes the form of low octave tremolos in piano that persist from the beginning to measure forty-seven, with two brief pauses along the way.

After some transitional material and cadenza-like passages in the violin part, a clear new area is reached at measure sixty-three. This section conveys a feeling of unfolding and expansion, with an initial sextuplet in the piano that gets added to or slightly manipulated as the string players join in with increasingly complex figurations. This eventually culminates in measure seventy-nine with the quickest, most rhythmically charged section of the piece. Triplet figures in the piano contrast duples in the violin while the cello contributes glissandi. These elements combine to create a sharp, chiseled scherzo, before more vertical writing in the piano returns in measure eighty-six. We return to the "A" pitch center in measure ninety-five, and revisit the tremolo concept in measure 103. This coincides with a return to a calmer demeanor, which continues until the end of the piece.

Variations on a Slovakian Theme for Violoncello and Piano

Bohuslav Martinů was born on December 8, 1890, in a small town called Policka in Eastern Bohemia, in the same region where Bedřich Smetana was born. Martinů's father was a shoemaker and the watchman at the church tower, and much of Bohuslav's early life was spent somewhat secluded. He was devoted to music from an early age, having begun his studies on the violin at age six and playing in concerts at age eight. Martinů would later study violin performance at the Prague Conservatory and eventually began playing in the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra. While in the orchestra, he gained

knowledge of the symphonic repertoire and even wrote some music for the orchestra, including his *Czech Rhapsody* in 1919, which was written in celebration of the liberation of the Czechoslovakian nation and scored for a massive force consisting of orchestra, chorus, soloists and organ.⁸² At this time, he was mostly a self-taught composer, though he would later study with Josef Suk at the Prague Conservatory and Albert Roussel in Paris.⁸³

Martinů traveled to Paris in 1923, intending to stay for just a handful of months, but he ended up living there until 1940. While in Paris, he was influenced by Stravinsky and Jazz, which led to an interest in short motives and a rhythmically driven style. In 1940, he and his wife left Paris due to the Nazi invasion of France.⁸⁴ They fled to America, where Martinů had several important performances and collaborations, including symphonies premiered by the Boston, Cleveland, and Philadelphia orchestras conducted by Koussevitsky, Leinsdorf, and Ormandy, respectively. He also taught at Tanglewood, Mannes, Princeton, and Curtis.⁸⁵ Despite this success in America, he returned to Prague to accept a teaching position at the Prague Conservatory in 1945.

The *Variations on a Slovakian Theme* are not a particularly well known piece of Martinů's output. They were written less than six months before his death in August 1959, when the composer was living in Switzerland with Paul Sacher, and while not unattractive, this is admittedly not a groundbreaking piece.⁸⁶ When needing to quickly

⁸² Šafránek, Miloš. "Bohuslav Martinů." *The Musical Quarterly*, vol. 29, no. 3, Oxford University Press, 1943, p. 330.

⁸³ "Bohuslav Martinu Obituary." *The Musical Times*, vol. 100, no. 1400, Musical Times Publications Ltd., 1959, p. 545

⁸⁴ Miloš Šafránek, "Bohuslav Martinů," p. 331.

⁸⁵ Svatos, Thomas D. "Reasserting the Centrality of Musical Craft: Martinů and His American Diaries." *The Musical Times*, vol. 150, no. 1907, Musical Times Publications Ltd., 2009, p. 55.

⁸⁶ Benda, Christian; Benda, Sebastian. "Variations on a Slovakian Theme." *MARTINU: Works for Cello and Piano*, Vol. 2, Naxos, 2000.

revamp this recital, I partially chose to program this piece for logistic reasons. I had recently played it with the cellist that I was performing with on this recital and it conveniently fit the theme of the dissertation. However, I had been curious about it because I could not shake the sense that I had already heard the melody it is based on but could not place it. Given that this is not one of Martinů's major works, there is not a lot of scholarship about the piece and it took some digging to figure out what was nagging me about the theme. One of the few mentions of the *Variations* that I could find was in a book on Martinů's work written in Czech, which had just one paragraph devoted to it. Fortunately, this did have the key information I was searching for. The folk theme used as the theme in this piece is called *Ked' bych já vedela*, ("If I only knew") and is from a collection of Slovakian folk songs by Viliama Figuš-Bystreho.⁸⁷ Béla Bartók also wrote a short setting of this melody as part of his *Gyermeknek*, (For Children) which I had heard while in a class years ago.

