2012

A performer's guide to Stephen Paulus' Mad Book, Shadow Book: Songs of Michael Morley

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A PERFORMER’S GUIDE TO STEPHEN PAULUS’
MAD BOOK, SHADOW BOOK: SONGS OF MICHAEL MORLEY

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
In partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Musical Arts

in

The School of Music

by

Jin Hin Yap
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May 2012
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First of all, I would like to thank all my committee members. Professor Grayson, I could not say thank you enough for all the years studying with you. You saw the potential in me and helped me to become what I am as a singer and as a teacher. I will remember it for the rest of my life. Dr. Sims, thank you so much for your guidance that helped me to be a better teacher with all the pedagogic tools you shared throughout my studies. Prof. O’Neill, thank you for being my diction guru and helping me with Alexander knowledge. Prof. Jesse, thank you so much for all your support that helped me to find my confidence as a singer. Dr. Douglas, thank you for your time and effort to be on my committee. I appreciate it very much.

I would like to thank Stephen Paulus and Michael Dennis Browne for this wonderful song cycle. Mr. Paulus, thank you so much for your time and for sharing your work with me. It is my great honor to work with you. Mr. Browne, it was an amazing experience to work with you and to have a chance to premier your work during this project. Thank you so much for everything you have shared.

I also want to thank all my colleagues, friends, and professors I have worked with at Louisiana State University. Thank you all for your help and support. It has been an amazing journey for me. To our host parents, Roger and Marcia Moser, and our friends Ed and Linda Green. I could not thank you enough for all your care and your love. We are blessed to have you in our lives. Thank you!

Finally and most importantly, I want to thank my fiancée Jane, who has supported and helped me during this process. Thank you for encouraging and keeping me on track. I cannot be thankful enough. Thank you for being in my life, and sharing your life, your laugh, and your love with me.
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ABSTRACT

Stephen Paulus is a prolific American composer of the twenty-first century. Together with his primary collaborator Michael Dennis Browne, an English born, American poet, he has produced numerous compositions ranging from choral works to operatic. This document introduces Paulus’ early song cycle for tenor Mad Book, Shadow Book: Songs of Michael Morley (“Michael Morley Creaked,” “Falling Asleep in the Afternoon,” “I Feel Good Running,” “Morley’s Root Song,” “Calm, Calm,” and “Et in Arcadia, Morley”). Included is biographical and stylistic information about the composer and the poet, general information about the song cycle, and a performer’s guide to the songs, followed by a conclusion. Appendices include the texts of the cycle, a catalogue of Paulus’ published songs, a list of Browne’s works, and transcriptions of interviews with the composer and the poet, as well as letters of permission.

KEYWORDS: Stephen Paulus, Michael Dennis Browne, Mad Book, Shadow Book: Songs of Michael Morley, song cycle
INTRODUCTION

Stephen Paulus is a prolific American composer of the twenty-first century. Together with his primary collaborator Michael Dennis Browne, an English born, American poet, he has produced numerous works ranging from choral to operatic. This document aims to introduce Paulus’ early song cycle for tenor Mad Book, Shadow Book: Songs of Michael Morley. The cycle of six songs is based on the imaginative world of Michael Morley, a persona created by Michael Browne. The document includes biographical information about the composer and the poet, general information about the song cycle, and performer’s guide to the songs, which is followed by a conclusion. Appendices include a list of Paulus’ published songs, a list of Browne’s works, and a transcription of interviews with the composer and the poet, and letters of permission.

It was by chance that I saw this cycle when I was browsing through Paulus’ works. After some research, I was quickly drawn to Browne’s writing and Paulus’ music, which so perfectly interprets Morley’s madness. I obtained the chamber version of the song cycle through Paulus’s publication company, and later was told by the composer that he had an unpublished piano version. The music of the song cycle is highly dramatic and is rhythmically complicated with Paulus making use of a variety of vocal styles.

