

ABSTRACT

The Grandeur of God: A Musical Setting of Gerard Manley Hopkins' St. Beuno Sonnets

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The poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins is rife with musical qualities; from his unusual “sprung rhythm” to the influence of the Welsh poetic tradition of *cynghanedd*, his works often “pour and pelt music” (“The Sea and the Skylark”). These elements have engendered many musical adaptations of Hopkins’ poetry, but such compositions rarely reach a large scale. In this creative project, I aimed to capture the musicality and meaning of Hopkins’ poetry in an eleven-piece cycle of piano works, each one the setting of a different sonnet written by Hopkins in the summer of 1877 while preparing for ordination at St. Beuno’s College. To this effect, I have adopted an original method of musical interpretation, drawing inspiration from both prosody and semantics to create instrumental melodies that follow the poetry closely, adapting each word of the text. The final project includes the compositional score in addition to an explanatory document that situates the work within the landscape of musical history—explicating the work’s many influences—and details many of my artistic choices in the compositional process.

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THE GRANDEUR OF GOD: A MUSICAL SETTING OF GERARD MANLEY
HOPKINS' ST. BEUNO SONNETS

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Over the course of the last few years, Gerard Manley Hopkins – that unique priest-poet of the late nineteenth century – has slowly joined the highly selective rank of writers who have wielded a profound influence on my intellectual and spiritual development. Before I encountered Hopkins in the course of my college classes, I saw poetry largely as the frivolous obfuscation of information better conveyed in prose; my brief interactions with Coleridge and Whitman in high school had done little to convince me otherwise. The Romantics were preferable to the moderns, but nevertheless all the poetic schools and eras seemed to be missing the point somehow, caught up in their stylistic conceits or particular sets of emotions. My religious convictions also played a part in this generalization; my perception of Christian poetry was merely an extrapolation from my perception of Christian film and other media, so I dismissed the idea of post-Psalmic Christian poetry altogether.

When Hopkins wandered into my academic scope, my opinions turned on their heads. Here was a man whose poetry reflected and even enhanced the convictions of his faith, whose words carried not only beauty but weight and clarity. A priest by vocation, Hopkins wrote not to impress and appease an audience of critics, but to “give beauty back... back to God, beauty’s self and beauty’s giver.”¹ His status as a great religious poet is well-earned, “for he is one of those few exceptional spirits who combine the

¹ Gerard Manley Hopkins, “The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo,” line 35.

characteristics demanded by that concept.”² Reflections on the nature of God and his creation are interwoven with inspiring theological ideas such as “inscape” (“the outward reflection of the inward nature of a thing”³) and its complement, “instress” (“a quasi-mystical illumination, a sudden perception of that deeper pattern, order, and unity which gives meaning to external forms”⁴). His marriage of grounded reflection and wondrous creativity invaded my own imagination, opening my eyes to the beauty of theology.

His poetic style was no less transformative, awakening my burgeoning appreciation for the beauty of the written word. Not only does Hopkins demonstrate a calm mastery of metered syntax (e.g., “...for Christ plays in ten thousand places / Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his”⁵), but he also liberally dashes his poetry with shocks of convention-defying emotion, producing such creative phrases as “dapple-dawn-drawn falcon”⁶ and “fall, gall themselves, and gash gold-vermillion.”⁷ Similarly, he most often uses the sonnet form, perhaps the most traditional of poetic forms in the English language, but he incorporates his own novel ideas of sound and meter as well. His now-famous “sprung rhythm” metrical system is a perfect example. Each line of his sonnets contains five accented syllables, like the traditional iambic pentameter, but with a variable number of unstressed syllables in between; he insisted that this meter was

² John Pick, “Introduction” in *Immortal Diamond: Studies in Gerard Manley Hopkins*, ed. Norman Weyand (London: Sheed & Ward, 1949), xxv.

³ W.A.M. Peters, *Gerard Manley Hopkins: A Critical Essay Toward the Understanding of His Poetry* (Cumberlege: Oxford University Press, 1948), 2.

⁴ W.H. Gardner, “Gerard Manley Hopkins and the Poetry of Inscape,” *Theoria: A Journal of Social and Political Theory*, no. 33 (1969): 11.

⁵ Gerard Manley Hopkins, “As kingfishers catch fire,” lines 12-13.

⁶ Gerard Manley Hopkins, “The Windhover,” line 2.

⁷ *Ibid.*, line 14.

inherent in the English language and that it more accurately reflected the flow of natural speech as well as its Anglo-Saxon roots.⁸ At last, I had found a poet whose inclinations mirrored my own: taking traditional poetic elements and breathing life into them, collecting bits of inspiration from various eras of poetry in a fashion that has caused critics to view him as drawing inspiration from both Donne and Eliot but essentially functioning as an anachronistic Romantic.⁹

As I read more and more of Hopkins, I noticed that this centuries-spanning fusion of poetic styles that has inspired readers and confounded scholars is no mere whim of poetic fancy, but simply one iteration of a theme that pervaded Hopkins' poetry as well as his priesthood – for, as Pick notes, it is impossible to see Hopkins as anything but “an integrated character whose verse is a counterpart to his integrated vision.”¹⁰ He was by circumstance a Victorian, by disposition a Romantic, and by heart a Medieval; he looked back to the Romantics for poetic inspiration to use as a vessel for religious ideas that began to die out with Renaissance humanism and met their fates during the Enlightenment. In particular, the transcendent, enchanted worldview of the Middle Ages ended on the scaffold of the rationalist guillotine of the eighteenth century, its place taken by the thoroughly disenchanted, nearly materialist view of the world that is the mark of the secular order. As a devout Anglican-turned-Catholic priest, Hopkins grieved this bereavement, and much of his poetry relates to this theme, either propounding an enchanted, God-imbued view of creation or lamenting its loss.¹¹ His poetic fusion,

⁸ Harold Bloom, *Gerard Manley Hopkins* (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1986), 3.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 1.

¹⁰ Pick, “Introduction,” xxv

¹¹ E.g., “God’s Grandeur” or “The Sea and the Skylark,” respectively.

bringing new life to traditional forms using tools as far back as Old English, therefore mirrors his ideological one as he seeks to reinfuse the natural world with God's presence.

As soon as I picked up on this theme, I began to wonder how it might translate into musical ideas. In high school, I had started to develop interest in composing music, with an inclination toward the programmatic; I wrote two instrumental albums and half a symphony based on various novels, and even recorded a collection of piano solos based on a single poem ("The Skylark" by John Clare), though I was aware that my compositions lacked mastery. My compositional endeavors continued in college, where I began a set of difficult piano solos based on a short story collection by Ray Bradbury, as well as a folk album for voice and instruments using my own poetry as text. None of these recent projects ever came to fruition, but when it became time to start working on my honors thesis, I decided it would be a good opportunity to explore another avenue of programmatic composition with an impetus to complete the work. Hopkins was the immediate, obvious choice; by taking some of his poems and setting them to music, I could deepen my acquaintance with the poet while attempting to bring out the musicality I had already seen in the text.

Now with a general idea of direction, I had to make another important decision: instrumentation. The lyrical quality of the poetry would lend itself well to voice, but there were certain lines that seemed to require a percussiveness and grandeur that a single voice cannot produce on its own, and I felt hesitant to begin my journey into choral composition with so grand a project. A suite for a solo instrument and piano would fail to achieve the many textures that my imagined melodies required, but a full symphony orchestra would be far too elaborate for these simple sonnets. In the end, I decided to

write the work as a set of pieces for solo piano. The dynamic and harmonic freedom of the instrument could accommodate the requirements of my vision, and my experience as a pianist would ensure that the music be well-suited to the instrument. I also felt that the quiet, simple nature of these sonnets implied a single voice; as universal as some of these poems claim to be, they nevertheless feel like the visions of one humble mind, of a single heart lost in wonder.¹² The freedom of expression inherent in a solo performance, moreover, seemed necessary to adequately convey the sense of wonder I intended to capture throughout the work. The decision was also a practical one; in the final presentation of my thesis, I could perform my own work instead of relying on others to do so.

The solo piano repertory enjoys a rich history. Invented in 1698, squarely within the baroque era, the fortepiano (the first iteration of the piano) at first lay in the shadow of the harpsichord, which the predominant keyboard composers of the era employed, notably J.S. Bach and George Frederic Handel. In the eighteenth century, however, the popularity of the piano began to rise, displacing the harpsichord as the primary keyboard instrument of the Classical era. The 1760s saw the greatest change, as publications and performances suddenly shifted to favor the new fortepiano all over Europe.¹³ Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, the foremost keyboard composers of the Classical period, all wrote for the fortepiano, establishing the instrument for its continued use throughout the subsequent eras.¹⁴

¹² I take this phrase from Catherine Randall's biography of Hopkins called "A Heart Lost in Wonder," a reference to a passage from Hopkins' translations of St. Thomas Aquinas.

¹³ James Parakilas, *Piano Roles: A New History of the Piano* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001), 20.

¹⁴ F.E. Kirby, *Music for Piano: A Short History* (Washington, DC: Amadeus Press, 1995), 93.

These early works for the piano, like most compositions from the Classical era, all fall into the category of ‘absolute music’ – that is, pieces that are not deliberately designed to reflect ideas, stories, or images that exist apart from the composition. A simple example can be found in J.S. Bach’s forty-eight fugues and preludes in *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, BWV 846-893, a series of compositions in each of the major and minor keys. Works that are not absolute, based on some extrinsic source material, are called ‘programmatic music,’ since they follow an externally defined program. The golden age of program music was the nineteenth-century Romantic era, but early examples of such works extend all the way back to the sixteenth century; scholars often cite William Byrd’s “The Battell” (1591) as one of the first important works of programmatic music.¹⁵ Although perhaps the majority of programmatic music is based on literature (e.g., Tchaikovsky’s *Romeo and Juliet* or Mendelssohn’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*), the source material may consist of anything from visual art to myth to an original story. For example, Mussorgsky’s piano suite *Pictures at an Exhibition* is based on a series of paintings by artist Viktor Hartmann, while Berlioz’s famous *Symphonie Fantastique* is a program symphony portraying an original narrative constructed by Berlioz himself.

Solo piano music is replete with examples of programmatic music. Even in the baroque era, a few keyboard works were explicitly programmatic. One of the clearest examples is Kuhnau’s set of six Biblical Sonatas published from 1689-1700, each of which takes its inspiration from a particular story from the Old Testament.¹⁶ Other

¹⁵ Richard Bratby, “The symphonic poem: Richard Bratby on the evolution of programmatic music,” *Gramophone* 97, no. 1177 (2019): 13.

¹⁶ Kirby, *Music for Piano*, 35.

examples from the Baroque period include Bach's *Capriccio sopra la lontananza del suo fratello dilettissimo* (Capriccio on the Departure of His Beloved Brother) in B-flat major (BWV 992) and Clementi's *Didone abbandonata* in G minor (op. 50 iii, 1821), while the works of Beethoven and others often continued to reflect various programs through the Classical period.¹⁷ Programmatic piano music, however, did not reach its peak until the nineteenth century, when Schumann's programmatic piano cycles were followed by Liszt's virtuosic tone-poems.¹⁸ Nearly all of these compositions were inspired in broad sweeps by stories, attempting to convey the relevant emotions and plot devices through analogous musical gestures, rather than adapting a text syllable by syllable in the manner of vocal text settings, as my project aims to do.

Although not usually programmatic, the nature of my composition also renders it necessary to discuss the "songs without words" (*Lied ohne Worte*) tradition, as pioneered by Felix Mendelssohn. These short, expressive pieces, which are written exclusively for the piano, share a form with the *lied*, a brief lyrical song for voice and accompaniment: a few measures of accompaniment introduce and conclude the melodic content, mirroring the prelude and postlude from traditional vocal music. Unlike traditional *lieder*, however, the melodic content standing over the accompaniment is not delegated to a vocalist, but still performed by the pianist – hence the label "songs without words." Though this phrase is associated almost exclusively with Mendelssohn, the style shares many characteristics with other lyrical Romantic character-pieces, and Liszt sees both subgenres as directly influenced by the compositions of John Field, an Irish composer

¹⁷ Ibid., 48, 111.

¹⁸ Jonathan Kregor, *Program Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 98-129.

who invented the nocturne.¹⁹ The lyrical quality of these works bears much similarity to my own style, which uses elegant, singable melody lines despite the pianistic form.

Although these classical and Romantic influences in my music are obvious, especially the influences from Liszt, Chopin, and Mendelssohn, it would be disingenuous to imply that I was fully aware of these influences while composing this work. In fact, until recently, my experiences with Chopin were brief, and I was barely acquainted with the works of Liszt and Mendelssohn at all. Interestingly, my musical background includes very few explicit encounters with classical music; I played a few piano solos from the classical and Romantic eras in middle school, when I was still taking lessons, and a couple of years ago I learned and recorded a few piano cycles by Schumann (*Waldszenen*, Op. 82; *Kinderszenen*, Op. 15; *Papillons*, Op. 2; and *Fantasiestücke*, Op. 12). These encounters with Schumann certainly influenced my eventual compositions, as these cycles demonstrate his fusion of literary and musical ideas; *Papillons* in particular is explicitly based on events from *Flegeljahre*, a novel by German writer Jean Paul. Beyond these ventures into musical history, the primary vessel through which I have encountered these influences is the fascinating prism of film music, which reflects various elements of compositional history in different programmatic settings.