The *Variations* are attractive and engaging, though somewhat unremarkable. They do however pose some of the typical challenges found in Martinů's music. The most interesting and challenging aspects of the *Variations* are the syncopated, offset rhythms and accents, and generally how the piano and cello interact with each other. After the initial presentation of the theme, reminiscent of cymbals and cimbalums, Martinů launches into a syncopated variation, alternating between 2/4, 5/8, and 3/4 time signatures. The piano figurations stay fairly consistent, so the 5/8 bars have the effect of changing where the accents in a measure occur. Martinů continues these techniques in further variations, using syncopation, meter changes, and accents to obscure the beat, which contributes an improvisatory, folk-like feeling throughout. The second variation

⁸⁷ Mihule, Jaroslav. Bohuslav Martinů : Profil Života a Díla. 1. vyd ed., Supraphon, 1974, p. 191-2.

remains in the mood of the first, albeit with greater agitation and intensity, leading to a moment of rest before the third variation. This short variation conveys a more soulful mood and feels more like an interlude than a full-fledged variation. Martinů is back to his old tricks in the next variation, a scherzo, writing surprisingly confusing combinations of offbeat accents and rests. It may behoove the pianist to change where they consider the bar lines for the initial page of this variation.

A brief return to the soulful mood of the third variation precedes the finale, which, with quick tremolo figures in the piano, call forth images of percussion instruments. The ending feels somewhat hastily written, which it may have been, given its close proximity to Martinů's death. Nevertheless, it can be made more convincing through the addition of an *accelerando* and *crescendo* over the final eight bars.

Selections from *Forty-Four Art Songs and Spirituals*

Florence Price was born in 1888 in Little Rock, Arkansas. Her family was relatively well-to-do: her father, James Smith was a dentist as well as an amateur painter and author, while her mother, also named Florence, was a schoolteacher who gave Price piano lessons when she was a child. Price soon showed her talent for music and began composing. At age fourteen, she began studying piano and organ at New England Conservatory and graduated when she was just nineteen. Afterwards, she returned to the south and taught at some colleges and Universities until she married in 1912. Over the next fifteen years, she had two daughters, continued to teach privately, composed, and won competitions for her music.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ Sophie Fuller, p. 254.

In 1927, Price and her husband, Thomas Price, moved to Chicago, though they eventually separated. In Chicago, Florence continued teaching and writing music and also began studying composition at the Chicago Musical College and the American Conservatory of Music. In 1932, her *Symphony in E minor* and *Piano Sonata in E minor* won first prizes in their respective divisions in the Rodman Wanamaker Competition, which led to a performance with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and increasing fame. She continued to enjoy increasing success, and wrote concertos, symphonies, other orchestral works, piano music and vocal works, but many of these pieces are now lost. Price's compositional style was generally in a late-romantic idiom, but she frequently used African American folk rhythms and melodies in her work.⁸⁹ She is today most remembered for her *Forty-Four Art songs and Spirituals*, of which I performed five on this concert.

This dissertation project, which attempted to be an overview of the influence many culture's indigenous music and folklife had on western classical music, would have felt incomplete without representation from at least one African American composer though I had hoped to program more. I quickly discovered while researching for this document that, as one might expect, the music of African American composers is a vibrant and active topic within musicological communities, replete with a plethora of terms, concepts, and ideas that were new or unfamiliar to me. Perhaps the most interesting of these is "signifyin'", which is sometimes written as "signifyin(g)". This concept, borrowed from literary criticism, was developed by Henry Louis Gates Jr. in his 1988 book, *The Signifying Monkey*. It is an allusion to a character found in African, Caribbean, and South American folklore, with origins that can be traced to the Fon and

⁸⁹ Sophie Fuller, p. 255.

Yoruba cultures of Benin and Nigeria.⁹⁰ This character, called Esu-Elegbara by the Yoruba and Fon, goes by many different names depending on the country. In all cases however, he is a mediator, but also a trickster. He is the sole messenger of the gods, carrying and interpreting their will while also communicating the desires of humans. Esu guards the space between the sacred and profane. He connects truth and understanding, the divine and rhetorical, and is said to walk with a limp due to walking between these two worlds.⁹¹ Traits and tropes of Esu are wide encompassing; they include satire, parody, irony, ambiguity, disruption, and reconciliation, among many others.⁹² I am paraphrasing, but Esu eventually becomes conflated with a monkey; that is, the signifying monkey derives from Esu.⁹³ Again paraphrasing to a dreadful degree, Gates connects the concept of Esu in a social and literary sense, to the practice of “signifyin(g)”, which in basic terms, is a trope consisting of tropes: it involves metaphor, irony, and hyperbole, among others.⁹⁴

So what does this have to do with Florence Price? As it turns out, perhaps quite a lot. Horace Maxile suggests in “Signs, Symphonies, Signifyin(G): African-American Cultural Topics as Analytical Approach to the Music of Black Composers” that the essence of African American music is qualitative as much as it is quantitative, and that the interpretation of black music depends on it being considered within the context of the African American experience. It is imperative then, to consider this music with at least

⁹⁰ Gates Jr, Henry Louis. *The Signifying Monkey : A Theory of African American Literary Criticism*. Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 5.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

basic knowledge of various aspects of African American music, including signifyin(g).⁹⁵ He further suggests that while African American music is inherently multi-cultural in a vast way, there are distinct sets of musical qualities suggestive of cultures of African descent.⁹⁶ These can have considerable expressive capability when presented in a classical context, and include but are not limited to call and response, blues, pendular thirds, the spiritual/supernatural, jazz, and signifyin(g).⁹⁷ Signifyin(g), in a musical sense, can be considered the act of transforming musical material. It is playing with musical styles and genres through embellishment, but with an emphasis on how musical elements are transformed, rather than what is being transformed.⁹⁸