The purpose of this document is to examine the six songs of the cycle Mad Book, Shadow Book: Songs of Michael Morley, and provide guidance for performance and interpretation. Chapters one and two provide biographical information about the composer and the poet, as well as a stylistic overview. Chapter three includes information on the cycle’s premiere, compositional concept, Paulus’ approach to the selection of the poems, and the two versions of the cycle. Chapter four offers a performance guide for each song, which incorporates interpretive and technical advice, and includes Paulus’ personal perspectives.
In addition to the research, a new piano/vocal score of the music has been created, which accounts for subtle variations between the piano version and the chamber version of the cycle. The musical examples in this document are based on this new score.
CHAPTER 1
THE COMPOSER – STEPHEN PAULUS

Biography

American composer Stephen (Harrison) Paulus was born in Summit, New Jersey on August 24, 1949 into a musical family. Both his parents, Harrison and Patricia, were pianists, and Harrison worked as an organist for churches. In 1951, they moved to St. Paul, Minnesota. Paulus began studying piano with his parents when he was eight, and commenced formal lessons at age ten. At age twelve, he turned his interest to composition. In 1967, he attended Macalester College during which time he studied composition with Thomas Clemen. In 1969, Paulus transferred to University of Minnesota where began work with Paul Fetler, who was to become his mentor and the greatest influence on his compositional style.

“...he was a wonderful teacher and a terrific composer. He taught by the Socratic method... lyrical and quite tonal but then with dissonance, very well orchestrated, very sensitive to texts and colors of the orchestra.”\(^1\)

Paulus received his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1971. After taking a year off to work, he returned to the university for the master’s degree in theory and composition, and continued working with Paul Fetler, ultimately earning a PhD in composition. During studies Fetler suggested that Paulus also work with Dominick Argento. “Dr. Fetler would refer me to him by saying, ‘you’re setting words here and Dominic is a real expert in that...’ So, once in a while, I would study with him.”\(^2\) Argento and Paulus maintained a long lasting friendship. Through Argento, Paulus met Libby Larsen, with whom he has collaborated. In 1973, Paulus and Larsen founded the Minnesota Composers Forum, which after 1993 changed its name to American Composers Forum.

\(^1\) Stephen Paulus, telephone interview by author, Baton Rouge, LA, January 12, 2012.

\(^2\) Ibid.
“We were both graduate students at the University of Minnesota... I was writing for Fetler and she [Larsen] was writing for Argento and nobody was playing them... What we decided to do is... to get some of our colleagues together and play our music so we could hear it... we decided to do that and anyone else did a little fund-raising and one thing led to another and we organized this group.”

In 1976, during his doctoral studies, Fetler arranged for Paulus to meet Michael Dennis Browne. In their first collaboration Paulus composed two choral works *Fountain of My Friends* and *Carol of the Hill*. Paulus also set music to *Mad Book, Shadow Book: Songs of Michael Morley*, which is based on one of Browne’s most dramatic and most imaginative poems, *The Michael Morley Poems*. Since then, Browne has been Paulus’ frequent collaborator, and they have produced more than twenty works such as his first opera *The Village Singer* (1979), the song cycle *All My Pretty Ones* (1984), and Pulitzer Prize nominated oratorio *To Be Certain of the Dawn* (2005). In 1983, he became the composer-in-residence for the Minnesota Orchestra, which was under the direction of Sir Neville Marriner, and later for the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra in 1988, when he moved to the city. In Atlanta, he met and worked with Robert Shaw and Yoel Levi. In 1990, he joined the Board of Directors of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP). In 1992, Paulus returned to St. Paul and remained a resident since then. He has served as resident composer for the Tanglewood Festival, Aspen Music Festival, Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, and for the Oregon Bach Festival. In July 1997, he founded his publication company, Paulus Publications, in St. Paul and New York.

In addition to his primary collaborator, Michael Browne, Paulus has worked with various contemporary librettists, including Andrea Fellows Walters, Colin Graham, and Joan Vail Thorne. His latest work *Shoes for the Santo Niños* was premiered on December 16, 2011. Paulus remains active promoting new music in the United States.

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3 Paulus, telephone interview by author, January 12, 2012.