My two favorite film score composers, John Williams and Howard Shore, have each played a role in influencing my melodic and harmonic style. The music of John Williams is nearly universally recognizable, with his work on famous film franchises such as *Star Wars* and *Indiana Jones* becoming staple cultural sounds of the last few

¹⁹ Maurice J.E. Brown and Kenneth L. Hamilton, "Song without words," Grove Music Online, 2001, <https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000026214>.

decades. He is also notable for being unafraid to draw liberally from the work of his classical predecessors. When George Lucas was producing his first *Star Wars* film, he had a musical vision: taking inspiration from Stanley Kubrick's earlier use of Strauss's *Thus Spake Zarathustra* in his seminal film *2001: A Space Odyssey*, he likewise intended to use great works of classical music as the primary soundtrack of his space opera, notably planning to use Gustav Holst's orchestral work "Mars, Bringer of War" from *The Planets, Op. 32* in the movie's opening crawl.²⁰ John Williams, insisting that *Star Wars* needed a new musical landscape, wrote an original score, but he drew heavily on Lucas's original inspiration, and the final score is clearly inspired by Holst.

The *Star Wars* score draws on far more than just Holst, however. Williams reaches back through musical history and takes elements from all eras, reforming them for a new purpose. He intentionally borrowed not only from great Hollywood film score composers such as Erich Wolfgang Korngold and Max Steiner, but also from composers such as Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev, Shostakovich, Stravinsky, and even Benny Goodman (for the Cantina Bar jazz).²¹ His thematic structure mirrors that of Sibelius, Mahler, and Strauss.²² The "Imperial March," Darth Vader's theme, seems to inhabit the same "soundworld" as Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*, and Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* is evident in the Tatooine theme.²³ Williams's use of leitmotifs in the vein of Wagner's

²⁰ Dan Golding, "Just Like Old Times?: Music, Seriality, and the Fugue of The Force Awakens" in *Star Wars After Lucas: A Critical Guide to the Future of the Galaxy* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2019), 114.

²¹ Ibid., 115-116.

²² Tom Schneller, "Sweet Fulfilment: Allusion and Teleological Genesis in John Williams's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*," *The Musical Quarterly* 97, no. 1 (2014): 99.

²³ Mervyn Cooke, *A History of Film Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008): 463.

Ring Cycle pervades his work, and he even identifies Wagner's "19th century operatic idiom" as an inspiration for the basis of the *Star Wars* score.²⁴ The result of this patchwork, pluralist pastiche is a soundscape that is "memorably ahistorical,"²⁵ borrowing from enough different traditions as to create something new – a theme evident in the poems of Hopkins as well, and subsequently in my treatment of them.

The influence of Howard Shore has been no less impactful in forming my own musical style. His masterful score for the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy has inspired me far beyond any other film music; accompanying J.R.R. Tolkien's enchanting narrative, the score complements the fantasy landscape of Middle-earth perfectly. Shore's use of "a complex web of leitmotifs" is perhaps even more characteristic of his musical Middle-earth than of Williams's sonic galaxy.²⁶ Like Williams, Shore uses elements from various periods of classical music, weaving them together to create a "soundworld" that, far from the unique futuristic hodgepodge of *Star Wars*, rather reflects a certain epic, historical grandeur. For example, he creates different harmonic palettes in which to set leitmotifs for different races of creatures, on a scale from familiar to unfamiliar: hobbits, the most understandable of races, function inside a paradigm of standard major-minor tonality; the somewhat stranger and more diverse race of men use the similarly expansive diatonic modes beyond Ionian and Aeolian, while the unfamiliar, mystical elves exist in a

²⁴ Irena Paulus, "Williams versus Wagner or an Attempt at Linking Musical Epics," *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 31, no. 2 (2000): 154.

²⁵ Cooke, *History of Film Music*, 463.

²⁶ Stephen Meyer, "Soundscapes of Middle Earth: The Question of Medievalist Music in Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings* Films," in *Studies in Medievalism XVIII: Defining Medievalism(s) II*, ed. Karl Fugelso (Rochester, NY: Boydell & Brewer, 2009): 169.

harmonic landscape of chromaticism.²⁷ This freedom of harmony has greatly influenced my own compositions; by being immersed in these various paradigms, I have developed the ability to use harmonic contexts as an expressive tool. Shore's simple, lyrical motifs have likewise influenced my style; my tendency, like Shore's, is to write a simple, elegant melody, then complement it with imaginative harmonic support and varied rhythms for different contexts. My experiences with film music have therefore shaped my musical proclivities as well as immersing me in the common practice period, echoing the forms and harmony of high Romanticism.

Besides film scores and my brief foray into classical music several years ago, there is one other major musical influence on my composition style for this project: the vocal music tradition. During my work on this project, I have been working as a piano accompanist for many vocalists in Baylor's School of Music, all of whom have weekly lessons and rehearsals as well as frequent performances. Their repertoire spans from J.S. Bach to Samuel Barber, but rarely beyond; as a result, I've been thoroughly immersed in the common practice period for the last couple of years. The lyrical nature of my composition undoubtedly derives much influence from these pieces, especially the Romantic; upon reflection, I certainly see how Schubert's *lieder* and Elgar's *Sea Pictures, Op. 37* have inspired a certain style of melodic contour and harmonic relationships in my own work. To a certain extent, I also see the influence of Roger Quilter's English art songs, such as "Spring is at the Door" and "Love's Philosophy," the latter of which bears a close rhythmic resemblance to the primary section of my composition "Pied Beauty." The chronologically varied nature of these influences reflects

²⁷ Vincent Rone, "Scoring the Familiar and Unfamiliar in Howard Shore's *The Lord of the Rings*," *Music and the Moving Image* 11, no. 2 (2018): 38.

(however incidentally) that curious blend of styles in Hopkins' poetry; like the poet, I have reached back and taken elements from many different styles of my predecessors in an effort that leads to a certain unique voice.

With all of this in mind, and my instrumentation chosen, I began to plan my work. My imagination was most captured by those poems of Hopkins' that related to his transcendent view of creation, such as "God's Grandeur" and "The Windhover." Especially interesting were those that affirmed the astonishing nature of all manner of natural creation in correlation with Hopkins' theory of inscape, notably "As Kingfishers Catch Fire" and "Pied Beauty." After a bit of research, I discovered that all of these poems were written at a certain time in Hopkins' life: his time at St. Beuno's college in Northern Wales in the summer of 1877, studying theology in preparation for his ordination. Suddenly I had a full set of poems to use; these eleven sonnets, sometimes known as Hopkins' "nature sonnets," already formed a thematically cohesive group. My project began to take its final shape: a set of eleven programmatic piano solos, each based on one of Hopkins' sonnets from the summer of 1877.

While my composition occupies a unique location in musical history, it bears many similarities to other works that have come before. There is a rich tradition of large-scale piano works that move through all twelve tonal centers, as mine does. J.S. Bach, in his keyboard work *The Well-Tempered Clavier, BWV 846-893*, writes two sets of preludes and fugues in each of the major and minor keys, resulting in forty-eight individual pieces (twenty-four in each book); these pieces are highly technical, however, and the minor-second key relationships form a much starker juxtaposition than my circle-of-fifths progression. My cycle bears rather more resemblance to Chopin's *24 Preludes*,

Op. 28, which omits the fugues and instead contains twenty-four preludes, one in each major and minor key, and which uses the circle of fifths as the means of progressing between keys instead of Bach's minor seconds. Additionally, although my style is closer to that of Chopin, Debussy's *Préludes* and Schumann's piano suites such as *Waldszenen*, *Op. 82*, ostensibly bear more similarities to my composition; each piece in these works is given a title, such as "Footsteps in the Snow" (Debussy) or "Lonely Flowers" (Schumann), giving them a distinct programmatic element. These sets, however, have no strict pattern of tonal centers, making my composition unique in this regard. It is also unique in that it cycles through all twelve tonal centers and arrives back at C, despite having only eleven pieces in all, meaning that two individual pieces ("In the Valley of the Elwy" and "The Lantern out of Doors") are split in two, each half dwelling in a different key, in order to cover all twelve in the course of the work.

There is also a large body of musical work using poetry as an artistic basis. Debussy's famous orchestral piece *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* (Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun), for example, took inspiration from "L'après-midi d'un faune," a poem by Stéphane Mallarmé. Although his work does not treat each word individually, as mine does, he nevertheless follows the text closely; the original poem has 110 lines, and Debussy's composition likewise contains 110 measures. This work, along with most of Debussy's other poetic settings, are written for orchestral instruments rather than piano solo; the tradition of adapting poetry to piano solo appears to be rather limited.

There are few examples in classical musical literature of taking a source text and adapting it word-for-word to instrumental music, a unique element that sets my composition apart. This compositional decision, however, benefits from the weight of

centuries of musical history, especially from the unexpected genre of jazz. Most jazz recordings by instrumentalists, including pianists such as Oscar Peterson and Bill Evans, are unique interpretations of jazz standards, which often date back to Irving Berlin, Duke Ellington, or other foundational composers. These tunes, which were originally written with lyrics and a melody intended for voice, have been set instrumentally for decades. “Autumn Leaves,” for example, was originally written in 1945 by Joseph Kosma, with original lyrics in French by Jacques Prévert, but it has been recorded over one thousand times since then, with varied instrumentation and dramatically differing interpretations. Jazz therefore houses a long tradition of taking a lyrical song and setting it for instruments, removing the lyrics but preserving the meaning, which bears some similarities to my project. John Coltrane even provides the closest analogue to my project in the fourth and final movement of his famous composition *A Love Supreme*, entitled “Psalm.” For this last movement, Coltrane wrote a poem and, in his own interpretative way, played it on his saxophone as the melody. Each word corresponded to a note in the melody, mirroring the poem’s prosody exactly, making it possible to read the poem alongside the recording and follow along. This piece closely resembles my own project, although mine takes existing poetry and adapts it for piano, rather than my own for saxophone.

My inclusion of the source text in the score, moreover, is a mostly unique artistic choice. Rarely does a keyboard composition include lyrics in the sheet music, but it does happen; for example, in Brahms’s *Eleven Chorale Preludes, Op. 122*, arrangements of Lutheran chorales for solo organ, he includes the text of the original chorale lyrics in the score. Never to my knowledge, however, has an original set of pieces contained lyrics in

an instrumental score that was not an arrangement of vocal music. In my composition, I decided to include the poem text along with each corresponding “syllable,” as if it were to be sung, in order to give the performer additional instructions and context for expression. Through these various unique elements as well as the connections to historical musical trends, my composition draws upon tradition while marking out a place for itself in the musical landscape.

CHAPTER TWO

Broad Musical Choices

When composing a programmatic work, there are a number of important artistic choices to make before the composition begins, most of which relate to form. The order in which to present the poems, for example, is an artistic choice, as well as the possibility of large-scale harmonic development through the set. On a smaller scale, each individual piece needs to begin with a meter and a modality, both of which should be influenced by the poem's thematic material. In all these preliminary choices, the goal is to convey accurately the impression of each poem while still exercising a degree of interpretive agency. This chapter is dedicated to exploring and explaining the various broad choices I made with regard to interpreting the text on both the macro and micro levels.

Since Hopkins never published these eleven sonnets from St. Beuno's himself, there is no established order of poems, which meant that I had to exercise creative liberty in arranging them to fit my narrative ideas. Surveying the poems, certain organizational choices felt natural to me; "God's Grandeur," for example, would be the first piece in the set. The poem's clear message functions as a strong opening statement, and its stately and majestic cadence likewise adds to the effect. Reading the sonnets in conjunction with each other also revealed patterns across the poems. Hopkins's enchantment with the beauty of life, for example, manifests itself clearly in the cycle of seasons, focusing especially on the vigorous liveliness of spring; this temporal element situates each poem in a broader cycle of time. The sonnet "Spring" is an obvious example, but he references

the season throughout many of his other poems, such as “In the Valley of the Elwy.”

Conversely, “Hurrahing in Harvest” talks of the onset of autumn; the poem opens with the declaration that “Summer ends now,” placing it chronologically after the earlier musings upon spring.

There is also a strong connection between this cycle of seasons and the cycle of an individual day. In “God’s Grandeur,” Hopkins writes, “And though the last lights off the black West went / Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs” (11-12). The use of the word “spring” as a verb describing the action of morning ties the two concepts, and the portrayal of a new dawn out of darkness in this passage provides a cyclical framework upon which to rest the structure of my composition. Two poems in particular deal with the night: “The Starlight Night” and “The Lantern out of Doors.” Of these, the former retains the wondrous awe that characterizes Hopkins’ daytime sonnets, while the latter is more contemplative, having settled into the calm rhythm of the night, making it a more appropriate final piece. Additionally, the final stanza of “The Lantern out of Doors” follows the narrator’s thoughts as he winds down from an observation of other people to a pure contemplation of Christ, which leads back into the opening proclamation of “God’s Grandeur.” Thus this set of piano pieces may be seen as a true cycle; it begins with the exuberance of morning, making its way through the day until finding rest in the comfort of evening, using the imagery of seasons to add a quality of universality to this reflection on the beauty of life.