The selections of songs by Florence Price display many of these traits. We began with *Bewilderment*, perhaps Price's most famous song, with lyrics by Langston Hughes. Immediately this song has a modal, folk or spiritual feel to it. Most of the vocal line in this song is in dorian mode, which, when combined with use of pendular thirds in the accompaniment, contributes to the musical aesthetic that Maxile describes. Price blends this style with elements reminiscent of late German romantic piano music, chromaticism, and virtuosic flourishes, particularly at the end when the singer declaims, "Lord God, I do not know." *Dawn's Awakening* and *Sympathy* evoke the atmosphere of a 1930s popular song. These songs feature a light atmosphere and make frequent use of blue notes, while still reflecting Price's experience as a gifted performer with engaging parts for both musicians. *Hold Fast to Dreams*, also with words by Langston Hughes, is a remarkable song that in its mere two minutes and twenty-nine measures, undergoes

⁹⁵ Maxile, Horace J. "Signs, Symphonies, Signifyin(G): African-American Cultural Topics as Analytical Approach to the Music of Black Composers." *Black Music Research Journal*, vol. 28, no. 1, University of Illinois Press, 2008, p. 124.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

drastic stylistic changes. Reminiscent of songs by Debussy, it is exceptionally lush, extensively chromatic, and demanding of the pianist. An impressive transformation with a flurry of notes occurs between measures eighteen to twenty-one, leading up to the climax of the song: “life is a barren field, frozen with snow.” The pianist’s chromatic postlude in d-minor is in stark contrast to the gently fluttering D-major triads of the introduction.

Lastly, Price wrote a significant number of spiritual arrangements, which were represented on this recital with *I’m Goin’ To Lay Down My Heavy Load*. The spiritual genre was created when African slaves were becoming African Americans and converting to Christianity, and has roots in African ring rituals, a type of religious dance.⁹⁹

In the circumstance of slavery, the spiritual was the transplanted Africans’ primary means of expressing their current struggles and fulfillments while maintaining contact with the traditions and meanings of the past.¹⁰⁰

The spiritual typically has aspects of African music including call-and-response, textual improvisation, folklore, and metaphor, as well as a subtle sense of rebellion. While religious in tone, these songs transcend Christianity and are more generally about hope, freedom, and prosperity. They are “folk songs of freedom and of faith in the inevitability of freedom.”¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ Floyd, Samuel A. *The Power of Black Music : Interpreting Its History from Africa to the United States*. Oxford University Press, 1995, p. 39.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

The Hag

In early 2021, I commissioned William Kenlon, a D.C. based composer who received his doctoral degree from the University of Maryland to write a piece for piano and voice for the occasion of my last dissertation recital. I consider performing newly composed music extremely important and rewarding and at the time, Kenlon was involved with the Irish traditional music scene in Washington D.C. Aside from needing to fit the theme of this dissertation project as well as fall in the soprano vocal range, I had no other requests or directions. Kenlon writes of the piece:

In my association with a variety of Irish traditional musicians in the greater Washington, DC area, I am often exposed to interesting texts and music that falls outside my realm of expertise as a performer and composer. Nevertheless, I am often struck by appealing turns of phrase I encounter in Irish music sessions and concerts, and I have long sought to find an excuse to incorporate strains of it into my own musical style.

The present text by English poet Robert Herrick was brought to my attention in a 2018 performance by the Borderland Family Ceili Band. Later, when prompted by a colleague to compose a work that used folk elements in some way, I decided to combine the text of “The Hag” with musical quotations of the following Irish session tunes: “The Hag at the Churn,” “The Hag’s Purse,” “The Old Hag,” “Old Hag, You Have Killed Me,” “Oh! Hag, You Have Killed Me,” “The Hag at the Spinning Wheel,” and “The Old Hag of Galway.” I am indebted to Meara O’Malley for her expertise and guidance in researching this repertoire.¹⁰²

Kenlon mentions seven songs in the above quote, suggesting that the “hag” is a common motif in both Irish and Scottish culture. The hag shows up in many forms, such as an old woman with a hood, or a nun who has taken the veil, while other accounts suggest she may be a pagan goddess.¹⁰³ What seems most common is that the hag refers to *Cailleach Bhearra*, a figure in Gaelic folklore that represents the wilderness and forces of nature,

¹⁰² Composer’s note in the score

¹⁰³ Hull, Eleanor. “Legends and Traditions of the Cailleach Bheara or Old Woman (Hag) of Beare.” *Folklore*, vol. 38, no. 3, [Folklore Enterprises, Ltd., Taylor & Francis, Ltd.], 1927, p. 226.

the sea, and stormy weather, particularly in winter times.¹⁰⁴ In appendix V, I will provide figures that accompany the following outline of tune usage in *The Hag*.

