

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: PROGRAMMATIC MUSIC IN VIOLIN LITERATURE

Qian Zhong, Doctor of Musical Arts, 2023

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This dissertation explores programmatic music in the violin literature, highlighting how composers convey extra-musical meaning in their works, inspired from literature, stories, or even personal experience. The research is organized into three thematic recitals: "Love," "Nature," and "Legend," each showcasing a range of compositions unified by a common theme. The paper will explore each piece from a variety of perspectives: cultural influences, composers' style, and their life experiences. It aims to investigate how music can tell stories while emphasizing how composers use similar themes yet with their unique approaches create distinctly personalized works. These programmatic pieces often make a deep emotional connection with the audience all the while inspiring the imagination. The paper also addresses, with specific suggestions, the technical challenges of performing transcriptions of orchestral scores that have been arranged for much smaller instrumentation, such as solo violin with collaborative piano.

The "Love" themed recital includes *Poème*, Op. 25, by Ernest Chausson (1896); Suite from *Romeo and Juliet* for Violin and Piano, by Sergei Prokofiev (1935) and arranged by Lidia Baich and Matthias Fletzberger; Three solos for Violin and Piano from *Swan Lake*, Op.20, by Pyotr

Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1875-1876) and arranged by Endre Granat; Suite from *West Side Story* for Violin and Piano, by Leonard Bernstein (1957), and arranged by Raimundo Penaforte.

The "Nature" recital features Sonata Representiva for Violin and Continuo in A Major, by Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber (1669); The Lark Ascending, by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1914); Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Op. 8, RV 315, "Summer" (*L'estate*), by Antonio Vivaldi (1718-1720) and arranged by Christopher Hogwood; *Verano Porteño Trio* for Piano, Violin and Cello, by Astor Piazzolla (1965) and arranged by José Bragato; Summer Night, by Shanle Yang (1952); Summertime, by George Gershwin (1935) and arranged by Jascha Heifetz.

The "Legend" themed recital presents Butterfly Lovers' Violin Concerto, by He Zhanhao and Chen Gang (1959); Myths, Op.30, by Karol Maciej Szymanowski (1915); Red Violin Caprices, by John Corigliano (1999).

This dissertation also contains three live recitals. The live audio recordings of these three recitals can be found in the Digital Repository of the University of Maryland (DRUM).

PROGRAMMATIC MUSIC IN VIOLIN LITERATURE

By

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Program I

“Love”

Poème, Op.25

Ernest Chausson (1855 – 1899)

<https://youtu.be/1EtlmLMpr5Y>

Suite from *Romeo and Juliet* for Violin and Piano

Sergei Prokofiev (1891 – 1953)

arr. Lidia Baich (b. 1981) and Matthias Fletzberger (b. 1965)

- I. Introduction
- II. The Young Juliet
- III. Dance of the Knight
- IV. Balcony Scene
- V. Dance of the five Couples
- VI. Mercutio
- VII. Battle and Death of Tybalt

<https://youtu.be/LAH7X8zvLDw>

Intermission

Three solos for Violin and Piano from *Swan Lake*, Op.20

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840 – 1893)

arr. Endre Granat (b. 1937)

- I. White Swan *Pas de Deux* <https://youtu.be/OXYSHB6Kbgk>
- II. Black Swan *Pas de Deux* <https://youtu.be/gmYHxT3TCZQ>
- III. Russian Dance <https://youtu.be/GI5U1f49h1Q>

Suite from *West Side Story* for Violin and Piano

Leonard Bernstein (1918 – 1990)

arr. Raimundo Penaforte (b. 1961)

- I. I feel Pretty <https://youtu.be/SCUXLRKUsNE>
- II. Somewhere https://youtu.be/mv-Z_JDKIS8
- III. America https://youtu.be/2wPY_VGPcHA

Program II

“Nature”

Sonata Representiva for Violin and Continuo in A Major

Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber (1644 – 1704)

- I. Allegro
- II. Nachtigal (Nightingale)
- III. CuCu (Cuckoo)
- IV. Fresch (Frog)
- V. Die Henn & Der Hann (Hen & Rooster)
- VI. Die Wachtel (Quail)
- VII. Die Katz (Cat)
- VIII. Musquetir Mars (Musketeer's March)
- IX. Allemande

<https://youtu.be/tG2aLi6giIk>

The Lark Ascending

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872 – 1958)

<https://youtu.be/qjoRMWJwjZ8>

Intermission

Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Op. 8, RV 315, "Summer" (*L'estate*)

Antonio Vivaldi (1678 – 1741)

arr. Christopher Hogwood (1941 – 2014)

- I. *Allegro non molto* <https://youtu.be/HnOQ-3ESFSk>
- II. *Adagio e piano – Presto e forte* <https://youtu.be/rpPnTDUJUC0>
- III. *Presto* <https://youtu.be/GMQt84JwW18>

Verano Porteño Trio for Piano, Violin and Cello

Astor Piazzolla (1921 – 1992)

<https://youtu.be/4meReWYrAZk>

arr. José Bragato (1915 – 2017)

Summertime

George Gershwin (1898 – 1937)

<https://youtu.be/awYRAjMbM-M>

Summer Night

Shanle Yang (b. 1927 – 2008)

<https://youtu.be/SObBoeHKGqQ>

Program III**“Legend”**

Butterfly Lovers’ Violin Concerto

<https://youtu.be/lreTF7dKpbs>

He Zhanhao (b. 1933)

AND

Chen Gang (b. 1935)

Intermission

Myths Op.30

Karol Maciej Szymanowski (1882 – 1937)

- I. *La fontaine d'Arethuse* (The Fountain of Arethusa) <https://youtu.be/OfTYw-ZRJwk>
- II. *Narcisse* (Narcissus) <https://youtu.be/FJsiz3fXHcU>
- III. *Dryades et Pan* (Dryads and Pan) <https://youtu.be/9Kbl5wGLdeg>

Red Violin Caprice

<https://youtu.be/THV6iwsGTNI>

John Corigliano (b. 1938)

Programmatic Music in Violin Literature

Introduction

This dissertation project encompasses the analysis and performance of three recitals of programmatic music selected from the violin literature and written by a variety of composers spanning several centuries and continents and representing multiple and diverse artistic approaches. Whereas absolute music is composed without the intention of representing any specific underlying meaning or storyline, in contrast, programmatic music is intended to convey a particular extra-musical meaning, often chosen by the composer from literary ideas, legendary stories, novels, paintings, or personal experiences. These three recitals in this project are each based on a different programmatic theme and are titled "Love," "Nature," and "Legend." Each recital includes repertoire by different composers and highlights how these composers' music is distinctive even while sharing the same programmatic idea.

An intensive study of programmatic music is of great interest to me. Programmatic music is about storytelling and it is delightful to learn how composers develop stories through their music and inspire the imagination. It is also interesting to investigate how composers have approached the same programmatic theme and yet, composed such contrasting pieces. The composers in these recital programs all showcase excellent storytelling skills through their works, yet each has a recognizable style which is personal and unique. This project therefore provides an analysis of each piece from the perspective of each composer's cultural influences, artistic style, and life experiences.

Note: Some of the pieces selected for this project have been transcribed for violin and piano directly from the orchestral scores. Although it is a challenge for a lone violinist, even with

a piano collaborator, to express the rich sound and impressive musical effect of an entire orchestra, performers can both adjust the score and employ creative instrumental techniques to imitate the orchestra with a solo voice.

The First Recital: “Love”

The repertoire for the recital “Love” includes Ernest Chausson's *Poème*, Op. 25, (1896); *Romeo and Juliet* (1935), from the ballet composed by Sergei Prokofiev; the three solos from the ballet *Swan Lake* (1875-1876) by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky; and a suite from the musical *West Side Story* (premiered in 1957) composed by Leonard Bernstein.

Chausson's *Poème* is based on the romantic novella *The Song of Love Triumphant* written by Ivan Turgenev, a Russian author who was also Chausson's friend. Chausson dedicated this piece to Eugène Ysaÿe, who gave its premiere at the Nancy Conservatoire on 27 December 1896. The *Poème* is an excellent exemplar of Ysaÿe's virtuoso style combined with French impressionism and exoticism. “*Poème*” was composed in 1896 in response to a specific appeal made by Eugène Ysaÿe for a violin concerto. Chausson wrote to Ysaÿe: “I hardly know where to begin with a concerto, which is a huge undertaking, the devil's own task. But I can cope with a shorter work. It will be in very free form with several passages in which the violin plays alone.”¹ In the exposition of the piece, there are sinuous double-stopped passages bearing a distinct style that could only have been composed with the inspiration of Ysaÿe. Eventually, Ysaÿe acknowledged that he had indeed written the double-stops himself within Chausson's initial framework.

Turgenev’s story that is the basis of *Poème* involves eerie supernatural elements which

¹ Mao, *Ernest Chausson's "Poème", Op. 25 in Cultural Context*.

the author frequently incorporated in his later works. This particular story revolves around two young and talented artists, Muzzio and Fabio, a musician and a painter. They are close friends, and both fall in love with the same woman, Valeria. Valeria chooses Fabio, and Muzzio is heartbroken. He goes on a journey to the East for five years to escape the sad situation. While away, Muzzio obtains an instrument with supernatural powers. When he returns home, he stays with Fabio and Valeria on their estate. At night, he plays a mysterious tune, 'The Song of Triumphant Love' on his new instrument. The music enchants Valeria, and she has a romantic dream involving Muzzio. Muzzio shares the same dream as well. The following night, Muzzio plays the tune again, and this time Fabio follows the sound. Sadly, Fabio attacks Muzzio when he sees Valeria and Muzzio together. Somehow, Muzzio survives the dangerous attack and is saved by his attendant. Realizing the danger, he has brought upon his friends, Muzzio decides to leave Fabio and Valeria, allowing them to live in peace.

Chausson seems to depict this series of evolving relationships through his "Poeme," a one movement piece with free form and many tempo changes: *Lento a misterioso*, *Animato*, *Molto animato*, *Animato (a tempo)*, *Poco lento*, *Poco meno lento*, *Allegro*, *Tempo 1*, and *Tranquillo*. The piece begins with a slow introduction played by the orchestra. Then the solo violin presents Theme 1 (Example 1), with its mysterious tune, to open the story. This motif recurs several times throughout the piece, representing both the concept of triumphant love and the character Muzzio.

Example 1: Theme 1

Lento e misterioso

The linking motive of Theme I (Example 2) introduces a long *cadenza* section. This cadenza serves technically to express the violin's soloistic qualities including repetitive *legato* string crossings, a sustained lower part to support double stopping, and a running passage with many accidentals lending an exotic quality.

Example 2: Linking Motive of Theme I

Musically, a fluid melody depicts Valeria following the path to Muzzio's dreamscape to meet with him. The solo violin compresses a repeated pattern until the music finally gives way to the *Animato* section where Theme II (Example 3) is presented for the first time and depicts the sensuous and loving interaction between Valeria and Muzzio in their dream state.