In light of the cyclical nature of this set, it seemed clear that I should use some mechanism to cycle through all twelve tonal centers in the course of the composition to add to the sense of continuation and renewal. There are only four interval cycles that

travel through all twelve pitch classes of the chromatic scale: the perfect fourth, the perfect fifth, the minor second, and the major seventh. The circle of fifths provides a tool for understanding the relation of tonal centers; using the same mode, moving the tonic up a fifth or down a fourth adds or removes only one accidental, meaning the keys (and therefore key signatures) are closely related; shifting the tonal center up or down a half step, by contrast, skips several keys and moves across the circle into a very distantly related key. Moving from C major to B major, for example, entails the addition of five sharps. In *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, Bach uses the ascending minor second, going from C major/C minor to D \flat major/C \sharp minor, and so on, resulting in the juxtaposition of drastically different tonalities. Using the ascending major seventh, the inverse of this interval, would produce a similar effect, the same as that of a descending minor second. This stark contrast seemed at odds with the smooth, elegant, flowing nature of the composition's thematic material, so I looked toward the perfect fifth. By ascending a fifth from the tonic of one key to find the tonic of the next, the individual pieces cycle through the circle of fifths, a much more graceful way to progress through all twelve tonal centers. Chopin uses this method in his *24 Preludes, Op. 28*, in which he travels around the circle of fifths in a much less startling manner than Bach's ascending minor seconds.

By virtue of its construction, this composition therefore lends a double meaning to its classification of a "cycle:" it falls into the tradition of song cycles, connoting a multi-piece work that shares a common theme, while also possessing a progressively cyclical nature seen in both thematic and musical circularity. "God's Grandeur" opens the set in

the simple key of C major, followed by the slightly brighter G major in “Spring.”²⁸ The tonal centers make their way around the circle of fifths, eventually progressing all the way to F major in “The Lantern out of Doors,” which returns home to the original key of C major to end the cycle in the same place as it began.

In addition to broad, cycle-wide patterns and forms, the thematic material of the poems influences certain general, individual qualities of each piece. Characteristics such as key signature and time signature, as well as more subjective qualities like harmonic palette and melodic contour, must also draw influence from the text, lest the musical interpretation fail to capture essential elements of the poems. In this section, I will examine certain pieces from the set and explain how the broad, thematic qualities of the original poems influenced my artistic approach in each case. Although time and space prevent an explication of every piece, I will choose a few of the most important and interesting examples.

Perhaps the clearest example of this effort at preservation lies in the setting of “Pied Beauty.” The poem’s title conveys its thesis: Hopkins is praising God for the beauty of “pied” things – that is, things of various colors, whether “dappled” (1) or “couple-colour” (2) or “freckled” (8). The poet appreciates the ironic beauty of things that might theoretically sound imperfect because of their non-uniformity but are in fact made more beautiful for their organic uniqueness, tracing the origin of things “counter, original, spare, strange” back to God.

²⁸ This perception of “brightness” results from the added tension of the F# in relation to the original C major context. Since only one scale degree is raised from C major to G major, the two keys share a mostly common harmonic space, but the single raised scale degree causes a sensation of upward tension, resulting in a “brighter” color.

It was beginning composition on this piece that truly made me realize the importance of capturing a poem's essence in these initial qualities. I could use a simple major key, but that seemed slightly inaccurate; the positive emotions of the piece, while strong, were associated with things that are beautiful for their originality and unusual, strange colors, so using the standard Ionian scale felt contrary to the spirit of the poem. Using a minor scale, though, would miss the point even more dramatically. The answer lay in the church modes: there are multiple modes that function as major scales with altered scale degrees. I eventually settled on D Mixolydian, which is a major scale with a lowered seventh scale degree. This choice keeps the major core intact, while the minor seven brings an unexpected color, which – like the “rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim” (3) – seems like it would mar the subject with imperfection, but rather adds an ineffable element of mysterious beauty to the whole.

Likewise, the measured cadence of the poem suggested the stately, standard time signature 4/4 rather than a waltz or a compound meter, but like the major scale it seemed too metrically pristine for the poem's message. Studying the poem, the twin qualities of strangeness and perfection stood out, two characteristics between which Hopkins illuminates strong connections. An unusual time signature, then, if used elegantly, could work well. Naturally, the number seven came to mind, since it both symbolizes perfection and brings a strange, unusual rhythmic cadence; 7/4, then, would be my primary time signature in this piece. The organic, asymmetric essence of the poem's beauty, however, prevents a single, static time signature; my piece, therefore, reflects this quality by changing freely between several different time signatures to accommodate rhythmic variation, but most frequently between 7/4 and 4/4, which best reflect the poem's

intention and cadence. This freedom of meter, moreover, fits Hopkins' cadence as well as his poetic vision so precisely that I decided to use it more or less freely through most of the cycle, though it was "Pied Beauty" that helped me to see it most clearly.

The next piece, "The Caged Skylark," provides a somewhat simpler example. Of all those I selected, this is one of only two poems that are characterized more by melancholy than by joy. The verses lament the state of fallen man, being bound to a broken body as if trapped in a "bone house." The first octet paints an image of man as this caged skylark, tinged slightly with hope but ultimately characterized by resignation. This, more than any other stanza in my Hopkins selection, seems to warrant the use of a minor flavor, so I chose to begin this piece in A minor. Though I do use the major dominant (V) on occasion, I also frequently use the minor dominant (v), as well as the minor subdominant (iv), for flavor; the Aeolian modality therefore dominates the piece, highlighting the narrator's despair – the inclusion of the raised scale degrees in harmonic or melodic minor would imply an upward-reaching hope that the passage does not exhibit.

After the octet, however, at the poem's turning point, the narrator's tone begins to lighten. Though the next three lines still wish for a "wild nest" rather than a "prison" for the skylark, there are brief descriptions of the free, elegant nature of the skylark's soul. The final three lines mark a stronger upward turn, as the narrator looks forward to the time when the skylark's soul is "uncumbered," followed by a rush to the poem's climax in the final words, "bónes rísen," a phrase which Hopkins emphasizes through his use of accents. This whole second section has less of a distinct emotional identity; wandering up from the minor despondency of the first stanza, the narrator only arrives at his joyful

conclusion in the last two words. To reflect this, I move from A minor into an agnostic key, noncommittally wandering around before building momentum and finishing on a grand A major chord to reflect the narrator's conclusion. In a sense, this gesture recalls the use of the Picardy third, a device used first in Renaissance music that entails a minor piece ending in a major tonic chord, but it is recontextualized in a more modern setting; never would an extended cadence in such early music contain such harmonic ambiguity. Despite the harmonic confusion in the second half of the piece, the resolution into A major solidifies this piece as being grounded firmly in A as a tonal center, which fulfills its function in the larger circle of fifths progression.

The other poem that carries the air of the minor key, "The Sea and the Skylark," also functions as a good example of these broad thematic choices. This sonnet has a very clear structure: the first two quatrains each describe a sound, first the sea, then the skylark; in the last sestet, the narrator steps back and considers these sounds in context of man's corruptive society. To emulate this pattern, I chose to color each section with a different harmonic palette. The first four lines illustrate the sea through calm, regular rhythms and such phrases as "low lull-off or all roar." To reflect these qualities, I chose to begin this piece in F# minor, with a low, smooth, repetitive motif in the left hand to represent the undulating deep. The shape of the melody also reflects this smooth ebb and flow, while slow, wide flourishes add to the sweeping impression of the sea. All the while, the pitch classes I use in this section are entirely within the F# Aeolian scale; except for one accidental used for effect. By immersing the listener in the lulling constancy of the ocean, this section reflects Hopkins' intent by providing a sonic adaptation of the sound the poem attempts to emulate.

The second quatrain, featuring the song of the lark in the narrator's other ear, marks a distinct shift from the sound of the ocean. Much of the melodic content remains the same, but it is thoroughly recontextualized to fit the impression of the lark given by the poem's quick, flitting lines, such as "His rash-fresh re-winded new-skeinèd score / In crisps of curl off wild-winch-whirl" (6-7). To fit this jubilant, whimsical instability, I use many quick flourishes, inverted chords, unexpected modulations, and otherwise unusual chromaticism along with the elegance demanded by the lark's flight. Since this section shares thematic content and metaphors with "The Caged Skylark," I also include a brief melodic line referencing the earlier piece. This section provides a stark contrast to the opening consideration of the ocean, but it still retains the same melodic content and remains, however loosely, tied to F# minor.

The third section differs even more substantially from its predecessors. As the narrator steps back from his sensory impressions and into philosophy, the key temporarily shifts to D minor, a chromatic mediant of the former key, before slowly making its way back to F# minor for the ending. The rhythms in this section are also much simpler; instead of the complicated flourishes and polyrhythms of the previous sections, the simplicity of the narrator's thought comes across in a slow-moving, rhythmic regularity composed primarily of quarter notes. The poetic structure of "The Sea and the Skylark," therefore, significantly influenced my composition of the corresponding piece, which draws inspiration from the poem to infuse different sections with varying colors.

The next composition in the set, "In the Valley of the Elwy," expresses greatly different emotions than the previous examples. Like "The Sea and the Skylark," its

predecessor, this poem has a clearly divided structure. In the first octet, the narrator reminisces on a particular scene of hospitality from his life, writing, “I remember a house where all were good / To me, God knows, deserving no such thing” (1-2). This lovely description gives way in the later sestet to a broader, less anecdotal meditation on the beauty of the Welsh landscape and the goodness of God. Since I only intended to write eleven pieces while still attempting to make it all the way back around the circle of fifths, which would entail thirteen pieces if each were to employ a single tonality, it was necessary for two of my compositions to encompass two distinct keys, dwelling in each one long enough to be considered a full modulation. This piece seemed the perfect candidate; its bipartite structure, along with the perspective shift between the two sections, meant that a key change halfway through would fit the text well.

The first half of “In the Valley of the Elwy,” therefore, occupies the harmonic space of D \flat major, while the second half transitions to a closely related key, A \flat major, in accordance with the perspective shift. The opening lines are characterized by a sense of contentment; the hospitable home in that Welsh valley seems a warm, restful memory. To match this contented air, the D \flat major section of the musical adaptation rests in the pleasant sonorities of the D \flat major tonic chord, often for several measures in a row, while the measured, Welsh-inspired, mostly pentatonic melody weaves its way around the scale. This style persists through the first octet, which ends with the fitting line “Why, it seemed of course; seemed of right it should” (8). As the narrator makes his shift at the beginning of the sestet, the rhythms intensify, flourishes start to emerge, and a sense of harmonic progression begins to manifest. Eventually, as the narrator settles down into his

contemplation of God, the original theme recurs, but with a new harmonic and rhythmic setting in the key of A \flat major.

No discussion of harmonic progression in this cycle would be complete without considering the first and last pieces of the set, “God’s Grandeur” and “The Lantern out of Doors.” Like most circle-of-fifths progressions, this set begins and ends in C major.

“God’s Grandeur,” which functions as the composition’s opening statement, enters with a short, simple melody phrase in the key of C, using mostly diatonic pitches. The poem, however, is liberal with its dashes of color and flashes of imagery, so my piece quickly ventures into new harmonic territory, swerving into and out of unusual modulations and leaping around with quick flourishes to highlight the dramatic nature of the text. A good deal of the piece is spent dipping into E \flat natural minor, a double chromatic mediant of C major, and nearly the entire second half is spent wandering through various tonal centers, a journey which culminates in a \flat VI – iv – I progression with a tonic pedal tone that brings the piece to a close back in the key of C major.

“The Lantern out of Doors,” as the last piece in the set, begins with F as its tonal center, but it returns home to C at the end, signifying the completion of the cycle. The text of the poem itself supports this; the final lines of this last poem reflect upon Christ as “their ransom, their rescue, and first, fast, last friend” (14). The last four words, moreover, echo the insistent, poignant rhythm of “ah! bright wings,” the final words of “God’s Grandeur,” making it clear that both pieces should end in a similar manner. Ultimately, I decided to tie these two pieces closely together; when the perspective in “The Lantern out of Doors” shifts to complete Christ, the key also shifts to reflect the key

of “God’s Grandeur.” Even elements of the melody carry over between the pieces, contextualizing the end of the composition with respect to its beginning.

When composing an instrumental programmatic work that follows its subject on a word-for-word basis, it is vital to capture the essence of the source text in order to preserve a close relationship between source and adaptation. These musical choices, including everything from structural arrangement to key signature, are wonderful tools with which to ensure this continuity of character, and use of these tools is necessary if the composer is to preserve a semblance of common identity between the two.

CHAPTER THREE

Text-Specific Choices

The use of thematic elements in the poetic source material as inspiration for broad musical characteristics is largely helpful, but for my composition, the text-music relationship needed to be even closer. Working within the unique musical paradigm I constructed, each piece must follow its respective poetic source on a word-for-word basis, effectively conveying each syllable of each word in the poems. In this chapter, I explain two major avenues by which to tie the text and music together even more closely – prosody and text painting – as well as several detailed examples of how I implement these strategies into my compositions.

The first major element of musical interpretation on this smaller scale is the prosody of the source text. A poem's prosody, referring to the rhythmic pattern of its syllables, has enormous implications for the experience of the poem. Iambic pentameter, for example, uses a series of five "feet" per line, each of which contains an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed; this regular rhythm creates a constant cadence similar to that of a heartbeat. Hopkins' unique "sprung rhythm" variation on iambic pentameter, by contrast, uses a variable number of unstressed syllables between each stressed one, creating a flexible system that is capable of a wide range of rhythmic expressions to match the character of each poem. The rhythmic freedom Hopkins takes in his poetry allows for a large degree of liberty in a musical setting of his work; following his prosody

inherently includes artistic choices, even in a simple rhythmic scheme like mine that includes a note of the melody for each syllable of the poem.