Of the seven songs mentioned, five are particularly prevalent: *The Old Hag of Galway*, *Oh! Hag, You Have Killed Me*, *The Old Hag*, *The Hag's Purse*, and *The Hag at the Spinning Wheel*. *The Old Hag of Galway* provides source material for the opening motif, which appears numerous times during the piece, such as at mm. 7, 45, and 56-61. *Oh! Hag, You Have Killed Me* is also especially important, as it is the source of the half-step motif that can be found throughout the entire piece. There is also a recurring descending triad motif that appears in m. 17, 27-8, 41, 63, which is derived from *The Hag's Purse*.

Most of *The Hag* is written in 2/4, 3/4, or 4/4 time signatures, with triplet rhythms throughout. However, a dramatic shift occurs in measure forty four, coinciding with a change to 3/2 time and a stout left hand quasi-ostinato bass line. This derives from *The Old Hag* and is set against a reprise of the initial melodic material, creating a three against four polyrhythm. This left hand figure is a main feature until measure fifty three, and is alluded to until the end of the piece.

The Hag features an engaging accompaniment and challenging vocal part. Given its pervasive chromaticism, it requires a precise approach with regards to tone and intonation. The text is an amalgamation of various poems referencing the hag, and as such, effectively calls forth themes of nature, the sea, and the weather. It features a variety of techniques and imaginative use of rhythm which evokes its Irish inspiration.

¹⁰⁴ Ó Cruailaoich, Gearóid. "Continuity and Adaptation in Legends of Cailleach Bhéarra." *Béaloideas*, vol. 56, An Cumann Le Béaloideas Éireann/Folklore of Ireland Society, 1988, p. 154.

Selections from Benjamin Britten's folk song arrangements

A selection of folk song arrangements by Benjamin Britten closed out this recital, as well as the performance portion of my dissertation project. Britten, like Ralph Vaughan Williams, Gustav Holst, Cecil Sharp, and Percy Grainger before him, found inspiration and fascination with folk music, particularly in his later years. Unlike Vaughan Williams or Sharp however, he strove to present his personal interpretation or vision of a folk song, rather than any sort of definitive or academic version.¹⁰⁵ Given the skill with which he wrote the accompaniments, Britten's arrangements feel more like original compositions, as though Britten himself wrote the tunes and was writing accompaniments to suit them.¹⁰⁶ This perspective is particularly interesting when considered in the light of the following statement by Eric Roseberry in 1961, in reaction to some of the songs performed on this recital:

It must be stressed emphatically that any folk song 'arrangement' is, by definition, a personal reaction to what has become common property. We enjoy Britten's folk song arrangements as the lively response of a highly civilized and subtle contemporary musical mind to a lost melodic innocence.

Seen in this light, the reaction of a musical friend with whom I attended one of the first performances of these arrangements seems irrelevant. For him, Britten was violating a sacred, national 'heritage' - which meant, one supposes, that only a traditional harmonic system will serve a traditional tune.¹⁰⁷

The four songs performed on this concert exhibit Britten's deft hand in arrangement as well as the aforementioned habit of approaching them in a manner similar

¹⁰⁵ Palmer, Christopher, et al., *The Britten Companion*. Cambridge University Press, 1984, p. 303.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

¹⁰⁷ Roseberry, Eric. "Britten's Purcell Realizations and folk song Arrangements." *Tempo*, no. 57, Cambridge University Press, 1961, p., 24.

to how he approached writing opera. We began with *Sail on, sail on*, a simple song with meandering parallel inverted triads in the accompaniment. The calmly rocking bassline draws forth images of a boat in the sea, while the more emotional moments are highlighted with gradual crescendos and diminuendos. The song trails off in lydian mode, in quiet reflection on leaving one's love behind and meeting again in a world not yet defiled by false hearted men.¹⁰⁸

The Scottish tune, *The Bonny Earl o' Moray* immediately draws forth thoughts of bagpipes, with its bass drones and ornamented perfect fifths. Lingering on this interval for the duration of the song would prove too simple though, as Britten quickly begins tinkering with it. In measure five, he begins a four-measure transition, drawing on fourths and tritones before returning to fifths as he tells a woeful story about the Earl of Huntley murdering the Earl of Moray. Though charged with energy from the quick ornamentation and razor sharp harmonies, much of this song has a thin accompaniment and is marked pianissimo. At the repeat however, these traits are reversed and Britten surprisingly but effectively indicates that the second verse is to be played much louder. Another sudden shift in volume, back to pianissimo, accompanies the Earl's wife's perspective, as the song draws to a close.¹⁰⁹

Avenging and Bright is both arresting and subtle, but nevertheless a remarkable example of word painting. The shattering downward arpeggios quickly serve to illustrate the "bright fall [of] the swift sword of Erin," and Britten uses *forzandos* to great effect at

¹⁰⁸ Or, if some desert land we meet,
Where never yet false-hearted men
Profaned a world, that else were sweet,
Then rest thee, bark, but not till then.