Example 3: Theme II

Theme II appears again at the end of the *Animato* section where it is played with double-stopped octaves that add depth to the emotion of the musical climax. Before the octaves peak, the double-stopped section written by Ysaÿe himself lends his distinctive artistic style. At this point, the linking motive occurs again, indicating that the magical instrument has brought Valeria and Muzzio to the dream a second time. This time Fabio has also followed the music and discovered the lovers. Unfortunately, Fabio and Muzzio fight and Fabio stabs Muzzio. Here, Chausson uses hemiola, syncopation, the lack of a down beat, the elongation of rhythm over the bar line, and a wave-like running passage to depict the urgent and chaotic scene. In the final part, marked *Tranquillo*, Muzzio has realized he has greatly disturbed Fabio and Valeria's life together, he chooses to leave them alone and keep this love only in his heart.

Musically, this section fully expresses the trajectory of Muzzio's love for Valeria from struggle to hope to fulfillment, and finally, to acceptance that the love between them is best not to be sustained. The slurred calm phrase expresses his missing Valeria during his five years of travel, the double stops with *flottato* depict his struggle and his hesitation to interrupt Valeria's life with Fabio. Ultimately, his suppressed love comes out of hiding, and he and the music both loudly exclaim his passion for Valeria in his dream, but soon he is back to the reality of life with sadness. Chausson then brings the linking motive back again with trilled diminished-seven chords to end this piece.

Chausson not only uses a free structure in *Poème*, he also incorporates an impressionistic style. From the score, we can see that he favors extended phrases, indicated by long slurs which create smooth and wave-like lines. The rhythm does not always reflect the meter and is often elongated beyond the bar lines.² He also uses non-functional harmonies and chromatic chords to

² Mao.

generate a mysterious atmosphere and employs pentatonic tonality to add exotic colors. *Poème* thus exquisitely explores the complexities of human relationships and the power of music to communicate otherwise inexpressible emotion and longing. The piece clearly belongs on the “Love” recital.

Prokofiev's Suite from *Romeo and Juliet* is taken from his ballet based on William Shakespeare's play of the same name. This tragic love story is about two young lovers, Romeo and Juliet. Born to feuding families, they fall in love at first sight. Since their families are in conflict, they cannot easily be together, and they are eventually driven apart by a series of tragic events. Ultimately, they both kill themselves because they cannot live without each other.

Prokofiev wrote the ballet in 1935, and later he reused the music in three different popular suites for orchestra that are still frequently played. Since the music is so vividly beautiful, many musicians have transcribed their own versions for various instrumentation. This suite for violin and piano, conceived by Lidia Baich and Matthias Fletzberger, is an impactful and successful transcription. While remarkably creative and exciting, the arrangement still exhibits great respect for the Prokofiev's original work. Baich and Fletzberger conserve the main story lines and employ tunes and melodies from the original work, and their version of the suite is imbued with Prokofiev's own musical language.

The suite is in six movements:

1. Introduction
2. Young Juliet
3. Dance of the Knights
4. Balcony Scene

5. Dance of the Five Couples

6. Fight and Tybalds' death.

From the Preface by Lidia Baich and Matthias Fletzberger³: “In the introduction, the scene prepares for the drama with themes from the overture to the ballet. From the playfulness of the young Juliet the music then leads to the parade of the feuding families — the dance of the knights — and towards the balcony scene, which is central to the whole work. The dance of the couples provides a moment of distraction before the drama unfolds: Romeo’s friend Mercutio provokes Juliet’s cousin Tybalt and is killed by him. Romeo avenges his friend by killing Tybalt after a fierce battle. The final funeral march — the ubiquitous symbol of death — leaves no room for a happy love.”

Prokofiev aptly and expertly depicts this tragic story through his musical language as a Neoclassical composer. He blends classical and modern elements such as harmonic language, rhythmic complexity, orchestration, and characterization all in his unique style.⁴ In this piece, he combines a delicate light feeling, representing young love, with music of real violence. His music can be both brutal and tender.

1. **Harmonic Language:** Prokofiev combines traditional tonal elements with more dissonant and chromatic harmonies in this piece. He frequently employs rich and colorful chord progressions to create a sense of tension and emotional depth. In "Dance of the Knights," Prokofiev uses dissonant harmonic progressions that contribute to the dark and dramatic atmosphere of the scene. In the "Balcony Scene," the harmonic language becomes more consonant and romantic with chromatic chords to convey the passionate and tender nature

³ Seigei Prokofieff, Lidia Baich, and Matthias Fletzberger, *Suite for Romeo and Julia for Violin and Piano*.

⁴ Prokofiev and Phillips, *Sergey Prokofiev Diaries, 1915-1923 : Behind the Mask*.

of Romeo and Juliet's love.

- Melodic Writing: Prokofiev's melodies in this ballet are lyrical and expressive, the themes are often memorable and have a distinct character that reflects the personalities and situations of the main characters. For example, the main love theme (Example 4), heard throughout the ballet, is a fine example of Prokofiev's melodic prowess. The theme has a *dolce*, lyrical quality that depicts both the youthful ardor and the tragic fate of the lovers.

Example 4: Love theme

Andante assai ♩ = 72

Violine

Poco più mosso

- Rhythmic Complexity: Prokofiev employs complex rhythmic patterns, ostinato rhythms with unexpected changes, and shifting meters to create a sense of excitement and dramatic tension. In "Dance of the Knights," the driving, ostinato rhythms lend a feeling of intensity and anticipation.
- Orchestration: Prokofiev's orchestration ranges widely, from a single instrument to the full orchestra. His use of orchestration enhances the dramatic impact of the music. In the "Death of Tybalt," Prokofiev's orchestration is particularly powerful. He employs the full force of the brass section to underscore the tragic moment and convey the emotional impact of Tybalt's death. In the transcription part, the violin and the piano cover most of

chords from the score to express the tension. Despite the extensive range and capabilities of both instruments however, there is the limit of what is playable in comparison with the full orchestral score. In comparison with the heavy orchestration of depicting Tybalt's death, Prokofiev has a more delicate and ethereal touch in the "Balcony Scene". Gentle strings and woodwinds create a dream-like atmosphere to express the tender and intimate moments between Romeo and Juliet. In comparison with the orchestral version, the transcribed solo violin playing of this melody has even more beauty to it.

5. Characterization through Music: Prokofiev's music effectively portrays the different characters and their emotions. In "Young Juliet", fast *staccato* running sixteen notes are associated with the lively and passionate young woman. The music for Romeo and Juliet's love dance in "Balcony Scene" is both beautiful and sweet which reflects their innocent love and hope for the life of their dreams.

Overall, Prokofiev has created a dynamic and emotionally charged musical experience that perfectly captures the tragedy and romance of Shakespeare's play and incorporates a wide range of techniques to bring the characters, emotions, and narrative to life.

The story line of *Swan Lake*, the famous ballet composed by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, revolves around a princess named Odette who has been cursed by an evil sorcerer, transforming her into a swan during the day. The only way to break the cursed spell is for a prince to promise his eternal love to her. The prince, Siegfried, falls in love with Odette and promises to marry her, but he is tricked by the sorcerer who presents his own daughter, Odile, disguised as Odette, at a nighttime dance party. Siegfried mistakenly declares his love for Odile, causing Odette to remain a swan forever. In the end, Siegfried realizes his mistake and fights the sorcerer, leading to their

deaths. Odette's love breaks the curse, and both she and Siegfried find peace in death, united forever.⁵ Tchaikovsky also composed a popular orchestral setting of his ballet that has been frequently played.

Three violin solos selected from the ballet have been arranged for violin and piano by Endre Granat: the “*White Swan Pas de deux*,” the “*Black Swan Pas de deux*,” and the “*Russina Dance*” (Russian Dance). The two *Pas de deux* have gorgeous melodies skillfully showcasing Tchaikovsky’s mastery of line in music. The Russian Dance is a traditional folk dance and exhibits a great deal of spirit and character.

The *White Swan Pas de deux* is a duet and depicts the first meeting between Prince Siegfried and Odette beside Swan Lake. Odette is relating her sad story to Siegfried and dancing with him while he is deeply falling in love with her. Musically, this duet is extraordinarily beautiful and expressive. In the orchestral version, Tchaikovsky uses solo violin with orchestral accompaniment to depict Odette. In Granat’s transcription, the solo part is the same while the piano plays an adapted version of the orchestral part. Tchaikovsky marks the time 6/8 in *Andante* for this *pas de deux*, creating a dancing rhythm set in a slow tempo. The melody is played by solo violin with a harp collaboration set in phrases that are both gorgeous and tender, suggestive of an intimate conversation. As the performer, this section feels more like playing a song rather than a dance movement because of the extended lovely phrases. Tchaikovsky, however, uses a 6/8 time signature as a reminder that this is indeed a dance and that the strong beats are especially important. After Odette’s poignant monolog, there is an easy and lively interlude, which depicts the sweet happiness of Odette and Siegfried (Example 5). In his ballet, Tchaikovsky uses running scales with chromatic notes and a pick-up rhythm pattern to depict the

⁵ Wiley, *Tchaikovsky’s Ballets : Swan Lake, Sleeping Beauty, Nutcracker*.

swan's dance while the ballet dancer's leaps coincide with the violin reaching the tops of these scales. Also, Tchaikovsky uses rests on second/weak beats in the violin part to depict Odette's sprightly and vivid character.

Example 5: Excerpt from the *White Swan Pas de deux* ⁶

The image shows a musical score for an excerpt from the *White Swan Pas de deux*. It consists of two systems of music. The first system starts at measure 32 and includes a violin part and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features a complex texture with chords and arpeggios. The second system starts at measure 35 and includes a violin part with ascending chromatic scales and a piano accompaniment with dynamic markings *mf*, *p*, and *quasi pizz.*

With the ascending chromatic scales, this section brings the connection of Odette and Siegfried to a peak. Then the solo cello interrupts, leading to the last section, which is more like a conversation between the two characters. In the orchestral version, Tchaikovsky uses the solo violin and the solo cello to depict this scene, and the two instruments are perfectly matched for this amorous duet. In the transcription, the piano takes over the cello part. The melody of the piano and the violin are woven together to generate a mood of increasing intensity: Odette gives her whole heart to Siegfried, and he commits himself to her. With the decrescendo to the end, the

⁶ Tchaikovsky, *Three Solos for Violin and Piano from Swan Lake*.

two lovers fade into the night.

The *Black Swan Pas de deux* occurs in Act III of the ballet during the ballroom scene in Siegfried's palace. With the intention of deceiving the prince, the sorcerer, Von Rothbart, has disguised his daughter, Odile, the Black Swan, as Odette. Odile intends to seduce Siegfried and trick him into declaring his love for her, thus breaking his pledge of love to Odette.

Odile performs an attractive and technically demanding dance, captivating Siegfried with her charm, grace, and seductive movements. The music then transitions into a dynamic and passionate dance between Odile and Siegfried. The dance features an elegant *Andante* tempo and Tchaikovsky has written beautiful, memorable, and lifelike melodies. The music alternates between moments of intensity and lyricism. This reflects the shifting emotions and interactions between the characters. In the piano part of this arrangement, the same harmonic progression patterns repeat several times. In contrast, the violin solo part is played differently each time with improvisation, contrasting dynamics, and a variety of ornaments to depict Odile's seductive intentions and the reactions of the prince and the sorcerer.

The Russian Dance is also featured in Act III. This lively and energetic dance is part of the "*Grand Pas de Six*," a series of dances performed by various characters during the ballroom scene. The Russian Dance showcases the virtuosity and athleticism of the male dancers, with energetic leaps, spins, and impressive footwork. The dance is a popular highlight of the ballet and is well known for its lively music.