For a simple example, consider the opening line of the poem “Spring,” which reads, “Nothing is as beautiful as Spring” (1). Although the stressed first word has no preceding unstressed syllable, Hopkins otherwise follows iambic pentameter here.

Quantizing the flow of speech into a strict metrical equivalent, the rhythm of this line may be thus approximated:



Figure 1. Opening rhythm of “Spring”



Figure 2. “Spring” rhythm, with words for reference

Writing a piece of music using only these strict approximations, however, would quickly become dull and repetitive, despite Hopkins’ occasionally unorthodox rhythmic patterns.

In keeping with the spirit of Hopkins, I have decided to use a more relaxed approach to the adaptation of each line, altering rhythms and recontextualizing them in different meters. In the case of “Spring,” a sprightly yet elegant waltz seemed most appropriate to capture the feeling of the poem, so I began in 3/4. Within this lilting, sloping rhythmic scheme, I attempted to preserve the air of the original line by using stressed syllables as arrival points, often on downbeats; stressed syllables 1, 3, and 5 (the first syllable of “nothing,” the first of “beautiful,” and “Spring”) thus become the downbeats of the first three measures, emphasizing their importance in the flow of speech. After making slight rhythmic changes focused on the preservation of “nothing” and “beautiful” as uninterrupted, polysyllabic words, this natural-feeling rhythm unfolded:

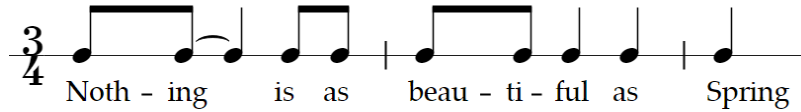


Figure 3. “Spring,” reimagined rhythm of opening lines

Adding pitches, this opening phrase becomes the following melodic fragment:

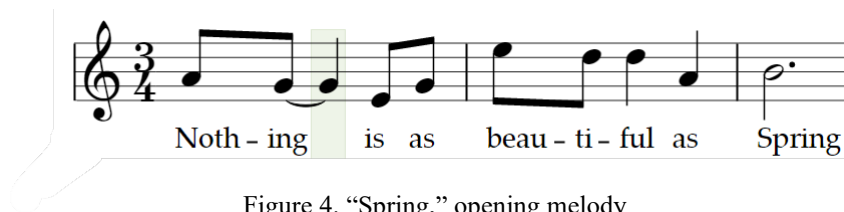


Figure 4. “Spring,” opening melody

This process of understanding a line’s metrical qualities, making alterations while preserving the essential patterns of the line, and adding melodic content constituted my work in adapting the prosodic elements of each poem into my composition. For the most part, this process was less a conscious effort than an intuitive understanding of the poetic flow, but if asked to explain, I would present something like the above, which is a detailed analysis of processes I performed naturally. Nevertheless, I made all these rhythmic choices intentionally, and preserving the prosody of Hopkins’ poetry was an important element of my compositional process.

The rhythmic choices in my adaptation often rely on more than just the pattern of Hopkins’ speech for inspiration; like the melodic and harmonic elements, much of the rhythm also draws inspiration from the meaning of the text. The fourth line of “The Caged Skylark,” the fourth piece in the set, illustrates this principle well. The line reads, “This in drudgery, day-labouring-out life’s age” (4). The following rhythm is suggestive of the line’s natural prosody:

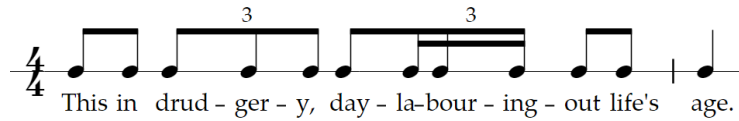


Figure 5. “The Caged Skylark” natural rhythm, line 4

Exhibiting Hopkins’ characteristic “sprung rhythm,” this line is admittedly much more rhythmically interesting than the typical excerpt of iambic pentameter. I could have easily used this rhythm for my melody without the piece’s musicality suffering for it. This line, however, is significant in its poetic context as an illustration of the tedium of man’s dreary societal existence. Hopkins fits many extra syllables into this line, so retaining a consistent cadence of stressed syllables would mean that the melody would fly by a listener’s ears far more quickly than its message might suggest; cramming the word “drudgery” into a short temporal span would seem ironic, given that it implies a dull, weary monotony. To capture the essence of the line rather than simply its prosody, I chose to slow this line, changing time signatures and doubling the length of these syllables in the composition. After the first two words, beginning with “drudgery,” each syllable is held for double its original length to emphasize man’s drawn-out toil. To emphasize the importance of “drudgery,” moreover, I made the first syllable the downbeat of a new measure, placing “This in” onto the anacrusis.

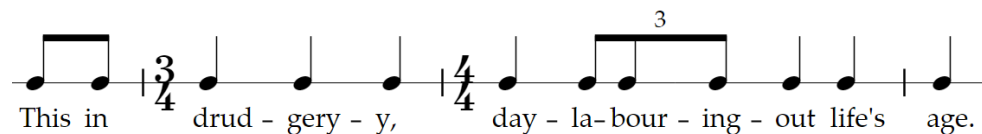


Figure 6. “The Caged Skylark” line 4, revised rhythm

With pitches:

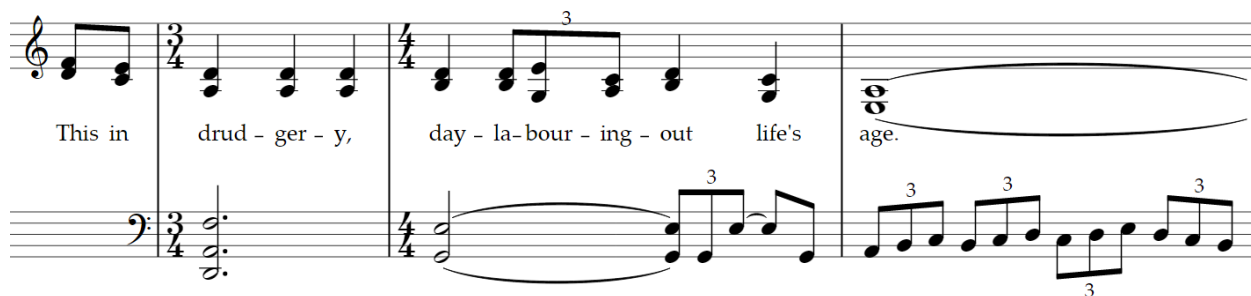


Figure 7. “The Caged Skylark, mm. 16-18

By setting “drudgery” within its own measure, and by making each syllable of the word a dull repetition of the same sonorities, the adaptation emphasizes the meaning of the passage. Likewise, the next phrase of the line maintains the same plodding quarter-note rhythm, varying only with the natural triplet of the unusual compound word “day-labouring-out.” Even this organic rhythm influences my development of the piece; after the triplet, the left hand picks up the triplet rhythm in the bass, developing the triplet into a theme in the next measure. The next stanza constitutes a repetition of the melodic context of the first four lines, forming an A’ section. The main variation in the beginning of this A’ section (mm. 20-29) is the continuous triplet rhythm in the left hand, which pervades this verse. The meaning and prosody of the fourth line, then, serves as the basis for the continued development of my rendition of “The Caged Skylark.”

Perhaps the most dramatic example of this prosodic adaptation comes in “The Windhover,” the fifth piece. The original poem displays Hopkins at his most extravagant; his description of the lively bird is rife with quick turns, hyphenated compound words, and dashing imagery. It begins unassumingly, with the first line and a half reading, “I saw this morning morning’s minion, king- / dom of daylight’s dauphin” (1-2). Halfway through the second line, the first glimpse of his rhythmic innovation peeks through with

the phrase “dapple-dawn-drawn falcon.” It was at this moment in the poem that I decided to match Hopkins in his rhythmic liberty; if he could use hyphenated phrases that implied a changing rhythmic basis, so could I. The majority of the piece is in compound meter, reflecting Hopkins’ use of compound words; it begins in 12/8 with a bright but calmly repetitive motif before the melody comes in. The rhythms, consisting mostly of dotted quarter notes, fit the compound meter nicely, until the phrase “dapple-dawn-drawn falcon,” which causes the piece to quickly dip into duple meter before returning to triple:

The image shows a musical score for the poem "The Windhover" by Gerard Manley Hopkins, measures 6 through 13. The score is written for voice and piano. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The time signature is 12/8, which changes to 3/4 and back to 12/8. The lyrics are: "morn - ing's min - ion king - dom of day - light's dau - phin, dap - ple - dawn - drawn Fal - con, in his rid - ing Of the roll - ing le - vel un - der -". The melody is in the voice part, and the piano accompaniment is in the piano part. The score is divided into three systems, each with a voice staff and a piano staff. The first system covers measures 6-8, the second covers measures 9-11, and the third covers measures 12-13. The time signature changes from 12/8 to 3/4 in measure 10 and back to 12/8 in measure 11.

Figure 8. “The Windhover,” mm. 6-13

The measure following the brief 3/4 bar is in 3+12/8, a time signature I use to emphasize that the first beat in the return to compound meter feels like a single-beat measure, a carryover from the previous bar, and that the remaining twelve sub-beats fit together naturally. The next phrase, “in his riding,” uses this same rhythmic pattern, but the duple measure here is in 2/4, not 3/4, in accordance with the passage’s prosody.

For the rest of this piece, I chose to exercise as much rhythmic liberty as Hopkins, freely changing time signatures in an effort to maintain the natural, graceful, unpredictable tone of the poem, intended to emulate the bird's flight. The best example of this rhythmic liberty comes in the following lines:

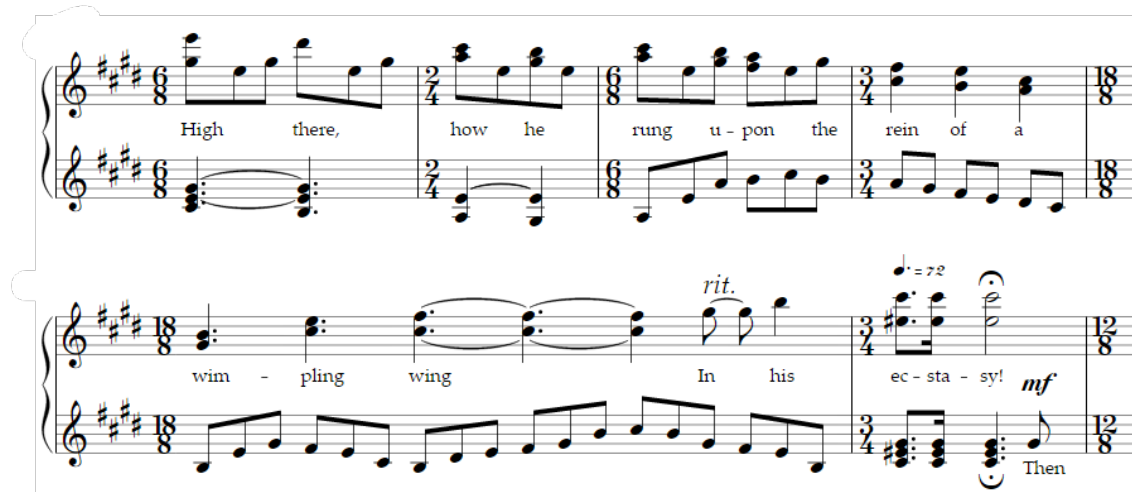


Figure 9. "The Windhover," mm. 16-21

To embrace the organic feel of the text, I move between 6/8, 2/4, 3/4, and 18/8 freely, alternating triple and duple meters for the span of this excerpt. The long, harmonically static 18/8 measure is intended to convey a sense of anticipation for the ecstatic resolution to C# major in the final bar. As the piece goes on, I become more extravagant, like Hopkins, in my flourishes and pauses, using these introductory measures as a loose inspiration for the rest of the rhythmic content, which is increasingly colored with embellished textures.