¹⁰⁹ O lang will his lady
Look frae the Castle Doune,
Ere she see the Earl o' Murray
come soundin' thro' the toon.

the ends of phrases when punctuating words such as “betrayed” or “victory”. The first two verses are similar, but the third verse introduces a low, generally step-wise moving baseline that is specifically to be played without the sustain pedal. This prevents a buildup of sound and allows the singer to accomplish their direction to sing in undertones, but requires a precise touch from the pianist. The bass line helps to move the drama along as the vocalist sings of revenge plots, which simply must be done in hushed tones. Britten requests a heavier touch in the reprise of the initial temperament during the fourth verse as the singer builds to the end.¹¹⁰

Britten’s unique style and subtle touch can perhaps be best observed in *The Last Rose of Summer*. With lyrics by Irish poet, Thomas Moore, this sweet, heartfelt song revolves around friends, companions, and loved ones, acknowledging the sad, stinging truth that they sometimes come and go throughout our lives. A typical performance of *The Last Rose* in its “authentic” form is simple, direct, and perhaps even innocent. In Britten’s hands however, the effect of the song is much more lasting.

It establishes an unsettled mood from the start, as though the song had already begun when the listener arrives. The introductory chord conveys a blurred, unsettled feeling, as though one had lost their sense of direction and had many paths before them with none of them particularly clear. When the haze clears, Britten establishes a c-minor/E-flat major key area, though he drifts into lydian mode in the following phrase. Britten connects the listener to the origins of the song by simulating the strumming of a harp, or perhaps even a guitar, though the song dips below E2 in the key I performed in.

¹¹⁰ Yes, monarch! though sweet are our home recollections,
Though sweet are the tears that from tenderness fall;
Though sweet are our friendships, our hopes and affections,
Revenge on a tyrant is sweetest of all!

Britten most dramatically departs from tradition in the third and final verse. While a typical performance would continue in the same manner as the first and second verse, Britten turns to a more rhythmic, martial quality. By the end of this verse, he strays from the exclusively pianissimo and piano dynamics of the first two verses with a crescendo to forte. When combined with faster note values and a gradually increasing volume of notes, the song culminates in a dramatic climax when the protagonist declares “fond ones are flown.”¹¹¹

When first listening to *The Last Rose of Summer*, I admit I felt somewhat disappointed and a little cheated. I was looking for a closing song that would function as a lullaby of sorts, to close out the last recital I would play as a student at the University of Maryland. I wanted something peaceful, quiet, melancholy, lush and much as it pains me to admit it, I was looking for something conventionally beautiful throughout. The melody in *The Last Rose* is achingly beautiful, the accompaniment perfectly sparse, the words plaintive and melancholy, and yet, so much of the song felt unsettling due to the initial chord and similar subsequent harmonies.

How glad I am that I did not let my initial feeling keep me from ending this recital with this song. I came to appreciate these harmonies, eventually realizing that they amplify the feeling of release and resolution at the end of the song. The ending is not the first time Britten reaches an E-flat major chord in this song; in fact, it is the fifth. However, each of the previous occasions (m. 7, 11, 25, 29) are in the interior of verses and merely linger on the chord before the pianist quickly resumes their strumming

¹¹¹ So soon may I follow, when friendships decay,
And from love's shining circle the gems drop away!
When true hearts lie wither'd, and fond ones are flown,
Oh! who would inhabit this bleak world alone?

figuration. Similarly, the vocalist is just a beat behind, ready to resume their line. There are many moments of suspended motion in the song, but these also do not seem resolved. They either coincide with the same unsettled chord the song begins with, or a c-minor chord that is preceded by a lydian-leaning F-major triad and a suspended, ornamented high note in the vocal part. These are beautiful moments to be sure, but they are not settling.

After living with *The Last Rose of Summer* and particularly after my first rehearsal with the singer, I had become firmly invested in it. By the end of this song, one yearns for a true resolution, which we finally receive when the A-flat from the initial chord reveals itself to have been a suspension all along, and quietly resolves to G by way of an appoggiatura, exhausted but fulfilled.

Concluding Thoughts

This dissertation has just scratched the surface of an enormous body of repertoire. I hope that my concerts have informed how musical traditions continue to blend with western classical music, influencing and living on in ways we may not have expected.

When I began thinking about the topic for my dissertation project, I had already found myself inexorably drawn to music with folk, nationalist, and cultural ties, for years in fact. I am thrilled that I was able to combine this attraction with my interests in contemporary music and performing in a variety of genres. The experience of preparing this music for performance was rewarding and I hope that the same can be said for my audience members.

My knowledge of the variety of composers whose music I performed has naturally grown during this process, but I have also learned about so many aspects of their cultures. This is the wonderful side effect this music has. Not only is it enjoyable to listen to and deeply fulfilling, it has the effect of transporting the listener to countries and regions they may have never been to. Even without trying, we learn something and forge a connection.