The Russian Dance can be played alone as an impressive showpiece and foreshadows the last movement of Tchaikovsky's violin concerto.⁷ The piece consists of three parts, a virtuosic

⁷ Tchaikovsky.

violin solo, a graceful *Andante* interlude, and lively and energetic *Allegro Vivo* section. In the violin part, Tchaikovsky gives free rein to the soloist's creative inspiration while incorporating lyrical and virtuosic techniques for solo violin such as tenth intervals, chords, fast running notes and high pitches on G string that all add to the splendid beauty of the music. The *cadenza* gives an explosive opening to impress the audience, highlighting the brilliance of both the solo dancer and the violinist. Then, in the *Andante* part, Tchaikovsky provides a brisk melody with light orchestration to match the graceful dance steps. The *Allegro Vivo* section is comprised of a series of sixteenth notes in a high-pitched register, forming a very classical phrase structured in four measures. Violinist Endre Granat mentioned in his program note, 'The Russian Dance is a virtuoso showpiece foreshadowing the last movement of the composer's violin concerto.'

West Side Story, composed by Leonard Bernstein, and likewise inspired by Shakespeare's play *Romeo and Juliet*, was originally staged as a Broadway musical. While Bernstein scored the music, Stephen Sondheim wrote the lyrics. The musical was groundbreaking, not only for its tragic tone, but for its unity of music, drama, and integration of dance. Bernstein later wrote the popular Symphonic Dances from "West Side Story" scored for orchestra (1961). The story is set in the mid-1950s in New York City, and thus the piece is seeped in American musical elements in addition to the Latin American music representing the Puerto Rican immigrant community at the time. The violin version, transcribed by Raimundo Penaforte, includes three selections based on three songs from the musical: "*America*," "*Somewhere*," and "*I Feel Pretty*."

"*America*" is a spirited and lively song wherein two young women who have immigrated from Puerto Rico, the fiery Anita and the more traditional Rosalia, engage in a humorous and

heated debate about the pros and cons of living in America. While Anita praises America and loves her life in her new country, Rosalia misses Puerto Rico and wants to return home to San Juan. The song explores themes of immigration, cultural identity, life experience and the pursuit of the American Dream.⁸

This is a vibrant song that combines Latin American dance rhythms, such as the mambo and the cha-cha with Sondheim's witty lyrics. In the orchestra score, Bernstein's tempo instruction is "*Tempo di Huapango*" (Example 6). *Huapango* is a type of Mexican music characterized by hemiola, a mixed rhythmic structure combining duple and triple meters, reflecting intricate dance steps. *Huapango* has three beats per measure, but it is often written in 6/8 because of the fast tempo. *Huapango* music is generally overlain with *staccato* melodies to lend a fast and happy feeling.

Example 6: *Tempo di Huapango*⁹

The image displays a musical score for "Tempo di Huapango (fast)". It consists of two systems of music. The first system, starting at measure 28, features a vocal line in treble clef and a piano accompaniment in bass clef. The piano part includes dynamic markings of *f marc.* and *dim.*. The second system, starting at measure 32, continues the piano accompaniment with a dynamic marking of *p lightly*. The score is written in 6/8 time and includes various musical notations such as stems, beams, and slurs.

⁸ Elizabeth A. Wells, *West Side Story : Cultural Perspectives on an American Musical*.

⁹ Bernstein and Penaforte, *West Side Story for Violin and Piano*.

In Penaforte's transcription, the piece starts with a slow lyrical melody in hemiola rhythm. The solo violin plays a duple rhythm in a free jazz style while the accompaniment is set in a triple rhythm with flowing notes, ascending and descending. In the fast section, the violin is challenged with many virtuosic techniques such as octaves, rapid string crossings, harmonics, *pizzicato*, and large shifts. The section is based on the original melody but also gives an impression of improvisation. This transcription can be interpreted by the performers with nuance and phrasing to bring out the flavor and the energy of the song.

Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim for the song "America" from *West Side Story* (See Figure 1)

Figure 1¹⁰

Rosalia:

Puerto Rico,
 You lovely island . . .
 Island of tropical breezes.
 Always the pineapples growing,
 Always the coffee blossoms blowing . . .

Anita:

Puerto Rico . . .
 You ugly island . . .
 Island of tropic diseases.
 Always the hurricanes blowing,
 Always the population growing . . .
 And the money owing,
 And the babies crying,
 And the bullets flying.
 I like the island Manhattan.
 Smoke on your pipe and put that in!

Others:

I like to be in America!
 O.K. by me in America!
 Ev'rything free in America
 For a small fee in America!

R: I like the city of San Juan.

¹⁰ Shakespeare et al., *Romeo and Juliet* : *West Side Story*.

A: I know a boat you can get on.

R: Hundreds of flowers in full bloom.

A: Hundreds of people in each room!

ALL

Automobile in America,
Chromium steel in America,
Wire-spoke wheel in America,
Very big deal in America!

R: I'll drive a Buick through San Juan.

A: If there's a road you can drive on.

R: I'll give my cousins a free ride.

A: How you get all of them inside?

ALL

Immigrant goes to America,
Many hellos in America;
Nobody knows in America
Puerto Rico's in America!

R: I'll bring a T.V. to San Juan.

A: If there a current to turn on!

R: I'll give them new washing machine.

A: What have they got there to keep clean?

ALL

I like the shores of America!
Comfort is yours in America!
Knobs on the doors in America,
Wall-to-wall floors in America!

R: When I will go back to San Juan.

A: When you will shut up and get gone?

R: Everyone there will give big cheer!
Everyone there will have moved here!

"*I Feel Pretty*" is sung by the character Maria, who is a young Puerto Rican woman who has fallen in love with Tony, a young man who is a member of a gang called the Jets. In the story, Maria is a hopeful and optimistic character, and "*I Feel Pretty*" is Maria's inner reflection on the joy and excitement of finding herself in love. After Maria returns from a rendezvous with Tony, she sings about feeling beautiful and confident because of her love for him. "*I Feel Pretty*" is a lighthearted and playful song that showcases Maria's happiness and the blossoming of her relationship with Tony.

The musical character of the song is bright and lively. It is written in a major key, which contributes to its uplifting and joyful tone. The melody is memorable with a playful and bouncy quality that reflects Maria's excitement and happiness. The song is set in a fast-paced 6/8-time signature, which adds to its energetic and spirited nature. In this transcription part, the violin solo has a bright and vibrant sound that matches the character of the song. Some techniques can bring a playful and uplifting quality to the performance such as *staccato* bow strokes, harmonic sounds, and jumping to very high pitches to express Maria's inner excitement. The piano part features a rhythmic and syncopated pattern which adds a sense of liveliness and movement to the music. The lyrics are set to a melodic line that often jumps between different pitches, emphasizing Maria's enthusiasm and her sense of feeling beautiful.

Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim for the song "*I Feel Pretty*" from *West Side Story* (See Figure 2)

Figure 2¹¹

Maria:

I feel pretty
 Oh, so pretty
 I feel pretty, and witty, and bright
 And I pity
 Any girl who isn't me tonight

¹¹ Shakespeare et al.

I feel charming
Oh, so charming
It's alarming how charming I feel
And so pretty
That I hardly can believe I'm real
See the pretty girl in that mirror there?
Who can that attractive girl be?
Such a pretty face
Such a pretty dress
Such a pretty smile
Such a pretty me!
I feel stunning
And entrancing
Feel like running and dancing for joy
For I'm loved
By a pretty wonderful boy!
Have you met my good friend, Maria?
The craziest girl on the block
You'll know her the minute you see her
She's the one who is in an advanced
State of shock
She thinks she's in love
She thinks she's in Spain
She isn't in love
She's merely insane
It must be the heat
Or some rare disease
Or too much to eat
Or maybe it's fleas
Keep away from her
Send for Chino!
This is not the Maria we know!
Modest and pure
Polite and refined
Well-bred and mature
And out of her mind!
Miss America, a speech, a speech, *que hable*
I feel pretty
Oh, so pretty
That the city should give me its key
A committee
Should be organized to honor me
I feel dizzy
I feel sunny
I feel fizzy, and funny, and fine
And so pretty

Miss America can just resign!
 See the pretty girl in that mirror there
 What mirror, where?
 Who can that attractive girl be?
 Which? What? Where? Whom?
 Such a pretty face
 Such a pretty dress
 Such a pretty smile
 Such a pretty me!
 Such a pretty me!
 Such a pretty me!
 I feel stunning (I feel stunning)
 And entrancing (and entrancing)
 Feel like running and dancing for joy
 For I'm loved
 By a pretty wonderful boy!

“*Somewhere*” is a haunting dreamful song sung by Tony and Maria. After Tony kills Maria’s brother accidentally in a gang fight, he comes to Maria, regretful and afraid. He is planning to go to the police after seeing Maria, but Maria stops him. Despite the ongoing conflict between their respective gangs and the disapproval of their friends and families, Tony and Maria dream of a better life together, free from the violence surrounding them. In “*Somewhere*,” Tony sings about a place called “Somewhere” where he and Maria can be together without fear and prejudice. The song is a beautiful and hopeful expression of their longing for a peaceful and accepting world. It conveys the hope that someday, somewhere, people can live in harmony, regardless of their backgrounds or differences.

Musically, “*Somewhere*” features a soaring melody and heartfelt lyrics, it blends elements of both classical and musical theater styles. It starts with a slow and expressive tempo, allowing the emotions of the song to resonate deeply with the audience. The song is typically performed in a ballad style, with a focus on the vocal performance and the emotional intensity of the lyrics. In this violin and piano arrangement, Penaforte takes advantage of soprano violin sounds to play the memorable and touching melody. The melodic lines are characterized by expressive intervals

and melodic leaps that evoke a sense of yearning and longing. Choosing effective strategies for shifting are an important consideration for the soloist in playing this piece to imitate the human voice. The song moves through different musical sections including a reflective opening, a soaring and climactic development section, and a fading ending. These sections create a dynamic and expressive musical journey that enhances the emotional impact of the song. Penaforte states the melody first time on the violin G string, which creates a warm calm sound. Next, he writes in octaves and intense chords both on violin and piano to soar to the climax. In the end, the melody fades into the violin's high register.

Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim for the song “*Somewhere*” from *West Side Story* (See Figure 3)

Figure 3¹²

There's a place for us,
Somewhere a place for us.
Peace and quiet and open air
Wait for us, somewhere.

There's a time for us,
Some day a time for us,
Time together with time to spare,
Time to learn, time to care.

Some day,
Somewhere,
We'll find a new way of living,
We'll find a way of forgiving.
Somewhere,
Somewhere . . .

There's a place for us,
A time and place for us.
Hold my hand and we're halfway there.
Hold my hand and I'll take you there
Somehow,
Some day,
Somewhere!

¹² Shakespeare et al.

Raimundo Penaforte's "*West Side Story*" Suite successfully conveys Bernstein's musical ideas and characters and offers distinctive interpretations of the songs, employing the violin's expressive potential, vibrant sound, ornamentation, and wide register with the impact of a solo performance. This Suite can be a captivating musical experience for both the performer and the audience.

In my first recital, the pieces I have chosen are all about 'love.' However, they each impress listeners with their unique characters and styles, distinguishing themselves from one another. Prokofiev, Chausson, Bernstein, and Tchaikovsky each build an emotional connection with the audience in their own way. Their music doesn't just narrate stories of love; it invites listeners into a world where every note, every harmony, resonates with the heart's own rhythm, creating an immersive, unforgettable experience of musical romance.