In many instances, the prosody of the original passage influences rhythmic variation in a repeated melodic phrase. For example, the opening theme of "In the Valley of the Elwy" occurs a total of three times: twice before the key change, and once after. Each of these iterations, while retaining the same melodic content, uses slightly different

rhythms in conjunction with the accompanying words, adding natural variation between sections. For the sake of space, I will include only the first phrase of the melody, originally composed by slowing the line “I remember a house where all were good” (1) and setting it in a contemplative 3/4:

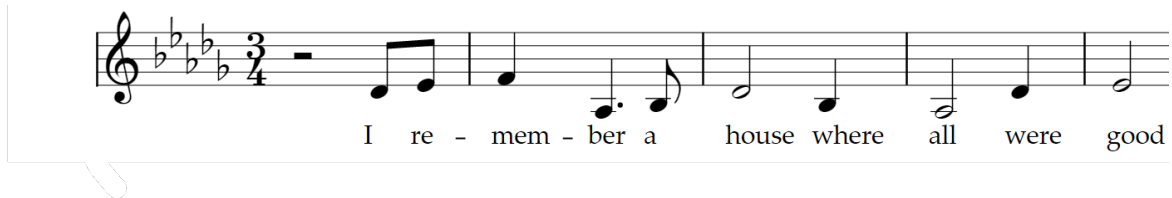


Figure 10. The initial melody of “In the Valley of the Elwy”

After the first statement of the melody, which adapts the first quartet, the piece goes into an A’ section for the second quartet, using the same melodic material but including variations in correlation to the changing text. The next iteration of this phrase, transposed up an octave, changes the value of nearly every note in the melody, even adding and removing an occasional note to fit the prosody, and yet the phrase is still easily identifiable:



Figure 11. The first melodic variation in “In the Valley of the Elwy”

The greatest rhythmic variation, however, occurs after the key change. The first three lines of the sestet mark a notable shift, and I take the opportunity to use them as a colorful, dramatic key change, driving forward then settling down into the key of A-flat major. Once in the new key, I bring back the melody from the first section to tie the piece

together, providing an occasion for yet another variation, this time setting the line “God, lover of souls, swinging considerate scales” (12). When spoken, this line has a strong triplet swing, implied by the phrases “ló-ver of sóuls” and “swíng-ing con-síd-er-ate.” Working with the triplet rhythm inherent in the words, I constructed the following variation of the melody:

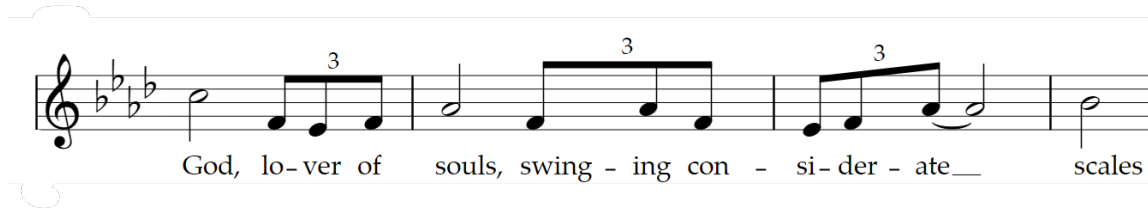


Figure 12. The final variation of the melody in “In the Valley of the Elwy”

Once again, despite the differing harmonic and rhythmic contexts, the melodic content is essentially the same as the first two iterations, and a listener could easily identify this as the opening line of the theme. Though this triplet rhythm does not continue until the end of the piece, it is still a clear example of how the natural prosody of Hopkins’ poetry influenced my development of rhythm in my adaptation.

My final example of prosody in this composition comes from the cycle’s most rhythmically complex piece, “Hurrahing in Harvest.” When composing this setting, it would have been natural to use a major key, since the poem is joyful in nature; since this is the only piece in the cycle that deals with autumn, however, I wanted to place it into a distinct harmonic space, and the poetic cadence of the words seemed to open the door for a more unusual interpretation. In the end, I decided to set the piece in a noncommittal E \flat Dorian, with a frequently raised 3rd scale degree and a significant emphasis on the sustained IV chord. This ambiguous mode brings an interesting duality: it appears to begin in A \flat Mixolydian, since the repetition of the harmonic content seems to solidify it

as the tonic despite the suspension, but then it resolves to a similarly suspended chord in E \flat , which alternates between Dorian and Mixolydian, before returning to A \flat . This unusual harmonic setting, along with a complex rhythmic theme, identifies this piece as unique in the cycle.

The rhythm in this piece is indeed different than the other pieces in this composition. For the entire first quartet (mm. 1-15), sixteenth notes consistently recur until the end of the fourth line. The distribution of notes between hands, however, prevents this rhythmic onslaught from becoming stale or overwhelming. The melody, soaring over this accompaniment of perpetual sixteenth notes, must be brought out through the accentuation of the performer, lest it be lost among all the notes. The whole of this piece could warrant further study, but I will isolate the short passage with perhaps the most rhythmic interest with respect to prosody: “has wilder, wilful-wavier / Meal-drift moulded ever and melted across skies?” (lines 3b-4). These lines, displaying Hopkins’ emotive mastery, leave enormous room for rhythmic interpretation, and the natural cadence of the words themselves is unusual. Here is the rhythm I chose for my adaptation of this line:

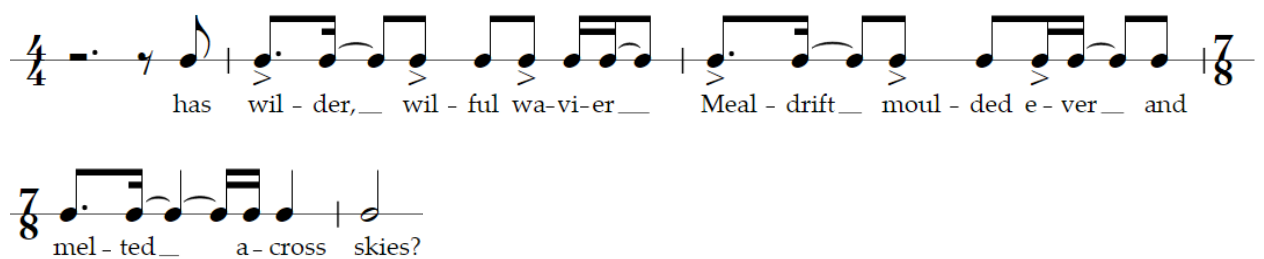


Figure 13. The rhythm of “Hurrahing in Harvest,” mm. 12-15

It is difficult to digest that rhythm by simply looking at it. There are many similarities between this line and the rhythmic variation of “The Windhover,” but whereas the

organic, fluid nature of those lines allowed me to freely move between time signatures, the tight rhythms of this poem encouraged creativity within the constraints of duple meter. As a result, many of these rhythms might feel like they are continuously changing meters, but in reality I am employing rhythmic complexity through syncopating by displacing the normal stresses within the meter, in accordance with the accents of the poem's prosody. For example, in the above passage, I placed accent marks on the syllables that would be naturally accented during speech; by accenting those notes, the melody increases exponentially in complexity.²⁹

The musical score for "Hurrahing in Harvest" mm. 12-15 is presented in two systems. The first system covers measures 12 and 13, and the second system covers measures 14 and 15. The key signature is G major (one sharp). The time signature changes from 7/8 to 4/4 and back to 7/8. The melody is written in the treble clef, and the accompaniment is in the bass clef. The lyrics are: "wild - er, wil - ful - wav - i - er Meal - drift moul - ded ev - er and melt - ed a - cross skies? 3 6 I". The score includes dynamic markings "mp" and "mf".

Figure 14. "Hurrahing in Harvest," mm. 12-15

In its full context, this prosodic rhythm becomes even more complex. To emphasize the strange accents in bar 11, the left hand doubles the melody an octave

²⁹ I urge the reader to try tapping the rhythm of the first full bar without the accents, then try again with accents, to aid comprehension. The result seems like a completely different rhythm, despite the same values.

below, before spiraling into the lower register to continue providing harmonic accompaniment in the next measure. This piece is an exercise in rhythmic control; in every one of these beats, there is rhythmic activity on every sixteenth note within this passage. This case exemplifies the effects of a different approach to prosody, choosing to retain the accents of common speech while surrounding it with a rhythmic context that makes these accents strange and exciting.

In all the examples cited in this chapter, the rhythmic and semantic characteristics of the text have influenced my approach in developing rhythmic elements for the piano solos. Rhythm, however, is only one component of a musical composition for piano; melody and harmony are equally important, and in this case equally informed by the source material. These pitched elements, while not as clearly embedded in the text, nevertheless draw inspiration from its meaning to form characteristics unique to each piece, such as text painting and harmonic progression. In this final explanatory section, I will present several examples of this phenomenon in my composition, explaining each with reference both to semantics and to musicality.

As an opening example, consider the first lines of “God’s Grandeur,” the beginning of the cycle: “The world is charged with the grandeur of God / It will flame out, like shining from shook foil / It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil” (1-3). The first quartet has a particular spacing scheme that mirrors the rhyme scheme: the second and third lines are indented, while the first and fourth use normal alignment. To mimic this, I decided to use the spatial shifts as a cue for harmonic shifts, temporarily modulating up or down to reflect the line spacing. As a result, the first line is in C major,

while the next two are in E \flat minor, one of its double chromatic mediants.³⁰ Echoing the simple yet profound statement of the first line, my piece begins humbly, with a simple melody line above calmly complementary harmonic accompaniment:



Figure 15. “God’s Grandeur,” mm. 1-5

The second chord, unexpectedly, is an E major chord, which functions as a secondary dominant for A minor, the vi chord of C major. I chose this chord since it adds a bit of surprising brightness to the just-emerging C major soundscape, in accordance with the word “charged,” which transforms the reader’s understanding of the world almost immediately. The chord underneath “God,” moreover, is a major seventh chord built on the fourth, a pleasant chordal structure that seems content to rest in the profundity of what it has expressed.

The next lines change the tone of the piece completely, adding flair and expression. Without textural context, the melody for the phrase “it will flame out” consists of the following:

³⁰ Chromatic mediants are keys with tonal centers that lie a third apart; for example, E major is a chromatic mediant of C major. If the two minor triads share at least one chord tone, they are known simply as chromatic mediants. If they share no chord tones, however, such as C major and E \flat minor, they are called double chromatic mediants, implying that the keys are very distantly related.

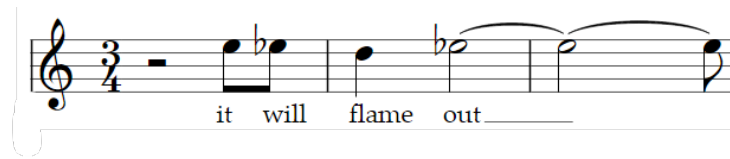


Figure 16. The melodic content of “God’s Grandeur,” mm. 6-8

“Flaming out,” however, is not a phrase that can be relayed through nearly static quarter notes and eighth notes. To supplement this melody, I add harmonic context and a quick flourish, an embellishment that intends to capture the shape of “flaming out:”

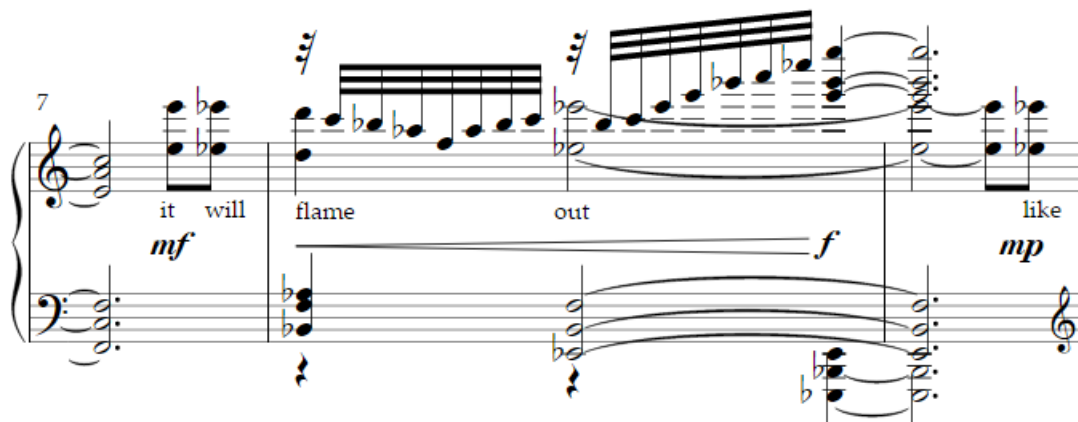


Figure 17. “God’s Grandeur,” mm. 6-8

To this effect, the right-hand flourish ascends quickly while the left hand drops an octave, flaring out in both directions while growing in volume. The next phrase in the poem, “like shining from shook foil,” modifies this one, so it retains its harmonic space. Here is the unadorned melody:

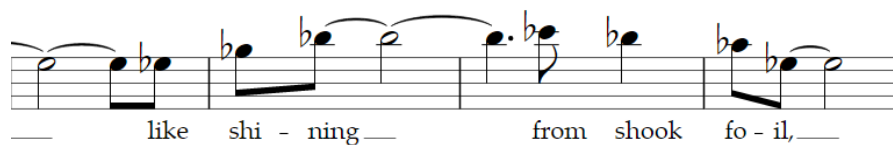


Figure 18. The melodic content of “God’s Grandeur,” mm. 8-11

To adequately portray these lines, I made many alterations and additions to the rest of the voices in the manner of text painting. To depict “shining,” a rolled $C\flat$ major seventh chord, arresting in its unexpected beauty, conveys its shimmering sound. Additionally, for the word “foil,” which uses a diphthong, I chose to use a quick succession of two eighth note chords that share the same harmonic space, and that could be seen as the same beat (the first played as if a grace note before the other chord), as seen in Figure 19.

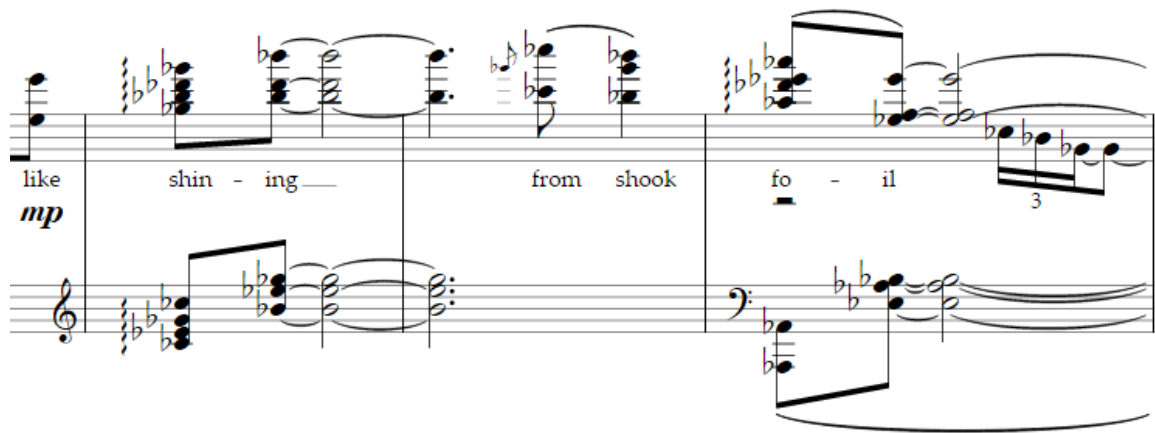


Figure 19. “God’s Grandeur,” mm. 9-11

Yet another example from this first stanza is the subsequent phrase, “it gathers to a greatness.” Still in the $E\flat$ chromatic mediant key, the melody may be seen as a variation of the setting of the second line. The texture, though, is where the text painting comes in; the music, along with the text, “gathers to a greatness,” beginning and completing a crescendo with a flurry of triplets in the left hand to land on a strong, powerful *fortissimo* chord that spans several octaves.