In most cases, the music I performed was written by a composer looking to their own heritage, which led to the most engaging connections. I got to know the composers on a deep level, even in cases where I considered myself already relatively familiar with them. I learned about their cultures, their history, their people, their compositional motivations, and their interests. I found interesting similarities between cultures and I found fascinating distinctions and peculiarities. Diving into the background of the music I

performed created seemingly personal connections, and I think this is important. It is through personal connections that we grow and aside from maybe food, what better vehicle is there than music? There are many pieces I had hoped to perform and many countries I wished I had time to visit, so I plan to continue my exploration of this music.

Appendix I:

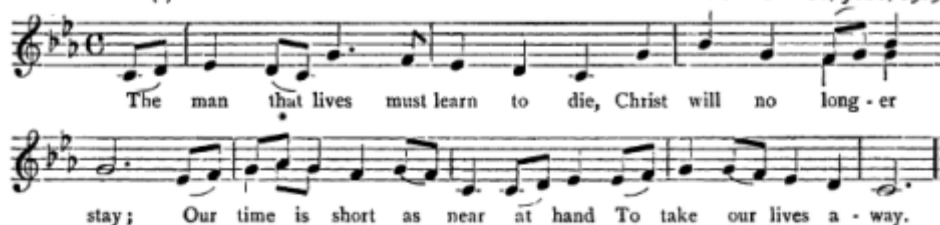
Three folk songs noted by Ralph Vaughan Williams that feature the same general melody with different titles and lyrics. Note the rhythmic and time signature irregularities indicative of the English folk style, as well as the reuse of melody with different lyrics.

4.—THE MAN THAT LIVES.

FIRST TUNE.

Noted by R. Vaughan Williams.
DORIAN (?).

SUNG BY MRS. WHEELER,
AT WEOBLEY, JULY, 1909.




The man that lives must learn to die, Christ will no long - er
stay; Our time is short as near at hand To take our lives a - way.

* Occasionally A \sharp .

SECOND TUNE.

Noted by R. Vaughan Williams.
ÆOLIAN.

SUNG BY MR. W. JENKINS,
LEDGEMOOR, KING'S PYON, JULY, 1909.



The man that lives must learn to die, Christ
will no long - er stay,..... Our time is short as

5.—THE TRUTH SENT FROM ABOVE.

Noted by R. Vaughan Williams.
DORIAN.

SUNG BY MR. W. JENKINS,
AT KING'S PYON, JULY, 1909.




This is the truth sent from a - bove, The
truth of God, the God of love; There fore don't turn me

6.—THE SINNER'S DREAM.

Noted by A. M. Webb and R. Vaughan Williams.
ÆOLIAN.

SUNG BY W. COLCOMBE (AGED 80),
AT WEOBLEY, 1906 AND 1909.



(Ver. 1.) One night in slum - ber, in sleep I lay, As I a - lone in
bed, When a vis - ion ve - ry strange Straight - way came in my

Appendix II:

Tunes used in Bartók's *First Rhapsody*. The first, *Árvátfalvi kesergő*, was retrieved from <http://systems.zti.hu/br/hu/browse/82/13251>. The remainder were found in *Rumanian Folk Music*, Volume One.

2988

U. f. 99 I. a)

Árvátfalvi kesergő

A felvétel helye: Medesin (Károlyfalva) 191. Gy.: Vékán

Előadta: Balog János 1911. évi. 2.

Elterjedtség: _____

Un poco lento

Violins

Violas

Cellos/Double Basses

4) az első részben a kettőst, mint a kettőst
 5) a 2. részben a kettőst, mint a kettőst (1. rész)

Még 2. vagy 3. sor; lejjebb eltérőek nélkül.

2988

232. *De ciuit* Violino

2. volta

M. F. 3544 d), Răpa-de-Jus (Mureș), Ion Popovici (22), II. 1919.

De ciuit

404. *Judecata* Violino

2. volta

M. F. 1746 c), Ghilad (Timiș), Pătru Moș (ca 60), XII. 1912.

Cf. Vol. II. № 385.

Judecata

298b. *Crucea* Violino

1. volta
2. volta
3. volta
4. volta
5. volta

M. F. 1746 b), Ghilad (Timiș), Pătru Moș (ca 60), XII. 1912.

215.

Pre loc

$\text{♩} = 138$

2 violini

sempre simile

Pre loc

226. $\text{♩} = 152$

Cuieșdeanca (fecioresc)

Violino

M.F. 35436) Răpăde-Sas (Mureș), Ion Popovici (22), IX. 1914.

Cuieșdeanca (fecioresc)

Appendix III:

An excellent example borrowed from David Schneider's article, *Gypsies, 'Verbunkos,' and Bartók's Debt to the Nineteenth Century* that displays both *dűvő* (in red) and *esztam* (in blue) accompaniment styles.