The Second Recital: "Nature"

The programmatic theme for the second recital in this dissertation is "Nature." The following analysis will begin with Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber's *Sonata Representativa for Violin and Continuo in A Major* (1669) followed by *Lark Ascending* (1914) composed by Ralph Vaughan Williams. These two pieces both depict animals, especially birds. Interestingly, the way each composer evokes bird sounds is quite unique.

Birds and other Animals

Biber's sonata is not strictly programmatic in the nineteenth-century sense, but the piece includes ample programmatic elements. Biber titles each movement with the name of an animal and represents the different sounds and activities of the animals using the techniques of *glissando*, *tremolo*, and semitones, among others.

The work is set in nine movements: I. *Allegro* II. Nightingale III. Cuckoo IV. Frog V. Hen & Rooster VI. Quail VII. Cat VIII. Musketeer's March IX. *Allemande*. That seven of the nine movements are given a title referring to an animal or activity supports the idea that this is indeed legitimately programmatic music.

Biber was a baroque composer and violinist best known for his works for violin which pushed the technical and expressive boundaries of the instrument at the time. His music often involves *scordatura*, an alternative tuning of the violin used to facilitate resonance in chordal effects such as in his famous "Rosary Sonatas" (1678). In his *Sonata Representiva*, he does not employ *scordatura*, however, he uses other advanced violin techniques to explore the violin's expressive potential as described below. This sonata may be played with collaborative harpsicord or basso continuo. Biber wrote only chords in harpsicord part, so the performer has room to improvise within the harmonic foundation. The violin part has a melodic structure but still can be enhanced with improvisation.

The first movement is titled *Allegro* but begins with a slower 2/2 indication to provide an introduction. The tempo of the introduction is close to *andante*, even though Biber does not specify this. In the introduction, one can imagine wandering in the countryside and enjoying the natural scenery. Next, in the lively and energetic *Allegro* section, Biber changes the meter to 6/4 and uses a consistent dotted-quarter rhythm pattern with a purposeful harmonic progression throughout. This ties the whole movement together tightly despite clearly heard distinctive phrases. In this *Allegro* section, Biber also employs counterpoint, combining distinct melodic lines to form a harmonious whole. The effect of the movement is light and fun.

The second movement is devoted to the nightingale, a small bird with a sharp and beautiful song. At the beginning of this movement, Biber provides a freely styled *cadenza*

allowing the soloist to bring the effect of authentic birdsong to life in their performance. To depict the nightingale, Biber employs techniques such as fast, fluttering figurations, repeated minor-second intervals, and high-pitched trills. Trills are often used to represent birdsong in music. These techniques, combined with the rhythmic freedom and improvisatory style characteristic of baroque music, indeed create a vivid musical picture of the nightingale in nature.

In the third movement the cuckoo's characteristic call is brought to the ear, represented by a falling minor third, with the higher note sounding first, mimicking the cuckoo's distinctive two-note call. This is a very common musical depiction of a cuckoo and can be found in other works as well, such as Beethoven's "Pastoral" Symphony (1808). This falling motif is repeated several times to imitate the persistent calling of the cuckoo bird.

In the fourth movement, Biber uses minor-second double-stopping to depict the frog. This creates a low and hollow dissonance suggestive of a frog's well known croaking sound. This croaking effect is often portrayed with repeated notes played in the lower range of the violin. Biber also uses short, repeated rhythmic patterns that lend a distinctly disjointed character, emphasizing even more the 'frog-like' effect.

A hen and rooster are portrayed in the fifth movement. To represent the clucking and pecking behaviors of the hen, Biber writes a quick, repeated-note figure with irregular high pitches popping out. He uses short, *staccato* notes in a very quick tempo, creating a hen-pecking effect. The rooster is portrayed using a crowing motif, typically a sequence of notes ascending in pitch and set in a dotted-rhythm pattern. The crowing motif is sometimes followed by a series of rapid notes, illustrating the rooster's flapping wings or even roosters fighting with each other.

The sixth movement portrays the quail. To achieve this, Biber employs a unique and

characteristic rhythm, a repeated note followed by two faster ones. This rhythm imitates the recognizable call of the quail. The pattern is often performed in a somewhat *staccato* manner, further enhancing the depiction of the bird's call. To make the sound more resonant and authentic, the performer may choose to sound the open string E through all the repeated notes. The repetitive and rhythmical motif is repeated throughout the quail movement to create a sense of the bird's persistent and distinctive song.

The movement devoted to the cat features dissonant and unpredictable intervals to capture the sometimes sneaky and unpredictable movements of a cat, a successful predator by nature. This includes wide leaps with big *glissandos* and irregular rhythms, creating a feeling of sudden movement. The slow and sticky *glissando* mimics the cat's 'meow.' One interpretation is to depict a lazy and sweet cat by using a *legato* style and "banana" bow. "Banana bow" is a specific bowing technique where the player applies lighter pressure at the ends of the bow (near the frog and tip) and heavier pressure in the middle section of the bow. It is important to note that these descriptions are not strict rules, and the portrayal can be subject to the performer's interpretation. Some musicians may change the tempo suddenly to reflect a cat's changing moods and jerky behaviors.

The eighth movement, Musketeer's March, is the only movement to depict human activity, specifically a military march, in this sonata. To evoke the image of marching soldiers, Biber uses a steady, regular rhythm, often in a duple meter, a meter characterized by a primary division of 2 beats to the bar. This steady rhythm mimics the measured and regular pace of soldiers marching in step. Some down-beat rests also have a certain rhythmic surprise, adding energy and some unexpected unpredictability to the march. Melodically, the phrase is characterized by a bold and simple theme, reflecting the straightforward and firm nature of a

military march. The theme is developed and repeated throughout the section to give a sense of ongoing movement and progression.

The "*Allemande*" is the final movement of this sonata, which seems unusual. In most baroque dance suites, the *Allemande* is typically one of the first dances. That Biber places his *Allemande* at the very end is another reflection of his innovative approach to musical composition. The *Allemande* is a German dance in binary form, which is typically serious in tone and performed in a quadruple meter with a pick-up beat. As with the first movement, "Allegro," Biber does not give a more descriptive animal title to this final movement indicating that he wishes to settle his novel programmatic movements into a more typical overall framework. Thus, he concludes his sonata in a conventional baroque style with the *Allemande* dance form.

Ralph Vaughan Williams was an English composer who was passionate about both poetry and the violin. This is evident in his tone poem *Lark Ascending* inspired by the poem of the same name written by the English poet George Meredith (written in 1881). Vaughan Williams has written twelve lines from Meredith's poem at the top of the score (Figure 4). In setting this poem to music, the composer focuses on using the violin to produce not only the sounds of birds but also the singing melody of birdsong. Though this piece, originally scored for solo violin and piano, was composed in 1914, it was not performed until 1920. Williams later revised it for solo violin with orchestral accompaniment.

Figure 4: The following excerpt from Meredith's poem appears on Vaughan Williams' score.¹³

He rises and begins to round,
He drops the silver chain of sound,
Of many links without a break,

¹³ Mellers, *Vaughan Williams and the Vision of Albion*.

In chirrup, whistle, slur and shake...

For singing till his heaven fills,
 'Tis love of earth that he instils,
 And ever winging up and up,
 Our valley is his golden cup,
 And he the wine which overflows
 To lift us with him as he goes...

Till lost on his aerial rings
 In light, and then the fancy sings.

The whole piece is written as a continuous movement with evolutionary and rondo-like characteristics. The work frequently incorporates the Dorian mode (major 6th), as well as the Pentatonic scale. The piece begins with a two-bar prelude played by woodwind instruments and hushed strings in a rhythm of 6/8. Following this, the solo performer steps in, presenting a gentle and unaccompanied *cadenza*. While the key area centers around D, ninth chords are also presented, highlighting the dissonance between D and E. This passage is marked with *pianissimo* and *sur la touche*, indicating a quiet tone and the bow's placement over the fingerboard. This technique diminishes the upper harmonics and results in a heavenly sound. The *cadenza* is marked *senza misura* (without bar lines). Musicians may interpret this notation as an invitation to perform freely, without strictly adhering to the meter.

The lark, like the nightingale, is a cheerful bird that sings loudly and clearly. This piece portrays the early morning in a small village in the English countryside, when a lark's singing interrupts the silence. The bird starts to flap its wings and fly up into the sky. To portray the lark in the beautiful natural landscape, Vaughan Williams offers three beautiful melodies in the piece (Example 7 to 9).¹⁴ He also repeatedly uses fast major-second intervals to imitate the sound of the bird.

¹⁴ Howes, *The Music of Ralph Vaughan Williams*.

Example 7: The first bird tune introduced by solo violin in pentatonic harmony (numeral 2 to 3)

2 a tempo
p cantabile

3
p cantabile

Example 8:

The second bird tune is in D in Dorian mode introduced first by the pianos (sample numeral 13).

13 Allegretto tranquillo
(quasi Andante)
semplice
Clar.

Example 9: The third bird tune is set in a compound rhythm in 6/8 and is more active.

p
p cantabile

In each tune, Vaughan Williams writes ample ornamentation using fast 32nd notes and running passages to depict the bird song more vividly.

Harmonically, the piece is clear and simple and based on modes. Vaughan Williams consistently uses consonant intervals, such as 8th, 5th, and 4th intervals, to depict the innocence of the lark as well as the peaceful landscape. For texture, the piece is predominantly characterized by homophonic sounds, which means there is a clear melody line played by the solo violin, accompanied by block chords or simple harmonically supportive material from the orchestra. This texture helps draw attention to the violin as it imitates the bird; the violin, with its clear, lyrical line, often seems to “soar” above the orchestral "landscape."

The structure of this piece is interesting in that it begins and ends in the same way, with a contrasting middle section. The form can best be described with the following scheme: ABCDCBA, with the A sections representing the *cadenzas*, and the other letters referencing various bird tunes and melodies; the notes, rhythms, phrases, and sections mirror themselves at various points in the composition. (Example 10)

Example 10: ABCDCBA Structure in *Lark Ascending*.

A(beginning) - **B**(num. 2)- **C**(num. 13) - **D**(num. 20) - **C**(num. 29) - **B**(num. 33) - **A**(num. 41)

Example 10: A(Beginning)

Violin Solo

Andante sostenuto

Cadenza sur la touche

pp senza misura

Stringe

Pianoforte

ppp

Ped.

CS Scanned with CamScanner

Example 10: B (num.2)

a tempo

p cantabile

muted strings

pp a tempo

CS Scanned with CamScanner

Example 10: C(num. 13)

Allegretto tranquillo
(quasi Andante)

G

Clar.

semplice

CS Scanned with CamScanner

Example 10: D(num. 20)

Allegro tranquillo (2 beats in the bar)

20

pp

Triangle. *p*

Oboe *ppp scherzando*

Clar.

Fag. *p*

Scanned with CamScanner

Example 10: C(num. 29)

senza misura

29

Allegretto molto tranquillo

ppp tranquillo

ppp tranquillo

S

Scanned with CamScanner

Example 10: B(num. 33)

33 Tempo del Principio (U)

f sostenuto

Example 10: A(num. 41)

41 senza misura

ppp sur la touche

ppp Ped.