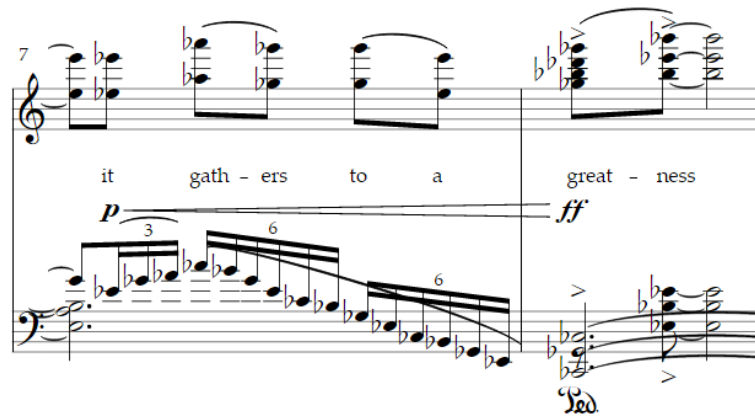


Figure 20. "God's Grandeur," mm. 12-13

This pattern of harmonic influence and text painting established in the first piece continues throughout the entire composition, though it occurs with varying strength in each setting.

This technique of text painting does not always occur on so grand a scale; in some pieces, the embellishments are much more reserved. For example, despite the dramatic title, my setting of "As Kingfishers Catch Fire" is a meditative reflection on the nature of being, especially considering the nature of identity, tracing it all back to Christ.

Accordingly, I open the piece with a quiet ostinato in the right hand, bringing the melody underneath in the lower register. The melody line of "As tumbled over rims in roundy wells" mirrors the shape of the phrase, but the first true instance of text painting comes in the next line, in the simple phrase "Stones ring":

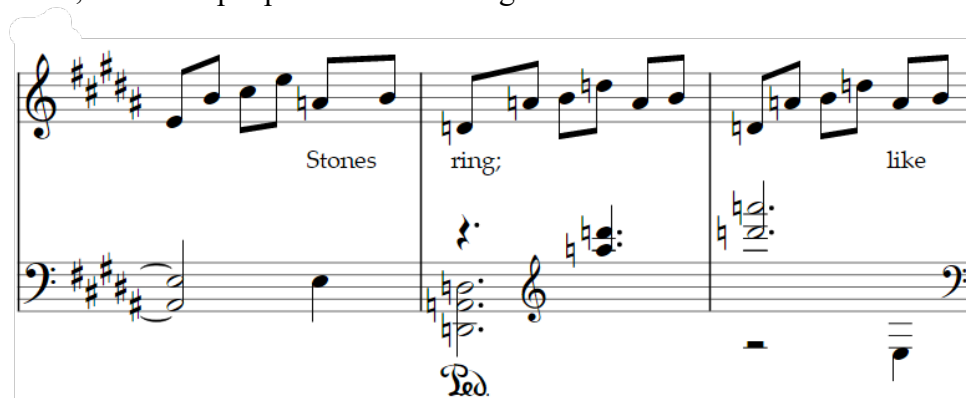


Figure 21. "As Kingfishers Catch Fire," mm. 16-18

To achieve the effect of “ringing,” I use a chord with an open fifth,³¹ playing various iterations of the sonorities in ascending registers to convey the sense of echoing. The specifically indicated pedal marking also adds to this effect, allowing the sounds to reverberate and build upon each other.

A couple of lines later, another subtle example of text painting presents itself in the phrase “to fling out broad its name.” Rather than adding embellishments, I embedded the text painting in the shape of the melody line (found at the top of the left hand):

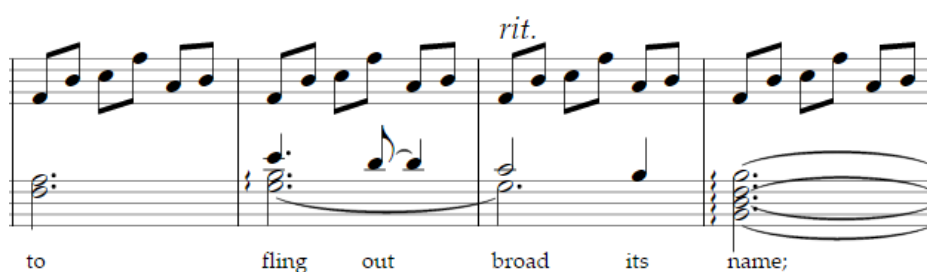


Figure 22. “As Kingfishers Catch Fire,” mm. 30-33

To portray the sense of “flinging,” a word which connotes carelessness or imprecision, the melody (found in the top note in the left hand) jumps upward to a seemingly arbitrary note in the scale, from an A# to an E natural – this is an upward leap of a tritone, an unusual interval to use when arriving at an important note in the melody. The arpeggiation of that chord further adds to the effect, emphasizing the upward motion that leads to the largest interval in the chord, like an arm winding up before launching a stone. Though all the pieces in this set use text painting, many of its manifestations are more

³¹ Every pitch contains a series of other pitches that are present in the sound, called overtones, as a result of acoustic physics. The perfect fifth, one of the simplest ratios in the scale (3:2), creates a pure natural resonance since it is always present as one of the original pitch’s overtones. My perfect fifths in this example, therefore, give the impression of “ringing” by utilizing this pure, resonant space.

subtle; these examples serve to show the impact of this interpretative method even in cases where its influence is less obvious.

My next example, “The Sea and the Skylark,” is perhaps the strongest, most consistent case of text painting in the entire cycle. For this reason, I will forego discussion of the minor instances of this technique in the piece in favor of recounting only the most significant ones. In the previous chapter, I explained the threefold structural division of the poem – the sea, the skylark, then the narrator’s detached musing – and how the characteristics of each section reflected their respective meanings. In this chapter, I will go into more detail for each of these sections, explaining how the musical techniques I employ reflect specific words and ideas.

The opening section of this setting portrays the sound of the sea. Many composers over the centuries have attempted to capture this particular sound in their music, with varying success; my particular favorites include the depictions in Rimsky-Korsakov’s *Scheherazade* and Rachmaninoff’s *The Isle of the Dead*, both of which use low, expansive gestures in the low strings that often span multiple octaves to reflect the depth of the ocean and the smooth repetition of the tides’ flow. Unlike these two pieces, however, my composition is limited to piano solo and the restriction of 4/4, the time signature suggested by the poetic cadence of the words. My rendition of the sea-sound, therefore, consists of an F# natural minor ninth chord arpeggiated slowly and with subtle variations from a low F# up to a higher one, then down again, accompanied by a crescendo as the wave crests and a decrescendo as it descends back into the deep. For example, this iteration ascends from F#1 to F#3, then returns to the starting octave:



Figure 23. The “sea” motif in “The Sea and the Skylark”

It is also notable that, as waves are not always precisely symmetrical or predictable, this gesture is often varied, altering the length of the phrase or even the sonorities in various circumstances. Measures 7-9 constitute a prime example of this, as the time signature moves from 4/4 to 3/4 to 6/4, each of which contains only one full iteration of this shaped line.

The repeating, cyclical nature of the waves also influences the melody in this section, especially in accordance with specific words. Consider, for example, the phrase “the tide that ramps against the shore” (2). One can almost hear the soft, patterned pull of the unstressed words to the stressed ones, echoing the tides. To reflect this, I include this effect in the melody line; the rhythm of several consecutive dotted eighth note-sixteenth note units achieves this gravitational effect, as does the oscillatory motion of the pitches that metaphorically suggests circular motion:

Figure 24. “The Sea and the Skylark,” mm. 7-8

These intentionally shaped phrases, in conjunction with the sensation of the rolling waves, suitably convey the impression of the calm, swelling sea.

In the middle of this sea-themed section, the following line presents a clear opportunity for text painting: “With a flood or a fall, low lull-off or all roar” (3). Taking this cue, the composition breaks from the incessant rhythm of the waves for two bars of contrast:

Figure 25. “The Sea and the Skylark,” mm. 11-12

The “flood” breaks the calm pattern of the waves, replacing it with an unexpected flurry that yet retains the harmonic color of the ocean. The “fall” does the same, but descending quickly – as the word suggests – rather than ascending, together with the previous word forming a more tumultuous rendition of the up-and-down wave-phrase from the previous measures. The next phrase, “low lull-off,” suggests a gentle abatement in the rush of the waters, and the music reflects this, quieting to a *pianissimo* and holding a serenely suspended minor seventh chord rather than continuing the dramatic flourishes. The music then “roars” out of this lull, landing on a powerful, surprising F# major chord at a

fortissimo with a resounding echo in the higher register like the crash of a second wave.

After this interlude, the music returns to the calm wave motif, winding down to the end of the sea stanza.

The next section, modeling the second quartet of the poem, utilizes the same melodic material but recontextualizes it in the manner of a sprightly, delicate lark. Quick, flitting embellishments evoke the whimsical, airy character of the lark, peppering the space between melodic fragments. Inversions of extended chords and reharmonizations color this section with energy and levity, despite the consistent minor mode. The first explicit instance of text painting in this section occurs in the first line with the words “I hear the lark ascend”:



Figure 26. “The Sea and the Skylark,” mm. 17-18

Rather than using the brief rise in the melody to descend into a minor triad, like the first section’s melody does, the lark’s melody continues to lift into a nondiatonic, unexpected G major chord, which then flourishes upward in a graceful ascent, signifying the lark’s defiance of gravity and its freedom of flight. The next line, continuing in this vein, contains a reharmonized reference to the earlier piece “The Caged Skylark”:

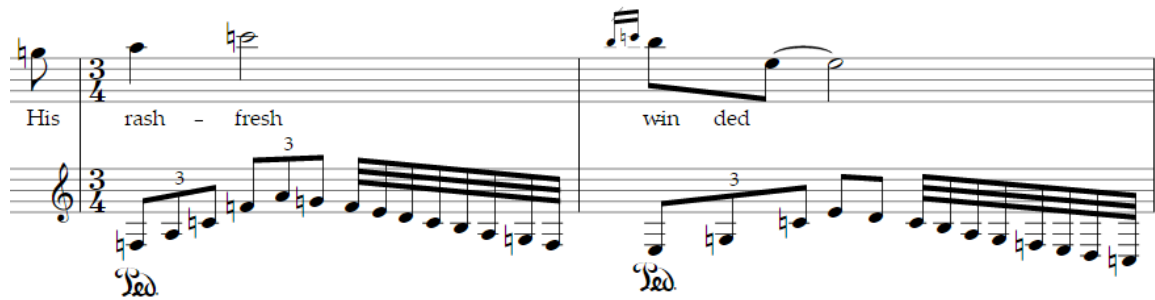


Figure 27. “The Sea and the Skylark,” mm. 19-20

The right-hand melody is a direct quotation from the opening lines of “The Caged Skylark.” Both poetic passages discuss the motif of the skylark, though the earlier passage uses the image as a metaphor for man, while this poem sees the skylark as an unblemished image of the natural world. By connecting these lark images, then, I am making an interpretive decision in addition to a musical one; this lark no longer only signifies the beauty of birds, but the majesty of man’s untainted soul. Accordingly, the quoted melody is here recontextualized with major chords rather than minor ones, as the virtues of the skylark are on full display, in contrast to the earlier piece’s lament.

The flourishes implied by the poem’s flashier lines, furthermore, were far too enticing to pass up. For the line “In crisps of curl of wild winch whirl” (7), I employ a barrage of quick scale-based runs that dive down and back up to mimic the shape of the “crisps of curl,” followed by an ascending pattern of the same shape to climb to the climactic word “whirl”:

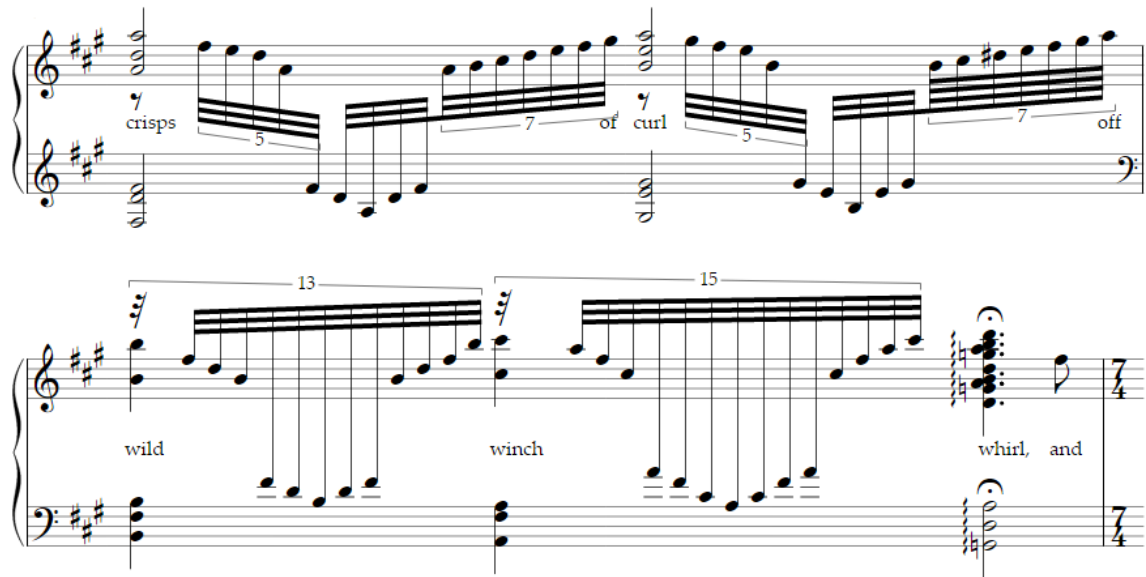


Figure 28. “The Sea and the Skylark,” mm. 32-33

Through these and other embellishments, the character of the second quartet proves markedly different from the first; the sea and the skylark inhabit different soundworlds despite the common tonal center and a mostly shared harmonic palette.