The musical score shows the following parts and markings:

- Címbalom:** Marked *simile*.
- Violino solo:** Marked *Moderato* and *108*.
- Violini I:** Marked *pizz.*
- Violini II:** Marked *pizz.*
- Viola:** Marked *simile* and *pizz.*. It also has markings *V* and *V*.
- Violoncelli:** Marked *pizz.*
- Contrabassi:** Marked *pizz.*

A red box highlights the Viola part, and a blue box highlights the Violoncelli and Contrabassi parts. The Viola part is also marked *V* and *V*.

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Ex. 5: B. Bartók, *First Rhapsody for Violin and Orchestra* (1928), mm. 1-6 (winds omitted).

Appendix IV:

Program from a concert featuring Murder Ballades, and source of the composer's note.

Retrieved at: <https://tinyurl.com/3heddhtu>

Mar 25–26, 2016

eighth blackbird featuring Will Oldham (Bonnie "Prince" Billy) *Ghostlight*

Flutes Nathalie Joachim
Clarinets Michael Maccafferri
Violin Yvonne Lam
Cello Nicholas Photinos
Percussion Matthew Duvall
Piano Lisa Kaplan

BRYCE DESSNER: *MURDER BALLADES* (2015, REV. 2015)

1. "Omie Wise-Young Emily"
2. "Hocket"
3. "Dark Holler"
4. "Lewisburg"
5. "Wave the Sea-Brushy Fork"
6. "Underneath the Floorboards"
7. "Pretty Polly-Tears for Sister Polly"
8. "Down in the Willow Garden"

DAVID T. LITTLE: *GHOSTLIGHT* (2015)

(INTERMISSION)

FREDERIC RZEWSKI: *COMING TOGETHER* (1971)
Arranged by Matt Albert (2000/2003)

WILL OLDHAM: SONGS (to be announced from the stage)

Voice and guitar Will Oldham

Stage Direction Matthew Ozawa

Lighting Design Erik Barry

Production Stage Manager Madeleine Borg

Running time is approximately 100 minutes including intermission.

All works in the program are for the full sextet (flutes, clarinets, violin, cello, percussion, and piano) and with guest artists as noted in the program with the exception of "Lewisburg" from *Murder Ballades*, which is for solo cello.

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Intern Eric Shoemaker

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eighth blackbird is ensemble-in-residence with Contempo at the University of Chicago and

EIGHTH BLACKBIRD AND THE MCA

eighth blackbird ensemble members are the 2015–16 artists in residence at the MCA. For the first time, the sextet brings its private rehearsal work into the public areas of the museum, preparing new compositions in the galleries. The residency also offers illuminating open rehearsals, an interactive gallery installation, performances, and public talks.



eighth blackbird
Photo: Severio Truglia

The group has divided the Dr. Paul and Dorie Sternberg Family Gallery on the museum's third floor into two distinct areas: a rehearsal room and a space for visitor engagement. When the musicians rehearse, museum visitors may witness the creative process in real time. When eighth blackbird is away, a video projected on three walls provides visitors an intimate look at a rehearsal of David Lang's *these broken wings*. In addition to the video, there is an audio recording that captures the group's studio preparations and discussions during their rehearsals and forthcoming concerts. Instruments and scores are on view when the artists are not on-site.

COMPOSERS' NOTES

MURDER BALLADES

When eighth blackbird asked me for a piece, I immediately knew what to do: let great American folk music inspire a great American new-music ensemble. The murder ballad has its roots in a European tradition, in which grisly details of bloody homicides are recounted through song. When this tradition came to America, it developed its own vernacular, with stories and songs that were told and retold over generations.

In *Murder Ballades*, I reexamine several of these old songs, allowing them to inspire my own music. "Omie Wise," "Young Emily," "Pretty Polly," and "Down in the Willow Garden" are classic murder ballads, tales of romantically charged killings that are based on real events. "Hocket," "Dark Holler," "Lewisburg," and "Underneath the Floorboards" are my own compositions, of which "Dark Holler" is loosely modeled on the clawhammer banjo style that would have accompanied many of these early folk songs. "Brushy Fork" is a Civil War-era murder ballad/fiddle tune, and "Wave the Sea" and "Tears for Sister Polly" are original compositions woven in the depths of the many months I spent inhabiting the seductive music and violent stories of these murder ballads.

—Bryce Dessner

GHOSTLIGHT

A ghost light shining in a darkened theater has always struck me as a symbol of both the mysteries of the unknown and the possibility of the sacred. The ghost light itself is, of course, connected with a sense of the supernatural in the superstitions of the theater. For example, one thought regarding the term's origins is this: since every theater has its own ghost, the light is placed on stage as a kind of offering, allowing the ghost(s) a chance to play upon the stage in exchange for the safety of the theater and its actors. Yet, to me, the ghost light has always felt more sacred than spooky; the setting is for a ritual, or is a kind of shrine, where an eternal flame burns, honoring the age and sanctity of the Theater, with its direct lines back to the ancient Greeks and their gods, rituals, and magic. *Ghostlight* was inspired by this sense of ancient ritual and the mysteries that lie within it.