Vaughan Williams is also a symbolic composer. The lark symbolizes a liberated spirit as it flies to the sky entering an untethered world. Vaughan Williams responds to the poetry and conveys the longing of peaceful and freedom of life through his composition.

The Season of Summer

Also from the second recital are several works variously depicting the season of summer. These include the “Summer” concerti from Antonio Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* (1718-1720) and Astor Piazzolla's *Four Seasons* (1965-1969), juxtaposed with George Gershwin's *Summertime* (1935) and *Summer Night* (1952) by Shanle Yang.

Vivaldi's “Summer” is a concerto piece for solo violin and string orchestra in three movements, each corresponding to descriptive Italian sonnets. Vivaldi was an Italian baroque composer, virtuoso violinist, teacher, and priest. He is one of the greatest and the most influential baroque composers. Johann Sebastian Bach for example was influenced considerably by Vivaldi's works. In 1703, Vivaldi joined Venice's *Ospedale della Pietà* (a convent, orphanage, and music school) and as a violin teacher. This became his "golden time," and he grew greatly in both reputation and productivity, creating numerous works for the institution's talented female ensemble (composed of Vivaldi's orphan students) who performed Vivaldi's works for appreciative Venetian audiences.

The *Four Seasons* (*Le Quattro Stagioni*) is a set of instrumental concerti from the collection of *Cimento dell'Armonico e dell'Invenzione* Op. 8, II, published in 1725. Vivaldi dedicated their publication to a bohemian patron, Count Václav Morzin (1676–1737). Each concerto has three movements, with a slow movement set between two faster ones. The four concerti are set in *ritornello* form, although in many instances a returning passage comes back with fragmented or shortened thematic material, or with just with the motive of the theme, or even with added new material. In this programmatic style, Vivaldi composes the music to match the associated sonnets.

“Ritornello form in Vivaldi, often described as procrustean, is actually rather flexible.

Central (and often final) ritornellos are usually shorter than the opening one, merely stating material selected from it and frequently omitting the opening theme. The intervening solo sections (symbolized S1, S2, etc.) which may or may not incorporate material from the ritornello sections (symbolized R1, R2, etc.), normally have the function of carrying out the modulations from key to key, each new key being confirmed and stabilized by the eventual entry of the tutti".¹⁵ (see Figure 5)

The "Summer" concerto depicts sweltering noon with many programmatic elements. The slow beginning in G minor hints of hot weather that makes people drowsy. Then the fast section with off-beats comes to the fore sounding hurried and irritable, suggesting that extremely hot weather makes it hard for busy people even to breath. Suddenly, the solo violin changes the mood with an ultra smooth sound, and in a short cadenza there are some high-pitched notes played by the solo violin imitating a cuckoo singing. A very odd dissonance depicts a turtle-dove singing, and trills combined with alternating high notes hint of sounds from a goldfinch. The final movement (also called "Storm") depicts a thunderstorm. Between the slow movement and final movement, Vivaldi employs chromatic melody lines for the soloist combined with tremors played by orchestra which hint that the weather is changing and storm is brewing. To guide the performer and the audience in their interpretation of the music, Vivaldi has selected sonnets for each movement and placed the words carefully in association with the related music phrases.

¹⁵ Don Michael, Randel and Willi Apel. *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music*. (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1986), from the "Solo concerto" section of the article on the Concerto.

Figure 5: Ritornello form with Italian sonnets, possibly written by Vivaldi himself. translated to English and placed in juxtaposition with the music in Summer.¹⁶

1st movement – *Allegro ma non molto*

Form	Measure	Key	Sonnets
R1	1-30	G minor	Beneath the harsh season inflamed by the sun, man languishes, the flock languishes, and the pine tree burns;
S1	31-48		the cuckoo
R2	49-58		unleashes its voice and, as soon as it is heard,
S2	59-77		the turtle dove sings and the goldfinch too.
R3	78-115	G minor to D minor	Sweet Zephyrus blows but Boreas suddenly, open a dispute with his neighbor,

¹⁶ Everett, *Vivaldi, the Four Seasons and Other Concertos, Op. 8.*

S3	116-154	D minor	and the shepherd
R4	155	G minor	weeps, for he fears a fierce storm looming – and his destiny.

2nd movement – Adagio

G minor	The fear of lighting and fierce thunder and the furious swarm of flies and blowflies deprive his weary limbs of repose.
---------	---

3rd Movement - Presto

Form	Measure	Key	Sonnets
R1	1-40	G minor to D minor	Oh alas! his fears are only too true. The sky thunders, flares, and with hailstones severs the heads of proud grain crops.
S1	40-54	D minor	
R2	55-73	D minor to C minor	
S2	74-84	C minor	
R3	85-96		
S3+R (switch role fast between tutti and solo)	97-119	Chromatic scales on solo	
R4	120	End with G minor	

Piazzolla's "Summer" (*Verano Porteño*) is a selection from a set of four tango compositions. The work pictures summer in Buenos Aires in Argentina. The original tangos were composed as separate works rather than a unified suite, although Piazzolla occasionally performed them together. Piazzolla's *Four Seasons* include *Verano* (Summer), *Otoño* (Autumn), *Invierno* (Winter), *Primavera* (Spring). This is a significant change from Vivaldi's original order. Russian composer Leonid Desyatnikov re-arranged Piazzolla's *Four Seasons* for solo violin and orchestra (1996-1998) and included some apparent links to the original Vivaldi work, so there are numerous connections between these two pieces.

This recital presented the piano trio version of *Verano Porteño*, edited by José Bragato, which is a popular chamber piece. Bragato, a renowned cellist, composer, and arranger who often worked with Astor Piazzolla, had a deep understanding of Piazzolla's music. His piano trio piece blends traditional tango music with elements of jazz and classical music based heavily on Piazzolla's original work. In the piano trio arrangement, a distinctive and consistent syncopated rhythmic motif continues through the entire piece. Bragato preserves Piazzolla's complex harmonies and creative tango style, and the rich, emotional expressiveness of the music is central to the *Lento* section. To begin the piece, some players may cross the bridge at the opening to create an eerie metallic effect that imitates the sound of cicadas. In addition to the perpetual syncopated rhythm, there is improvisation from each player (violin, cello and piano) and dynamic changes from a softer to a more intense sound, which pictures the impending feeling of summer arriving.

In the highly satisfying *Lento* section, the rich, emotional expressiveness of the music becomes a central feature. Piazzolla's melodies are often long, winding, and highly sonorous,

reflecting the emotional depth of his music.¹⁷ In this trio version, Bragato takes advantage of violin and cello's timbres to create a rich, layered sound, and he provides an expressive conversation to the two instruments. This orchestration is especially impressive because the tone quality from violin and cello so perfectly match the feeling of the music.

Following the emotional *lento* section, the piece returns to an energy and rhythm similar to the beginning, but with a livelier and more exciting feeling. This faster section is filled with passion and even aggression with a syncopated rhythmic pattern and wide dynamic changes. After the energetic *allegro* bridge section, a violin *cadenza* follows. The *cadenza* is short but fully reveals the violin's lower register: it can be played only on the G string for even deeper and more meaningful sound colors. This *cadenza* also serves as an expressive link to the next *Lento* section.

The first and second *Lento* sections share the same melody and phrase materials but the second one begins one step higher in pitch at the beginning and then develops to much high register later. Also, the second *Lento* employs chromatic scales and richer intervals such as augmented seconds, along with colorful slides to decorate the phrases to create a more improvisational and free effect. Emotionally, the second *Lento* develops much more than the first, building in intensity with fragile and breathless timbres that bring listeners to another world. Then, several sixteen notes from the violin, set in a typical jazz harmony progression, break the atmosphere and serve to bring the piece back to the first energetic material again, this time with even more excitement and a faster tempo. The piece closes with a big dissonant *glissando* from all the instruments.

In comparison with Vivaldi's "Summer," Piazzolla's "Summer" as arranged by Bragato

¹⁷ Azzi and Collier, *Le Grand Tango : The Life and Music of Astor Piazzolla*.

focuses more on musical expression and emotional release. The trio embraces diverse musical elements from classical and jazz music and offers much more of a free improvisational feeling to give the listener a sense of a hot and lazy summer just through the experience of hearing the music. Vivaldi's "Summer" concerto is more conventional musically, and he molds his music to match the sonnets which he uses to provide imagery for the performers and audience to guide their imagination toward experiencing the feelings of summer.

The son of Russian immigrants, George Gershwin (1898 –1937) was an American composer and pianist from New York City, whose compositions mixed popular music, jazz, and classical genres. In addition to this, his musical style was significantly shaped by French composers of the early twentieth century such as Maurice Ravel with whom Gershwin had a close friendship.

Gershwin's *Summertime* was originally an aria from his opera *Porgy and Bess* with lyrics by DuBose Heyward. This piece is considered the composer's most enduring work and has been transcribed into many different versions. It mixes elements of jazz with historic song styles from the southeastern United States.

The song "Summertime" is sung by the character Clara in Act I of the opera. The song depicts a scene of a calm and serene life, specifically in the summertime. The opera opens with Clara, one of the community members, singing the famous lullaby "Summertime" to her baby. Clara describes an ideal, peaceful summer scene where life is easy. The lyrics are an expression of aspiration, implying a world where the child is taken care of and does not need to worry about basic survival. The song's original lyrics include the following verse (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: Lyrics by DuBose Heyward from the song “Summertime” composed by George Gershwin.

Summertime,
 And the livin' is easy
 Fish are jumpin'
 And the cotton is high
 Your daddy's rich
 And your momma's good lookin'
 So hush little baby
 Don't you cry

Musically, Gershwin blends elements of classical music, jazz, and blues into this piece.

This blend creates a rich and unique sounds that depicts the diversity and complexity of American culture, particularly African American culture in the southern United States.

Melodically, Gershwin's music is known for its memorable, singable melodies. “Summertime” is no exception. Rhythmically, Gershwin uses syncopation and other complex rhythmic patterns that gives the music a free feeling and energy that reflect the influence of both jazz and African American folk music. The harmonies also reflect the color of jazz and impressionism. There is the dissonance of chords shifted in parallel that is not resolved but used to provide a distinctive timbre. This version for violin and piano is transcribed by the brilliant virtuosic violinist Jascha Heifetz (1901-1987). He adds a double-stopped section to a repeated statement of the melody that lends incredible emotional depth harmonically. Heifetz also repeats the melody soaring up an octave higher to further augment the mood in yet a new way.

Technically, shifting in “Summertime” is an important consideration for the violinist. The violin serves to imitate a rich and operatic human voice in this case, and it helps to provide natural and free sounding slides to the shifting process in this piece. Carefully considering when shifting-related slides begin, how long the slides last, and how fast the slides are delivered all influence the emotional communication of the song. The Heifetz transcription is a fantastic

version for violin and piano and is frequently played in recitals.

Summer Night is composed by Chinese composer Shanle Yang who uses the tones of Hunan folk songs. The work describes the scenery of a lotus pond in midsummer south of the Yangtze River to express his nostalgia for his hometown.

The piece starts with a slow tempo and long *legato* phrases that transport listeners to peaceful river villages. The delicate melody and beautiful sound paint a picture of a lotus pond bathed in moonlight during a summer night. The soft sounds of frogs and insects mingle with the light scent of lotus. The quiet night gives a feeling of calm.