In the third section of this sonnet, after the descriptions of both the sea and the skylark, the narrator steps back and contemplates these sounds in context of the lamentable effects of human society. To mirror this perspective shift, the music modulates down to D minor, a chromatic mediant of F# minor, to reflect the connection between these sections while tracing the decline of the first two into the third. Here is the first line of the last sestet, the beginning of the new key:



Figure 29. "The Sea and the Skylark," mm. 28-31

The most interesting instance of text painting in this section begins in the third measure, setting the phrase "shallow and frail town." Until that point, the poem still references the polyphonic, nuanced nature of the sea and the skylark, lending even their act of shaming an air of elegant complexity. When the poet begins to describe the lamentable town, however, the music shifts tone accordingly; it abandons the rhythmic complexity of the previous measure in favor of a homorhythmic texture, a sequence of light, inverted chords that exemplify the adjectives "shallow" (lacking rhythmic and sonic depth) and "frail" (unsteady and unstable via chord inversion). The rest of the piece continues in this vein, altering dynamics, melodic contour, and harmonic accompaniment to fit the text, bringing "The Sea and the Skylark" to the fore as one of the strongest holistic examples of text painting in the set.

The cycle's penultimate piece, "The Starlight Night," likewise uses a significant amount of text painting. The poem begins with an injunction to "Look at the stars! look, look up at the skies!" (1), going on to marvel at the colors and visions floating in the night sky. Hopkins uses many opaque metaphors in this poem, but the sonic effect is unmistakable: the vibrant sounds and imagery bring the "starlight night" to life. In my adaptation, I attempt to capture this feeling through rubato phrases, interesting colors, and

unexpected chord progressions, along with more specific instances of text painting. The first line, for example, mirrors the text: as the line directs the reader to “look up at the stars,” the melody slowly ascends, stopping at the top to dwell upon the major third of the tonic chord, emphasizing the beauty of what lies above. The second, repeated exhortation uses the same melody, but altered to fit the new prosody:

Freely, with wonder ♩ = 90

Piano

mp

Look at the stars! look, look up at the skies, O

Ped. Ped. Ped.

Figure 30. “The Starlight Night,” mm. 1-4

These deep, spacious chords lend the piece an air of grounded contemplation, but the second-inversion root triads at the end of each phrase start to pull upward, looking to the skies; the result mirrors earth-bound man gazing upward to the heavens.

Most of the piece draws inspiration from the text in such a way, but it is worth describing the details of one more particularly interesting passage: the setting of lines 3-4. The text of the poem reads, “The bright boroughs, the circle-citadels there! Down in dim woods the diamond delves! the elves’-eyes!” When studying these lines, I noticed Hopkins’ clever progressive alliteration: beginning with the letter B, each phrase in these two lines uses alliteration with the next letter of the alphabet, spending a few seconds in the respective realms of B, C, D (twice), and E. Contemplating this, I wondered whether

it was possible to use chords built upon these respective pitches to set each of these phrases – e.g., a chord underneath “bright boroughs” with B as a root, etc. After exploring the possibilities, this is what I composed:

6

Pn.

sit - ting in the air! The bright bor - oughs, the cir - cle ci-ta-dels there,

Red.

10

Pn.

Down in dim woods the dia - mond delves! the elves' - eyes!

Red.

Figure 31. “The Starlight Night,” mm. 6-14

Since the piece is set in B \flat major, I was initially wary of using a chord built on a B major triad, a completely chromatic chord with no shared tones or clear relationship to pitches in the home key. Nevertheless, the phrase “bright boroughs” clearly rings of a major third, and the letter B more closely implies a B natural than a B flat, so I decided to use it anyway – and it led to perhaps the most unique colors in the whole cycle. The B major-minor seventh chord on “bright boroughs” gives way to the C major triad of “circle citadels,” but the F \sharp from the previous measure carries over into this one, transforming the melody into C Lydian – a bright-sounding harmonic pattern that matches the poem perfectly. The next two phrases both use D as their base, which had me stuck for a while

before realizing that the first phrase, “dim woods,” could imply a minor color, while “diamond delves” is clearly major. Bringing back the B \flat melodic motif from earlier, I chose to invert it over a D in the bass and subsequently lead it to a D minor chord, a surprising sound since every preceding chord in the piece is built on a major triad. This minor sound is quickly subverted, though, as the “diamond delves” transform the minor chord into a major one, before leading upward to the E major triad of “elves’-eyes.” This passage, however short, is one of my favorite moments in the cycle, being an example of both colorful musicality and intentional text-painting.

Both these elements – text painting and prosody – heavily influenced my musical interpretations of these eleven sonnets, serving as tools by which to preserve elements of the original poems while exercising creative liberty to add new elements in the manner of Hopkins’ vision. Although these interpretive elements manifest themselves differently in each piece, they are nevertheless always present in some manner, and the diversity that results from these eleven distinct settings only adds to the composition’s unique appeal.

CHAPTER FOUR

Conclusion

No explanation of a musical work will ever be entirely sufficient to grasp the whole of the composition, and this paper – however detailed – is no exception. Much is lost in the translation from sound to text, and no number of figures can convince a reader of a melodic interval’s emotional impact, for example, as strongly as hearing the music itself. Nevertheless, it is my hope that this explanatory document may serve as a helpful tool for understanding *The Grandeur of God* by virtue of its influences, techniques, and artistic choices, and that the reader may grow in appreciation not only for my musical work, but for the value and beauty that can be found in compositions across all eras and genres.

There is also a danger in spending so much time and ink explaining the inner mechanisms and techniques of a musical composition, as if it were a clever message to be decoded. When considering the merit of one’s own artistic choices of interpretation, this danger is ever-present. C.S. Lewis, in his wonderful fantasy *The Great Divorce*, explains the danger this way through the voice of a heaven-dwelling Spirit: “Every poet and musician and artist, but for Grace, is drawn away from love of the thing he tells, to love of the telling till, down in Deep Hell, they cannot be interested in God at all but only in what they say about Him.”³² In the course of my composition, originally inspired by the beauty of which Hopkins is merely a signpost, I have needed to remind myself of the true

³² C.S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2001): 85.

purpose of my musical creation, like the ghostly painter to whom the Spirit says, “When you painted on earth – at least in your earlier days – it was because you caught glimpses of Heaven in the earthly landscape. The success of your painting was that it enabled others to see the glimpses too.”³³

While my ostensible goal in this project was to write an impressive work of music that would hold up to criticism, the true value of my endeavor is the chance to reflect some of the grandeur of God in my humble offering, offering glimpses of that transcendent beauty to those who might stumble across it. At the same time, I must remember that no amount of analysis or criticism can erase the beauty of music, my own included. After all, it draws inspiration and reflection, however dim, from Him “whose beauty is past change.”³⁴ In closing, at the end of “God’s Grandeur,” the sonnet that inspired the theme of this project, Hopkins offers a reminder and a benediction:

“And for all this, nature is never spent;
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights off the back West went
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs –
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.”³⁵

³³ Ibid., 83.

³⁴ Gerard Manley Hopkins, “Pied Beauty,” line 14.

³⁵ Gerard Manley Hopkins, “God’s Grandeur,” lines 9-14.

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God's Grandeur

Matt Young

(2021-22)

Reverently (♩ = 90)

Musical score for measures 1-6. The piece is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The tempo is marked 'Reverently' with a quarter note equal to 90 beats per minute. The lyrics are: 'The world is charged with the gran - deur of God it will'. Dynamics include *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *mf* (mezzo-forte).

Musical score for measures 7-10. The lyrics are: 'flame out like shin - ing from shook'. Dynamics include *f* (forte) and *mp* (mezzo-piano). Measure 7 features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand.

Musical score for measures 11-13. The lyrics are: 'fo - il it gath - ers to a great - ness'. Dynamics include *p* (piano) and *ff* (fortissimo). Measure 11 features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand. Measure 13 features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a sixteenth note in the left hand.

Musical score for measures 14-17. The lyrics are: 'sub. like the ooze of oil Crushed. Why do'. Dynamics include *p* (piano), *mp* (mezzo-piano), and *mf* (mezzo-forte). Measure 14 features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand. Measure 17 features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a sixteenth note in the left hand. A '(cross)' marking is present in measure 16.

* When pedal indications are not given, pedaling is at the discretion of the performer.

17 *p* men then now not reck his rod? Gen - er - a - tions have *p* trod, have trod, have

21 *mf* trod And all is seared with trade, bleared, smeared with

23 *f* toil and wears man's smudgeand shares man's smell: the

25 *mp* so - il Is *p* bare now, nor can *rit.* foot feel, be - ing shod. *mp* But for

30 *A tempo* ♩ = 90 all this na - ture is nev - er spent There

34

lives the dear-est fresh-ness - deep down things. And though the

39

last lights off the black West went Oh, morn-ing at the

43

brown brink, - east - ward springs! Be -

46

cause the Ho - ly Ghost ov-er the bent world broods with warm breast and with

[illegible]

Spring

Sprightly (♩ = 148)

p
Ped. simile

5 *8va*
Noth - ing is as beau - ti - ful as Spring When

9
weeds, in wheels, shoot long and love - ly and

13
lush; Thrush - 's eggs look lit - tle low

17
heav - ens and thrush through the ech o - ing tim - ber does so

21 *rit.*
rinse and wring the ear.

25 *legato*
it strikes like light - ning to hear him
mf

29 sing; The glass - y pear - tree

33 leaves and blooms they brush the

37 de - scen - ding blue - that blue is

41 all in a rush with rich - ness; the ra - cing

45 lambs too have fair their fling

49 Freely $\text{♩} = 62$

What is all this juice and all this joy?

pp

55

A strain of the earth's sweet be-ing - in the be-gin-ning -

61

in E-den gar-den - Have, get, be-fore it cloy, be-

66

fore it cloud, Christ, lord, and sour with sin-ning,

mf *ff*

l.h.

71 Con moto $\text{♩} = 90$

In-no-cent mindand May-day in girl and boy Most, O

p

76

rit.

maid'schild, thy choice and worth - y the win - ning.

Pied Beauty

With energy (♩ = 96)

The musical score for 'Pied Beauty' is written for piano and voice. It features a complex rhythmic pattern in the piano accompaniment, primarily using eighth and sixteenth notes with accents. The tempo is marked 'With energy' at 96 beats per minute. The score is divided into six systems, each with a measure number (3, 5, 6, 8, 9) at the beginning. The lyrics are: 'Glo - ry be to God for dap - pled things For skies of coup - le co - lor as a brin - ded - cow; For'. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature changes from 4/4 to 3/4 and back to 4/4. The piano part includes a 'mp' (mezzo-piano) marking. The voice part is indicated by the lyrics placed below the piano accompaniment.

3
Glo - ry be to God for dap - pled

5
things For

6
skies of coup - le co - lor as a

8
brin - ded - cow; For

9

11

rose - moles all in stip - ple up - on

mf

12

trout that swim 6 6

mp

14

Fresh fire - coal chest - nut - falls; finch - es'

mf

15

wings;

17

Land - scape plot - ted and piec - ed

[illegible]

21 *rit.*

mf all trades, their gear and tack - le and *p* trim.

23 *Rubato* (♩ = 76)

All things count - er, or i - gi - nal, spare, strange; What - ev - er is

27

fick - le, freck - led (who knows how?) With swift, slow;

Ped. Ped.

30

rapidly
8va -

sweet, sour; a - daz - zle,

ff

6 9

p dim;

Ped. Ped. Ped.

33

Reverently (♩ = 56)

mf

He fath - ers - forth whose beau - ty is past change: Praise him.

rit.

Ped. Ped.

The Caged Skylark

♩ = 90

As a dare - gale sky - lark scant - ed in a dull cage

p

6

Man's mount - ing spir - it in his bone - house, mean house, dwells - That

12

bird be - yond the re - mem - bring his free fells; This in

mp *rit.* *A tempo* *p* *mp*

16

drud - ger - y, day - la - bour - ing out life's age.

19

Though a - loft on turf or perch or

22

poor low stage, Both sing

25

some - times - the sweet - est, sweet - est

28

spells, Yet both droop dead - ly some -

32

rit. A tempo

times in their cells Or wring their bar - ri - ers in bursts of fear or

mf *ff*

36

rage. Not that the sweet - fowl, song - fowl, needs no

mp

41

rest Why hear him, hear him, bab - ble and

45

drop down to his nest, But his own nest, wild nest, no

rit.