Like many works by the artists to whom each movement is dedicated—Leonora Carrington, Remedios Varo, Anne Waldman, and Lou Harrison—*Ghostlight* is a self-contained journey, first inward, then out. It begins with the calm of a summer dusk, then gradually grows darker, as it travels into murkier and stranger

Appendix V:

These are the tunes used in Kenlon's *The Hag*, as well as selected uses of them. Some motifs were used extensively, such as the opening melody from *The Old Hag of Galway*, and the half-step neighbor motion derived from *Oh! Hag, You Have Killed Me*. The composer and myself retrieved these notated versions from <https://thesession.org/>.

The Old Hag Of Galway

The image displays a musical score for the song "The Rose Tree". It features a vocal melody and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The vocal part is written on three staves, and the piano accompaniment is written on two staves. The score includes various musical notations such as treble and bass clefs, key signature, time signature, notes, rests, and dynamic markings like "mp" (mezzo-piano) and "f" (forte). Red boxes highlight specific measures in the vocal and piano parts, likely indicating areas of interest or difficulty. The piano part includes a red box around the first measure of the first staff and another red box around the first measure of the second staff. The vocal part includes a red box around the first measure of the first staff and another red box around the first measure of the second staff. The score also includes a key signature change to one flat (B-flat) and a time signature change to 4/4.

The Hag's Purse

Measures 1-19 of the musical score for 'The Hag's Purse'. The score is in 8/8 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first staff has two red boxes highlighting the eighth-note pairs at measures 5 and 9. The third staff has a red box highlighting a triplet of eighth notes at measure 1.

Measures 20-28 of the musical score for 'The Hag's Purse'. The score is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The first staff has a red box highlighting the lyrics "Through Brakes and through Bryars" and the musical notes. The piano accompaniment is on the bottom two staves.

Measures 29-37 of the musical score for 'The Hag's Purse'. The score is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The first staff has a red box highlighting the lyrics "Mires, She" and the musical notes. The piano accompaniment is on the bottom two staves.

Measures 38-46 of the musical score for 'The Hag's Purse'. The score is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The first staff has a red box highlighting the lyrics "w out, and then in," and the musical notes. The piano accompaniment is on the bottom two staves.

The Hag At The Spinning Wheel

First system of music for 'The Hag At The Spinning Wheel'. It consists of four staves of music in G major. The first staff has a repeat sign. The second staff has first and second endings. The third staff has a red box around a triplet of eighth notes. The fourth staff also has first and second endings.

32 *poco meno mosso* (♩ = ca. 66–69) *mp*

No Beast, for his food, Dares now

sempre p

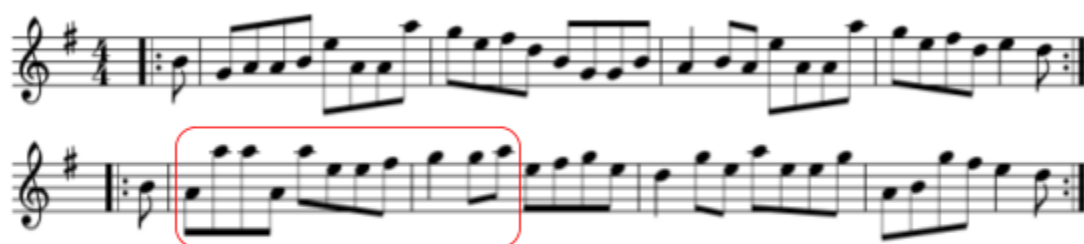
Second system of music. The top staff is vocal with lyrics 'No Beast, for his food, Dares now'. The bottom staff is piano accompaniment with a red box around a triplet of eighth notes. The tempo is 'poco meno mosso' and the dynamic is 'mp'.

36 *p*

range the wood; But husht in his lair he

Third system of music. The top staff is vocal with lyrics 'range the wood; But husht in his lair he'. The bottom staff is piano accompaniment with a red box around a triplet of eighth notes. The dynamic is 'p'.

The Old Hag



Oh! Hag You Have Killed Me

The first system of the musical score consists of four staves, all in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 6/8 time signature. The first staff begins with a repeat sign. The second and fourth staves end with repeat signs. Red boxes highlight specific musical phrases: the first measure of the second staff, the last four measures of the second staff, the first four measures of the third staff, and the last four measures of the fourth staff.

The second system of the musical score begins at measure 26. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a 3/4 time signature. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves in treble and bass clefs. The vocal line includes the lyrics "Through Brakes and through Bryars o'er Dit - ches, and". Red boxes highlight specific musical phrases: the first four measures of the piano accompaniment's treble staff and the last four measures of the piano accompaniment's treble staff.

The third system of the musical score begins at measure 60. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a 3/4 time signature. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves in treble and bass clefs. Red boxes highlight specific musical phrases: the first four measures of the piano accompaniment's treble staff and the last four measures of the piano accompaniment's treble staff.

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