Next in an *Allegro* section, the mood changes. People are talking and laughing under trees to stay cool after dinner time. A few children dive into the clear stream to play in the water. Everyone is feeling light-hearted and having fun with their family and friends, the summer heat does not bother them, they are immersed in the joy of the community interaction. Toward the end of the song, the music returns to the calm and melodious tone it had at the beginning as the sky is getting darker. People slowly leave. The pond goes back to its quiet with the sweet smell of lotus and people go on to their sweet dreams while the violin ends with soft sounds.

Harmonically, this piece is composed on the Pentatonic scale, a harmonic effect that is fundamental to traditional Chinese music. Most traditional Chinese music is inspired by folk songs, and this makes the melody simple and easy to memorize. The Pentatonic scale fits easy over several different chords and harmonic contexts. Technically, Shanle Yang has employed *appoggiatura*, different types of grace notes, trills and all kind of slides to imitate sounds of the erhu, a traditional Chinese stringed instrument. Usually, erhu performers freely add ornamentation into their playing. The erhu is not as readily resonant as the violin and the sound

is more difficult to sustain. Therefore, if there is slur in the score, sometimes the violin player may bow with a small intentional pause between the two slurred notes to better emulate the folk instrument. The pentatonic harmony and the ornaments that the composer has used to emulate the sound of the erhu combine to lend the piece a distinctive Chinese national style.

The Third Recital: “Legend”

The third recital, celebrating programmatic music inspired by the literary genre of legend, includes three large works: the *Butterfly Lover’s Concerto* for violin and orchestra (1959), composed jointly by He Zhanhao and Chen Gang, Karol Maciej Szymanowski's *Three Myths*, Op. 30, (1915) and *The Red Violin Caprices* (1999) by John Corigliano.

Zhanhao and Gang’s *Butterfly Lover’s Concerto* for violin and orchestra is based on a love story from Chinese legend that is well known to the Chinese people. The story has a significant status in Chinese historical literature and to many it is considered the "Eastern Romeo and Juliet." The composers use many Chinese musical elements in the piece, such as pentatonic scales, melodies from the Shaoxing Opera, and techniques of playing Chinese traditional instruments.

The legend centers around the love of a brilliant ambitious girl named Zhu Yingtai and a talented boy named Liang Shanbo. Zhu comes from a wealthy family, yet she must disguise herself as a boy so she can attend school (girls are forbidden to attend school at that time in ancient China). At school, she meets Liang. Liang comes from a humble background, but despite their differences, they fall deeply in love and their feelings are strong. Due to familial and societal pressures however, Zhu is forced by her parents to become engaged to another wealthy boy named Ma. Tragically, when Liang learns that Zhu is going to be forced to marry someone

else, he passes away from illness. Heartbroken by this news, Zhu escapes from her wedding ceremony to Liang's grave. As she weeps, the grave opens suddenly, and she jumps in, wanting to be with her love forever. In the end, the two lovers transform into two beautiful butterflies flying out of the grave, finally side by side for eternity.

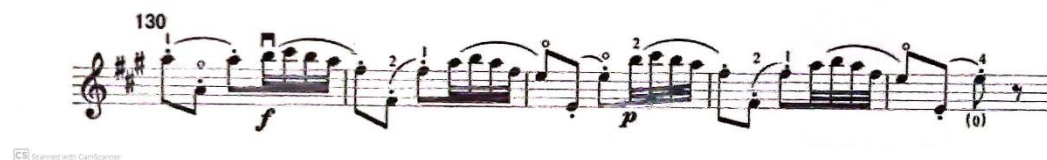
Given the popularity and fame of this story, it is not surprising that eventually, a composer named Chen Gang and his partner He Zhanhao chose to set this touching story to music. They subsequently created what is now known as the "Liangzhu Violin Concerto." The violin represents the voices and emotions of the two lovers, telling their story without words. When people listen to the concerto, they can feel the love, sadness, and ultimate reunion of Liang and Zhu. This concerto has also been frequently performed using a variety of traditional Chinese instruments such as the erhu, the guzheng, and the Chinese flute.

The concerto can be divided into three parts: the Exposition "Pledge the oath as brothers in Cao bridge", the Development "Zhu fights against marriage", and the Recapitulation "Becoming butterflies after dying for love".

Taken from the storyline, the exposition narrates the time during their happy school days, when Liang is unaware of Zhu's gender, and they pledge oaths to become brothers. To open the curtain, the piano imitates a flute's sound on a free *cadenza* to represent a scene of fragrant flowers and birds chirping in sunny weather. Then, the solo violin presents the first theme, the main love melody. This tune is heard throughout the piece several times, and it is easy to remember and sing. It represents Liang and Zhu's pure and noble love. After a short *cadenza* from the solo violin, there is an *Allegro* part in rondo form, characterized by a dotted rhythm followed by two eighth notes in a fast tempo to depict Liang and Zhu's joyful student life and the positive undertones. The solo violin uses *staccato* and *ricochet* bowing styles to express the

playful mood. Composers Chen and He also incorporate the guzheng's *glissando* technique on the violin with fast and short articulation to create a more Chinese-like sound (Example 11).

Example 11: Technique to emulate the sound of the Chinese guzheng



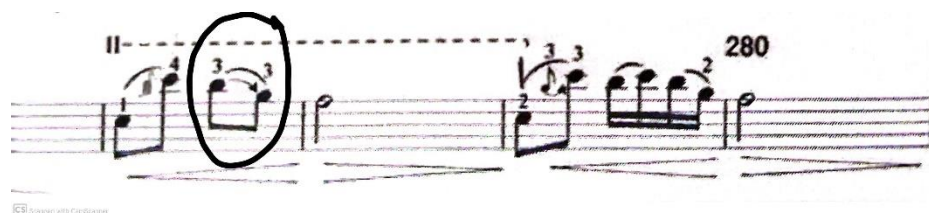
The following *Adagio* section voices Zhu's hidden love for Liang as they graduate from school. She wants to tell Liang that she is a young woman, but also hesitates to let him know. The melody is very expressive and introverted. For this section, the composers combine many different sliding techniques from the Chinese Yue opera genre and from the erhu to express Zhu's thoughtful inner voice (Example 12)

Example 12: Three types of slides characteristic of Chinese music.

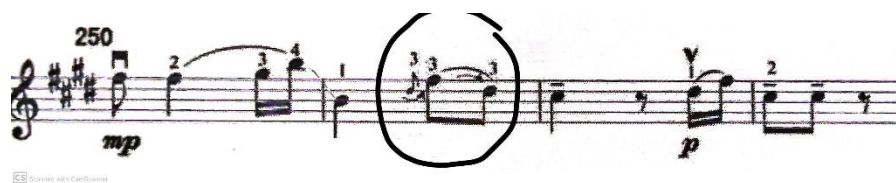
1. A slide up through minor third interval; this slide must be executed slowly during the shift with the same finger.



2. A slide down through a minor third interval, which is played more like a singing cry.



3. A slide both up and down through a minor third interval. This slide is inspired by a singing technique borrowed from Chinese Yue opera. It imitates a sighing motif and emphasis on certain tones.

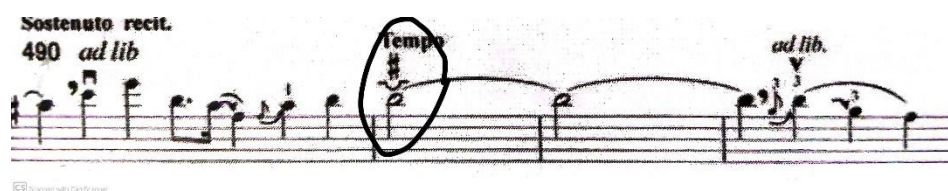


The development section depicts Zhu's fight against the arranged marriage when she returns home after finding out she is to marry Ma instead of Liang in accordance with her parents' wishes. In the orchestral version, the low pitch registers played by the cellos and the bassoons foreshadow the tragedy to come. The brass have an *accelerando* through the "feudal forces" theme to represent societal opposition in the couple's way. The solo violin enters with *elevato recitativo* to depict Zhu's anxiety. This *cadenza* showcases a rhythmic flexibility to imitate the human voice in thought. Then comes the *Allegro* section with syncopated rhythm representing Zhu's opposition to her arranged marriage, and the motif of sequential sixteenth notes representing the insistent power of her family and feudal (societal) forces. The two motifs push against and weave in and out of each other until the first climax which is a slow and *lacrimoso* section followed again by an *allegro*.

Zhu and Liang have not seen each other since their school days, and their meeting again is a precious opportunity but it is a dark moment for these two lovers. At this point, Liang knows that Zhu is female and is engaged to Ma; they express their hearts to each other and are deeply sad for the separation. To mimic their love and sadness in this section, the composers wrote a beautiful duet for solo violin and cello. Then, the orchestra suddenly disrupts the peaceful moment with a *presto*, leading to another *allegro* section that starts with recitative by the solo violin. After Zhu finds out Liang has passed away from illness, she goes to God with her resentment for the impending marriage and decides to run away after completely breaking down.

On the wedding day, Zhu goes to Liang's grave to say her final goodbyes when suddenly the grave opens, and Zhu jumps into Liang's grave without hesitation to be with him. This is the ultimate climax of the piece. In the development section, as mentioned earlier, composers He and Chen adopt some techniques unique to Chinese opera, including imitating the erhu, which is widely used in the genre. For example, in the recitative section, the notated symbol means to play *portamento* back and forth through a semitone. The player should place the finger on the real pitch first, then go a half-step lower with slow speed, and then back to the real pitch. This technique comes from playing the erhu to imitate crying affection (Example 13).

Example 13: Playing *portamento* through a semitone to imitate the erhu



Another example is found in mm. 531-540. This phrase goes from slow to fast with the same pitch and rhythm pattern to make it sound more urgent emotionally. Classical Chinese opera singers frequently use this technique for emphasis or dramatic emotional change (Example 14)

Example 14: Repetitive technique used for dramatic effect in traditional Chinese opera music.

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is labeled "自慢至快 (from slow to fast)" and "mp". It features a series of notes with a "cresc." marking and a "poco" marking. The bottom staff is labeled "ad lib." and "540". It features a series of notes with a "ff" marking and a "Tempo" marking. The notation includes various note values and rests, with some notes connected by curved lines representing portamento.

To conclude the piece, the recapitulation serves like a coda, short and with a peaceful and mysterious ending. After the musical climax depicting Zhu jumping to her death for love, witnesses see two butterflies ascend from the grave, chasing after one another and disappearing

into the sky. In the orchestral version, a harp plays ascending and descending slides to transcend the audience into another world, while the solo flute brings back the exposition material to signal that the atmosphere of drama and despair has dispersed. The solo violin then presents the first theme again playing *con sordino* (with mute) to sound more mysterious, as if the tale were being told from afar. At the very end, the solo violin plays slow minor-third slides and harmonics to further depict resolution to the peaceful scene in a Chinese style.