50

pri - son. Man's spir - it will be flesh - bound when found at

mp

54

best, But un - cum - ber - ed : mea - dow - down is not dis - tressed For a

p *mp*

58

rain - bow foot - ing it nor he for his bones ris - en.

rit. *f*

The Windhover

$\text{♩} = 126$

mp

3 *rit.*

5 A tempo

7

9

12

The musical score for 'The Windhover' is written for piano and voice. It begins with a tempo of 126 beats per minute. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a more complex, syncopated pattern in the left hand. The voice enters at measure 3 with the lyrics 'caught this morn - ing'. The tempo slows down (rit.) for the next two measures. At measure 5, the tempo returns to the original speed (A tempo). The lyrics continue: 'morn - ing's min - ion king - dom of day - light's dau - phin, dap - ple - dawn - drawn Fal - con, in his rid - ing Of the'. The score includes various musical notations such as treble and bass clefs, key signatures (three sharps), time signatures (12/8, 3/4, 2/4), and dynamic markings (mp, rit.).

caught this - morn - ing morn - ing's min - ion

king - dom of day - light's dau - phin,

dap - ple - dawn - drawn Fal - con, in his

rid - ing Of the

13

roll- ing le- vel un-der - ²neath him stea- dy air, and

15

stri- ding High there, how he

18

rung u - pon the rein of a

20

wim - pling wing In his ec- sta - sy! *mf*

Then

A tempo ♩ = 116

22

8va -----

off, off forth on swing, As a

24

skate's heel sweeps smooth on a bow - bend: the

26

hurl and gli - ding re buffed the

29

Freely

big 10 wind. My heart in hi - ding

f

8va

rit.

31

Freely ♩ = 72

stirred for a bird, the a chieve of, the mas - ter - y of the

p *f* *ff*

7

35

thing! *mp* Brute beau - ty - and va - lour and act, oh, -

3

38

p *mf* air, pride, -

6 6 6 6

39

plume, here

buc- kle! And the

mp

41

fire that breaks from thee

p

42

then, a bil - lion times told

pp *mf*

44

love - li - er, more dan - ger - ous, O my che - va - lier! No

pp *mf*

48

won - der of it: sheer plod makes plough - down - sil - lion shine

pp *mf*

52

and blue - bleak

54

em-bers, ah - my dear, Fall,

mf

57

gall them - selves and gash

mp *mf*

59

gold ver - mil - lion.

P *pp*

As Kingfishers Catch Fire

Contemplatively ♩ = 156

ppp *mp*

As

5

king - fish - ers catch fire,

9

dra - gon - flies draw flame;

As

13

tum - led o - ver rim in roun - dy wells

Stones

17

ring like each tucked

21

string tells, each hung

25

bell's bow swung finds tongue

29

to fling out broad its

33

name; Each mor - tal thing does one thing and the

37

same Deals out that

41

Ped. be - ing in - doors each one dwells;

45

Selves

49

goes it - self; my - self it speaks and

53

spells, Cry - ing "What I do is me:

57

for that I

61

came."

I say more: the just man jus - ti - ces; Keeps

67

grace:

p

mf

that keeps all his go - ings

71

gra - ces;

f

Acts in God's eye what in God's eye he is -

77

Christ

For Christ plays

81

rit.

in ten thou - sand pla -

85

ces,

Love - ly in limbs, and

89

love - ly in eyes not his

To the

93

rit.

Fa - ther through the fea - tures of men's fa - ces.

The musical score for measures 93-96 is written for piano and voice. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo marking 'rit.' is above the first measure. The lyrics are 'Fa - ther through the fea - tures of men's fa - ces.' The piano accompaniment consists of chords and moving lines in both hands. The voice part is a single melodic line with lyrics.

The Sea and the Skylark

mp $\text{♩} = 60$

4 On ear and ear two noi - ses too

6 old to end Trench right, the tide that

8 ramps a - gainst the shore;

9 With a

The musical score is written for piano and voice. It begins with a tempo marking of quarter note = 60 and a mezzo-piano (mp) dynamic. The key signature has three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The score is divided into five systems. The first system (measures 1-3) is in 4/4 time. The second system (measures 4-5) changes to 5/4 time. The third system (measures 6-7) changes to 3/4 time. The fourth system (measures 8-9) changes to 6/4 time. The fifth system (measures 10-11) changes to 4/4 time. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a more complex, often syncopated, pattern in the left hand. The vocal line consists of a single melody line with lyrics written below the notes.

10

flood *f* or a fall, low

15

8vb *mp*

11

lull - off or all roar, Fre - quent - ing there while

pp *ff* *mp*

3

13

moon shall wear and wend. Left

Freely ♩ = 60

16 *p* hand, off land, I hear the lark as -

18 *mp* cend, His rash - fresh

20 re- win - ded new skein - ed score In

23 crisps of curl off

24

13 15

wild winch whirl, and

25

pour and pelt mu-sic till none's to spill nor spend. How

mp

29

these two shame this shal-low and frail town! How ring right out our

mf *p* *f*

33

espressivo

sor - did tur - bid time, We, life's pride and

mp *p* *mf*

be - ing pure!

36

cared - for crown, Have lost that cheer and charm of earth's - past - prime: Our

mp *f* *mp*

40

make and mak - ing break, are

f

41

break - ing, down, to

5 6

43

man's - first dust, drain fast toward man's first

3

45

slime.

rit.

In the Valley of the Elwy

Warmly ♩ = 92

7

mp

I re - mem - ber a house where all were good To me, God knows, de - ser - ving

sost. ped.

13

no such thing: Com - for - ting smell breathed at ve - ry en - te - ring,

19

Con moto

Fetch'd fresh, as I sup - pose, off - some sweet - wood. That cor - dial -

23

air made those kind peo - ple a hood All o - ver, as a

be - vy of eggs the mo - ther - ing wing

26

Will, or mild nights the new mor - sels of Spring:

29

Why, it seemed of course; seem - ed of right it should.

34

Love - ly the woods,

mp *mf*

Ped.

36

wa ters, mea dows, combes,

mp *f*

Ped.

39

vales, All the air - things - wear - that build this world of Wales; *mf*

44

mp On - ly the in - mate does not cor - res - pond: God, lo - ver of

48

souls, swing - ing con - si - der - ate scales, Com - plete thy crea - ture dear O

53

where it fails, Be - ing migh - ty a mas - ter, be - ing a fa - ther and *f* *p*

59

fond.

Hurrahing in Harvest

With energy ♩ = 90

The musical score is written for piano in 4/4 time with a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). It consists of four systems of staves, each with a treble and bass clef. The melody is primarily in the treble clef, featuring many beamed eighth and sixteenth notes, often with accents. The bass clef provides a steady accompaniment of eighth notes. The lyrics are placed below the treble staff. Performance markings include *mp* (mezzo-piano), *mf* (mezzo-forte), and *Ped.* (pedal). The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Sum - mer ends now;

now, bar - ba - rous in beau - ty, the

sto - oks rise, A - round, up a -

bove, what wind - walks!

mf

Ped.

8

what lo-vely be-ha-viour

mp

Ped.

10

Of silk-sack clouds! has

mf

Ped.

12

wild-er, wil-ful-wav-i-er

mp

13

Meal-drift moul-ded ev-er and melt-ed a-cross

mf

15

skies? I walk, I lift

p

Ped.

17

up, I lift up

Red.

18

heart, eyes,

8va -----

16:10

Red.

19

Down all that glo - - ry in the heav - ens to

mp

Red.

21

glean our Sav - ior! and

mf

Red.

23

eyes, heart, what looks, what lips, yet

mp

Red.

26

gave you a rap - tur - ous love's gree - ting of

Ped. *P*

29

real - er, of round - er re - plies? And the az - ur - ous hung

rit. *mp* $\text{♩} = 152$

32

hills are his world - wield - ing should - der Ma -

37

jest - ic - as a stal - lion stal - wart, ver - y - vio - let - sweet!

42

These things, these things were here and but the be - hold - er

47

Want - ing; which

pp

51

two when they once meet, The

poco a poco cresc. *accel.*

55

heart rears wings bold and bold - er

poco a poco cresc.

59

And hurls for him,

63

O half hurls earth for him off

67 *Furioso*

un - der his feet.

ff

3 5 3 3

70

3 8vb

The Starlight Night

Freely, with wonder ♩ = 90

Look at the stars! look, look up at the skies, O

look at all the fi-re folk sit - ting in the air! The

bright bor - oughs the cir - cle ci - ta - dels there,

Down in dim woods the dia - mond delves! the

mp

mf

p

14

elves' - eyes! The gray lawns cold where gold, where

p

Ped.

18

quick - gold lies! Wind - beat white - beam!

Ped.

20

air - y ab-les set on a flare! Flake - doves sent - float - ing forth

8va...

23

at a farm - yard scare! Ah well! it is all a pur - chase, all is a

l.h.

29

prize! Buy then! bid then! What? *mp* Prayer, pa - tience,

f

35

alms, vows, Look, look: a May - mess like on

mf

39

or - chard boughs! Look! March - bloom like on

43

mealed - with - yel - low sal - lows! These are in - deed the barn; with -

mp *p*

47

in - doors house, the shocks. This piece - bright pal - ing

mf

50

mp shuts the spouse Christ home,

p Christ and his moth - er and all his

55

hal - lows.

The Lantern out of Doors

$\text{♩} = 90$

Some-times a lan-tern moves a-long the night That in terestour eyes. And who goes

mp

6

there? I think; where from and bound I won-der, where,

pp *mp*

12

With, all down dark-ness wide, his wad-ing light? Men go

pp

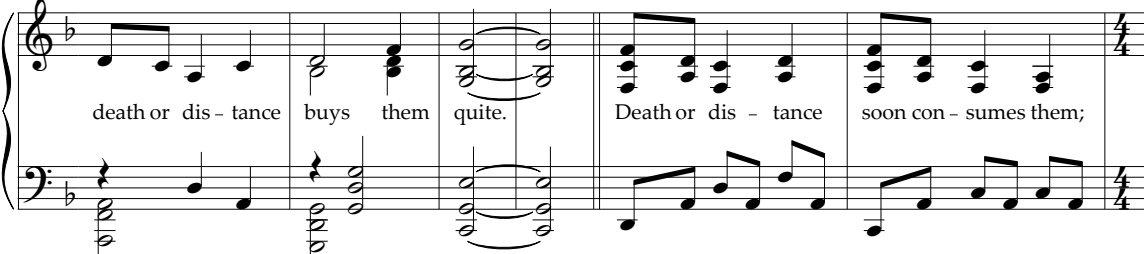
18

by me whomeith-er beau-ty bright In mould or mind, or whatnot else makes

24

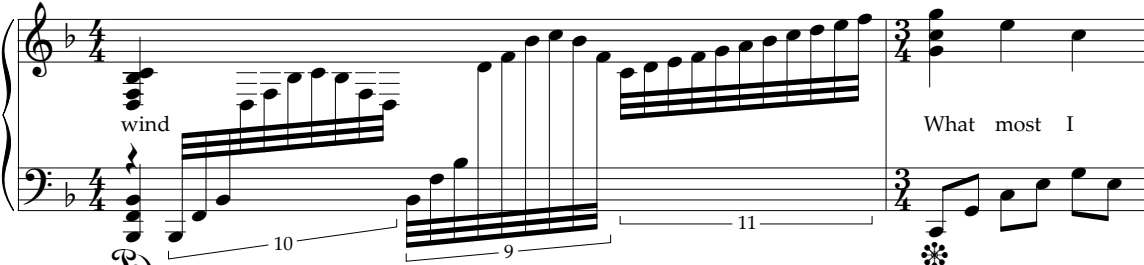
rare: They rain a-gainst our much-thick and marsh air Rich beams, till

29



death or dis - tance buys them quite. Death or dis - tance soon con - sumes them;

35



wind What most I

10 9 11

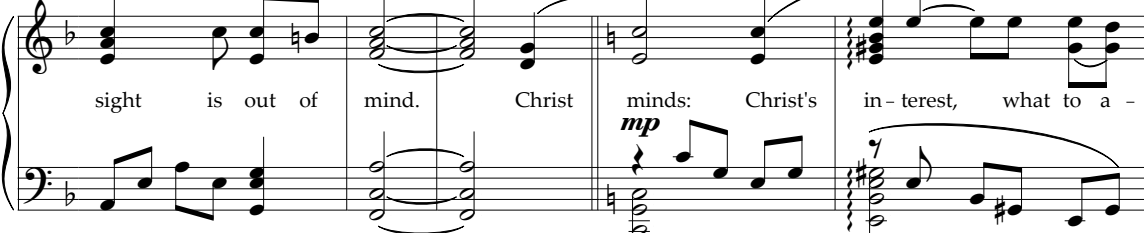
Ped.

37



may eye af - ter, be in at the end I can not, and out of

41



sight is out of mind. Christ minds: Christ's in - terest, what to a -

mp

46



vow or a - mend There, eyes them,

mf

51

heart wants, care haunts, foot fol - lows kind,

55

Their ran - som, their res - cue, and

58

$\text{♩} = 100$

f

first,

first,

59

$\text{♩} = 100$

fast,

fast,

61 *rit.* 8va

friend.

Ped.

6 6 7 7 7

6 6 7 7 7

8va 7