Three Myths, Op. 30 for violin and piano written by Karol Szymanowski in 1915, is dedicated to Zofia Kochańska. The opus comprises three programmatic miniature tone poems, each depicting a scene from Greek mythology: *La Fontaine d'Arethuse* (The Fountain of Arethusa), *Narcisse* (Narcissus), and *Dryades et Pan* (The Dryads and Pan). Szymanowski referred to these pieces as “poems,” marking his early exploration of violin colors and techniques. The work is inspired by the composer's early travels, to Sicily and North Africa, and by impressionism in music. *Three Myths* can be considered a milestone in the twentieth-century violin writing because Szymanowski extensively uses many advanced violin techniques such as quarter tones, chromatic harmonics on double-stops, notated *portamenti* and *strisciando* effects. For his courageous musical explorations, Szymanowski enjoyed the great admiration of composers such as Béla Bartók and Sergei Prokofiev.

Szymanowski composed *Myths* during his stay at Zarudzie in Poland. During the same period, he also composed a work of similar nature, *Métopes*, a cycle of three programmatic tone poems also based on the Greek myths but written for solo piano. Guido Pannain, in his essay, has aptly described Szymanowski's compositions as a fusion of “rich and varied tonalities” and a manifestation of “profound instrumental genius”, with “orchestral sensibility” that reflects

“harmonious colors, transcendental virtuosity, and melodic richness”.¹⁸ These works demonstrate influences from composers like Debussy, Ravel, and Scriabin, evident through the use of pentatonic and chromatic scales, *tremolos* in the string writing, dynamic extremes, frequent meter changes, and fragmented motives. The three movements of *Myths* are unified by a foundational four-note chromatic descending figure and elements of the pentatonic scale. The work is a striking example of Szymanowski’s ability to blend the characteristics of French impressionism with German expressionism, resulting in a captivating and evocative musical journey.¹⁹

Arethusa and Alpheus

The first piece of this cycle, *La Fontaine d’Arethuse*, begins in the mythological world of Acadia. Szymanowski was inspired by his trip to Syracuse, Sicily in 1912, where he visited the Fountain of Arethusa on Ortygia Island in person. This piece tells the story of the love between Arethusa, a nymph, and Alpheus, a river deity. In Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, Alpheus sees Arethusa bathing in his river and immediately falls in love with her. When Arethusa hears the strange sounds of Alpheus’s presence from the bottom of the water, she flees immediately. To escape, she prays to the goddess Artemis for help. Artemis turns Arethusa into a stream of water. But Alpheus also takes his water form and chases after Arethusa along his river. Finally, their rivers merge near the island of Ortygia, symbolizing their union.

As the music unfolds, it captures the sense of the chase, fear, fervor, and the ultimate transformation. The notes cascade like water, conveying Arethusa’s emergence as a spring and her struggle for freedom. Szymanowski shared his interpretations of the programmatic elements

¹⁸ Maciejewski and Aprahamian, *Karol Szymanowski: His Life and Music*.

¹⁹ Hyojin Ahn, *Karol Szymanowski’s Musical Language in Myths for Violin and Piano*, Op. 30.

in *Myths* with the American violinist Robert Imandt. He said “it was not to be a drama, unfolding in series of scenes, from which each has an anecdotal significance- it is rather a musical expression capturing the beauty of the Myth. The principal ‘tonality’ of the ‘flowing water’ in Arethusa, the ‘still water’ in Narcissus (the still and transparent surface of the water), water, which reflects the beauty of Narcissus- these are the principal lines of the work...In the Dryads one can imagine the material as anecdotal, in a sense.”²⁰

To depict “flowing water”²¹, Szymanowski employs *tremolos* and trills in the texture throughout the entire movement. This textural background atmosphere set in non-functional harmonic movement is clearly reminiscent of Debussy and Ravel’s “water” music writing.

(Example 15)

Example 15: Textural background harmony in *Myths*

Poco allegro opus 30

delicatamente, sussurrando, flessibile

ppp

con sord.

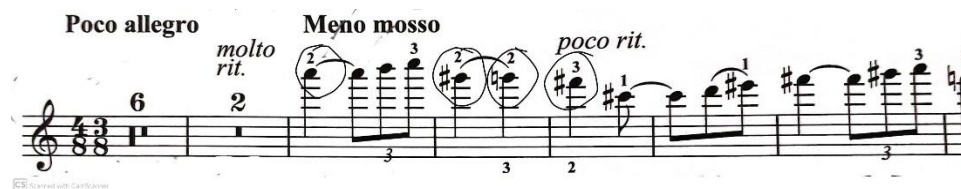
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²⁰ Chylińska, *Karol Szymanowski : His Life and Works*.

²¹ Szymanowski, *Mythes : drei Gedichte für Violine und Klavier = Trois poèmes pour violon et piano : op. 30*.

After 8 bars, the violin presents Arethusa's theme created by a four-note chromatic descending figure.²² (Example 16)

Example 16: Arethusa's Theme



In the B section following the opening passage, the tempo and dynamics both shift abruptly to depict the chase, with agitated diminished-seventh chords and chromatic passages conveying the tension. A climax marked by sudden dynamic changes, trills, and *glissandos* symbolizes Arethusa's fear and panic. Then the violin plays a *pizzicato* note marked with *sfff* to represent Alpheus's leaping into the river as he continues his pursuit. After some silence, the piece concludes with a return of the "flowing water" theme in a mysterious tone. The chromatic scales and trills gradually merge together, signifying the union of the two characters.

Narcissus

The second movement, *Narcisse*, delves into the myth of the beautiful youth, Narcissus, whose handsome features attracts many admirers including the nymph, Echo. Hera has cursed Echo to be able to repeat only the last words anyone had said to her. She is unable to coherently express her feelings to Narcissus who rejected in her in disdain and contempt. Heartbroken, Echo eventually wastes away until all that remains of her is her voice, echoing in the wilderness.

As the result of his vanity and lack of empathy, Narcissus incurs the wrath of Nemesis, the goddess of retribution. Narcissus finds himself captivated by his own figure, yet remains

²² Szymanowski.

oblivious to the trap of his indulgent self-affection. One fateful day, he encounters his reflection in a pool of water and becomes so entranced that he cannot tear his gaze away from the illusion, unaware that he has fixated on a mere image. He sits by the pool, endlessly contemplating his own reflection. Over time, the painful realization dawns upon him that his love is unrequitable, plunging him into deep despair. He eventually turns into a flower by the river, watching himself for eternity.

In contrast with the first movement, the second movement of *Myths* begins with a calmness representing the “still water” in which Narcissus sees his own image. The same chord is struck repeatedly through the bar line. Then the violin presents the first Narcissus theme based on a pentatonic scale and a three-note chromatic descending figure above the piano part. This chromatic motive appears throughout the movement. It is a vivid depiction of Narcissus watching his own image in the water.²³ (Example 17)

Example 17: Narcissus Theme

alto sostenuto Karol Szymanowski

The musical score for the Narcissus Theme is presented in 3/4 time with the marking 'alto sostenuto'. The piano part begins with a triplet of eighth notes (F#, G, A) in the first measure, followed by a chromatic descending figure (A, G, F#) in the second measure. The violin part enters in the third measure with a pentatonic scale (A, B, C, D, E) and a chromatic descending figure (E, D, C, B, A) in the fourth measure. The chromatic figure is circled in red in the original image. The score is by Karol Szymanowski.

After the piano plays a unique *siciliano* rhythm with the same calmness²⁴, the second Narcissus theme enters on a pentatonic sonority employed also in the first theme. (Example 18)

²³ Szymanowski.

²⁴

Example 18: Second Narcissus Theme set over a *siciliano* rhythm

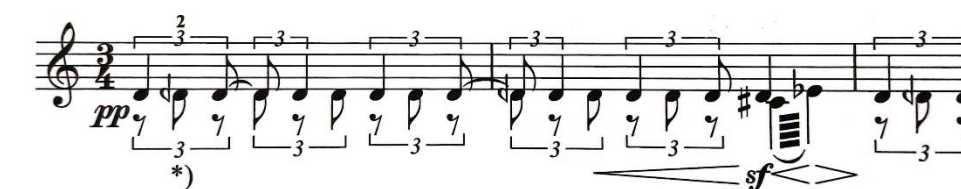
Although heavily influenced by the impressionistic acoustic world, Szymanowski still follows some traditional ideas in phrasing, generally using two-bar phrases with clear strong and weak beats. This periodic phrasing is occasionally disrupted by extra measures of irregular number of beats, but these disruptions are overshadowed by the overall phrase structure.

Dryades et Pan

In the third movement of the set, *Dryades et Pan*, Szymanowski transports us to a deep green forest where the tree nymphs, known as Dryads, dance among the trees. Their happiness is seen in the flutter of leaves and heard in the rustling of branches. One day, Pan, the playful god of the nature, enters the forest playing his flute. He plays a tune which quickly captures the attention of all the Dryads. They dance to his flute music, and the forest becomes even more alive with their combined magic. Pan's eyes eventually find Syrinx, the most exquisite of all the Dryads. Pan tries to approach her but she is shy and repeatedly slips away from him. In her bid to escape his advances, she transforms into hollow water reed by the river's edge. Pan, in his longing, makes his flute pipes from these very reeds, naming the instrument Syrinx in her memory.

Szymanowski has mentioned the Dryads in an anecdote, he describes “a murmuring forest on a hot summer night, thousands of mysterious voices intermingled in the darkness, merrymaking and dancing Dryads.”²⁵ To depict this picture with the murmuring forest full of Dryads, Szymanowski uses the quarter-tone as a part of a double-stop to create an eerie sound (Example 19). Wilfred Dunwell remarks about this quarter-tone use that “if any smaller interval than a semitone enters the practical field of music, one of its natural functions could be some such decorative one. The third of Szymanowski’s “mythes” Op.30, for violin and piano opens with such auxiliary note undulating a quartet-tone below D’.²⁶

Example 19: Use of the quarter-tone to create and eerie effect in *Myths*.



The piano then presents the first dance theme of the Dryads while the violin plays double-stopped trills to create the murmuring background sound of the forest (mm11-14) (Example 20).

²⁵ Chylińska, *Karol Szymanowski : His Life and Works*.

²⁶ Maciejewski and Aprahamian, *Karol Szymanowski: His Life and Music*.

Example 20: The first dance theme of the Dryads in *Myth*

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The second dance theme is played on the piano with chromatic *staccato* notes (mm20) (Example 21).

Example 21: The second dance theme of the Dryads in *Myths*.

Scanned with CamScanner

The third dance theme is played by the violin with trills in a high register (mm27-29) (Example 22)

Example 22: The third dance theme of the Dryads in *Myths*.

ul E $\begin{matrix} 2 \\ \flat \end{matrix}$ $\begin{matrix} 1 \\ \flat \end{matrix}$ $\begin{matrix} 2 \\ \flat \end{matrix}$ $\begin{matrix} 1 \\ \flat \end{matrix}$ $\begin{matrix} 1 \\ \flat \end{matrix}$ $\begin{matrix} 2 \\ \flat \end{matrix}$ $\begin{matrix} 1 \\ \flat \end{matrix}$ $\begin{matrix} 3 \\ \sharp \end{matrix}$ $\begin{matrix} 1 \\ \sharp \end{matrix}$

poco sostenuto, grazioso *poco sosten.*

p dolciss.

The fourth dance theme is played on the violin with chromatic scales and trills (from mm 42) (Example 23).

Example 23: The fourth dance theme of the Dryads in *Myths*.

\sharp Sul D $\begin{matrix} A \\ D \end{matrix}$

f

43 *poco a poco cresc.*

Then the violin cuts sharply through the dance themes, signifying Pan's entrance by mimicking the sound of his flute through playing open harmonics (mm55-58) (Example 24).

Example 24: Pan's flute is signified using open harmonics in the solo violin in *Myths*.

(La Flûte de Pan)
a piacere

55 *sf* *p* *gliss.*

In this section, the violin also strives to imitate different flute sounds, such as a lyrical flute melody as well as fast and high-pitched piccolo sound.

As Pan pursues the reluctant Dryads, their tunes blend and weave together. This section is very dramatic and influenced by expressionism in many ways. For example, tempo changes are used unexpectedly and repeatedly to portray different characters. Frequent large leaps on the violin from low to high pitches express a Dryad's fear when Pan follows her. Extreme dynamics changes with extensive *glissandos* on the violin convey the intense emotions. In contrast with the complex texture on the violin, the piano plays a beautiful melody in the low register (mm95-98) (Example 25).

Example 25: Contrast of texture in the violin and piano in *Myths*.

The image shows a musical score for Example 25, illustrating the contrast between violin and piano textures. The score is in G major and 4/4 time. The violin part (top staff) is marked 'allargando' and features a long, sweeping melodic line with a trill and a triplet. The piano part (bottom two staves) is marked 'capriccioso' and 'ppp', featuring a rhythmic, arpeggiated pattern. The piano part includes dynamic markings 'pp', 'sosten.', and 'pp capriccioso', and a 'ten.' marking. The score is numbered 97 at the beginning.

The piece concludes by returning to the sounds of the murmuring forest from the beginning of the movement. The violin plays quarter-tones *con sordino* (with mute) while the piano plays some fragment material. "...then everything calms down in the freshness and calmness of the rising sun. In essence, an expression of complete reverie of a restless summer night."

Szymanowski describes in his letter.²⁷

²⁷ Chylińska, *Karol Szymanowski : His Life and Works*.

The final work presented in this paper is *The Red Violin Caprices* composed by John Corigliano. The caprices are closely related to his music composed for the 1998 film "The Red Violin." The film's score, which Corigliano also composed, supports the storyline of a mysterious violin and its various owners over several centuries. Later, Corigliano also adapted his score for the solo violin pieces: *The Red Violin Caprice for solo violin* (1999). Film music may be considered typical programmatic music because the film genre combines visual scenes with descriptive background music to maximize the artistic effect. The best film music is played in the concert hall without the need for any visual scene.

These caprices are known for their technical demands and emotional range, capturing the essence of the film's narrative. The film is inspired by a Stradivarius violin known as the "Red Mendelssohn." This violin was made in 1720, with a red varnish that Stradivari used in his "Golden period." The violin has been played by Lilli von Mendelssohn and American violinist Elizabeth Pitcairn purchased the violin in 1990 through auction. What actually happened to the Red Mendelssohn over the period of 1720 to 1930 remains a mystery.

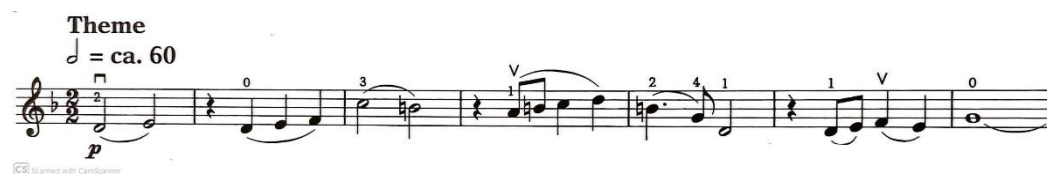
In the film, the story begins in Italy, where the violin is crafted by a fictional eighteenth-century master violin maker, Nicolo Bussotti. He creates this masterpiece in honor of his unborn child, but sadly both his wife Anna Rudolfi and the infant die during childbirth. In his grief, Bussotti infuses the blood of his beloved into the varnish of the instrument, giving the violin its distinctive red color.

The violin then travels through various hands over the centuries: a young prodigy Kaspar Weiss in an Austrian monastery in the eighteenth century, a virtuoso violinist Frederick Pope in late nineteenth-century Oxford, and a Chinese violinist during the Cultural Revolution. Each owner faces their own struggles and passion for the violin, and the ownership

of the violin impacts their lives in significant ways.

This work includes a single theme followed by five variations (Example 26). “These variations intentionally evoke Baroque, Gypsy [sic] and arch-Romantic idioms as they examine the same materials (a dark, seven-chord chaconne as well as the principal theme) from differing aural viewpoints,” John Corigliano said in his program note.²⁸

Example 26: Anna’s Theme from *The Red Violin Caprices*.



The first caprice is based on “Anna’s Theme” shown above, which is the leitmotif for both the character of the luthier’s wife and the red violin itself. It is a slow, lullaby-like melody. In the film, Anna was singing this single melody for her unborn son. The melody is quiet and calm, it expresses a new mother’s expectation and love for her soon-to-be-born child. From the second phrase, Corigliano adds double-stops with some dissonant intervals such as a major seventh, and a major second under the main melody, which express a mother’s worries and hint of the tragedy to come.

Variation 1: *Presto*. This virtuosic section portrays the young violin prodigy Kaspar Weiss in eighteenth-century, Vienna. It is the only variation set in a major key and is filled with fast, flowing notes. The entire variation is composed of sixteenth notes with three repeats, played each time with increasing tempi. Even though the tempo is in *presto* with virtuosic arpeggios and string crossing, the variation features the elegant style of Baroque and Classical pieces. This

²⁸ John Corigliano, *The Red Violin Caprices for Solo Violin*.

variation appears in the film in a dramatic scene that shows the sudden death of young Kaspar from a heart attack caused by a chronic health condition exacerbated by the pressure of his violin playing. The real challenge for executing this passage is playing in the extremely fast tempo with precise intonation.

Variation 2: *Con bravura*. The second variation is inspired by “Roma music.” The violin has found its way to the United Kingdom in the late nineteenth century after the violin is taken from Kasper Weiss’s grave. When Lord Frederick Pope hears a woman playing the violin, he acquires it in exchange for offering shelter to the woman and her friends at his manor. This variation appears in the film when a girl plays on this violin and has elements the typical of “Roma” style, a common feature in nineteenth-century violin compositions such as *Tzigane* (1924) by Maurice Ravel and *Zigeunerweisen* (1878) by Pablo de Sarasate. These Roma elements include the use of the harmonic scales, big *glissandos*, and challenging sections featuring left-hand *pizzicato*. The variation also includes some challenging hand positions, the difficult technique of playing double stops in half position, and double-stopped unisons. Also, Corigliano frequently switches the time meter between 7/8, 3/4, 2/4, and 4/4, lending the Roma dance a unique character.

Variation 3: *Adagio*, languid. The third variation takes its inspiration from “Victoria's Departure.” In the film it is played by the virtuoso violinist Pope when his muse and lover, Victoria Byrd, temporarily departs for Russia. This variation depicts his loneliness and reluctance for Victoria to leave. The whole variation is played in octaves with some slides to make the phrases more lyrical and singing. The musical style imitates Paganini's *Caprice No.3* (the introductory part) and his *Caprice No. 21*. Both are known for their complexity and challenging intonation control. Another notable challenge in this variation is to play with a

beautiful tone quality in octaves.

Variation 4: Slowly *con rubato*. This fourth variation draws from the scene "Pope's Betrayal," depicting the moment when Victoria returns from her trip and discovers Pope's infidelity: he has shifted to a Roma violinist for his source of inspiration and has a relationship with her. This variation is characterized by two distinct sections: The first section features a melodic theme that delves into Victoria's inner world, capturing her complex feelings. She has longed for Pope during their time apart and is filled with excitement about their imminent reunion. However, this excitement is tinged with worry and insecurity. To convey these contrasting emotions, Corigliano employs a D minor chord to reflect Victoria's anxieties and her thoughts about Pope. In contrast, D major and seventh chords are used to portray her eager anticipation of their reunion. The shifting between these chords effectively illustrates the fluctuating emotions Victoria experiences in this narrative moment. The other section has very powerful and strict rhythmic patterns involving double, triple, and even quadruple stops, showcasing the violinist's technical prowess and adding to the dramatic intensity of the piece. In the film, Victoria finally realizes Pope's betrayal. She climbs some stairs, hears some concerning sounds, and then opens the bedroom door to find Pope is with another woman. She is stricken by what she sees, breaks down, and finally shoots Pope. To depict this dramatic scene, Corigliano insistently employs triplet rhythms and double-stops from beginning to end with *accelerando* to build the tension. At the peak moment, he uses a double-stopped *glissando*, contrasting pitch registers and triple and quadruple stops to portray Victoria's angry and bewildered reaction.

Variation 5 *Presto, pesante*. This final variation takes inspiration from "Pope's Concert." It serves the purpose of a coda in this set of caprices, and it stands out as the most rhythmically intense of the set, while retaining a romantic essence. This variation is presented in the film when

Pope is inspired by Victoria before a concert, so he changes his repertoire without notifying the orchestra and plays it with improvisation. This piece has a brilliant and impromptu effect with wide arpeggios, parallel-fifth double-stops, chromatic scales, consistent string crossings and octaves scales. This virtuosic variation is set in a *presto* tempo from the beginning to the end and puts the solo violinist's technique to the test.

Conclusion

The process of completing this dissertation project has been a challenging and enlightening experience. Program music in general offers a unique auditory canvas akin to the visual arts where composers and performers can paint vivid pictures and tell important stories through sound, inviting listeners to engage their imaginations and experience the music as they might while reading a book or watching a movie. It has been interesting to learn and write about the specific stories, the composers who have created great works in this genre, and the tools and methods composers and performers employ to maximize their story telling capacity.

Symbolism is a potent tool in this genre. For instance, in "*The Lark Ascending*," the composer expresses a yearning for a peaceful world, transforming the violin into a symbol of hope, passion, and the resilience of the human spirit, similar to its representation in "*The Red Violin Caprices*." Programmatic music also establishes a profound emotional connection with its audience. It captures the essence of a scene or emotion and can elicit strong emotional responses, providing a deep and personal connection to the piece such as in Chausson's "*Poeme*."

Another fulfilling aspect is seeing how composers integrate diverse musical elements into their own compositions while using a familiar story. Works like "*West Side Story*" the "*Romeo and Juliet Suite*" and "*The Butterfly Lover's Concerto*" all exemplify this. The composers have all adapted different and distinctive cultural elements of time and place into a universal story.

Each work is deeply captivating in its own way.

Regarding the art of exaggeration, program music often amplifies legendary tales, making them more mystical and spurring the audience's imagination. The "*Three Myths*" and "*The Red Violin Caprices*" exemplify this by enhancing the mystery and allure of the stories they depict beyond reading or hearing the stories without any musical illustration.

As an art form, program music can skillfully mold specific ideas into abstract concepts and likewise turn abstract ideas into tangible elements. Works like Biber's "Sonata," and Gershwin's "Summertime" demonstrate this: using tangible elements such as bird songs or a mother's love to inspire the creation of beautiful or intriguing musical expressions that can stand alone for the listener, and likewise using musical devices to artistically illustrate and even illuminate people, animals, feelings, situations, and human aspirations.

Lastly, program music serves as a wellspring of creative inspiration. It often leaves room for interpretation; it can inspire listeners to create their own stories or art in response to the music. This genre, therefore, not only tells stories but also ignites the storytelling instinct within its audience and the performer.

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