Paulus’ Compositional Style

Stephen Paulus is a prolific composer with over two hundred works which encompass orchestra, keyboard, instrumental concertos, operas, choral works, chamber ensembles, and solo voice. He has been commissioned to compose music for artists such as Thomas Hampson, Deborah Voigt, Håkan Hagegård, William Preucil, Cynthia Phelps, Evelyn Lear, Leo Kottke, and Robert McDuffie.⁵

Paulus’s music is characterized as “rugged, angular, lyrical lean, rhythmically aggressive, original, often gorgeous, moving, and uniquely American.”⁶ Often described as a Romantic composer, he refers to himself as “lyrical and anchored in some tonalities, but also able to dart in and out of dissonant things.”⁷ Moreover, he prefers a balance between consonance and dissonance. Paulus is very sensitive to text setting. In his solo vocal and choral works, he always attempts to highlight the texts, with the accompaniment not overpowering the voices. “...one thing I’m careful to do usually is to keep the piano away or apart from fighting the voice, I always want the words to be heard.”⁸ His songs “exhibit his fine lyrical sense, dramatic flair and attention to detail, and keen sense of prosody.”⁹

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⁶ Ibid.
⁸ Ibid.
⁹ Kimball, Song: A Guide to Art Song Style and Literature, 327.
CHAPTER 2
THE POET – MICHAEL DENNIS BROWNE

Biography

A native of England, Michael Dennis Browne was born on May 28, 1940 in Walton-on-Thames, in the county of Surrey in southern England. Both his parents, Edgar Dennis Browne and Winifred Margaret Denne were of Irish origin. Edgar worked as a sales manager of a motor oil company, but his passion was for music; he was an organist, a pianist, and a choirmaster. Winifred, according to Michael Browne, was “a talented amateur actress, and all her life enjoyed reciting for us passages from Shakespeare’s plays, in particular from A Midsummer Night’s Dream.”

In 1947, Michael Browne studied at the Saint George’s College, a Catholic school in Weybridge. During his studies there, the priests who read aloud inspired him.

“I like to think that as a teacher, as a public reader of poetry, and also as a parent I have passed on that love of reading, and listening to reading.”

Although he did not do well in his studies, Browne loved reading, and acting. In his autobiography, he said, “I certainly loved to read, and not just poetry – the novels of Jane Austen and Thomas Hardy absorbed me for years... I wanted to be on the stage, I thought...” However, after several attempts at acting, Browne decided not to pursue a career in theater.

In 1958, after qualifying for university entrance, Browne left Saint George and was accepted to the University of Hull to study French and Swedish. This experience was to be a life-long influence on his career as a poet.

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11 Ibid., 57.

12 Ibid.
“Hull was not a particularly likely, or even fashionable, choice for a failed actor from the southern home counties but it turn out to be a fine one for me and set me on a course which led, through many detours and digressions, to the life I have now as a writer and teacher in North America.”\(^{13}\)

At Hull, Browne discovered poetry from the United States, France, and Sweden, representing such poets as Theodore Roethke, Wallace Stevens, Charles Baudelaire, Alfred de Vigny, Guillaume Apollinaire, Gustaf Fröding, Per Daniel Amadeus Atterbom, and Carl Michael Bellman. He also participated in drama productions, sang in the choir, and contributed poems to the literary magazine, where he served as editor.

On April 9, 1960, the death of Browne’s father changed his life forever. He was traveling to London when he received the news about his father. “...then began a nightmarish forty-eight hours which ended in the death of my clever, loving father.”\(^{14}\) Browne, who was still a teenager, was deeply affected by his father’s death.

“It took me fifteen years or more to write my way through the crippling grief of that loss and to begin to be able to live my life with reasonable clarity. I can hardly blame my father’s death for the waywardness and self-centeredness of much of my behavior in the years that followed, but I know it had a deep effect. I also know that it gave me a keen sense of how brief life is and of the need to express the polarities of experience...”\(^{15}\)

In the same year, as part of the procedure for students of French studies, Browne went to France for nine months. Still under the grief of his father’s death, Browne was hit by another difficulty – being separated from his family. To overcome such pain, he increasingly expressed his thoughts in poetry.

After graduating from the University of Hull in 1962, Browne spent some time teaching English and pursuing his hobby of acting with touring theatrical groups. In 1963, he travelled as

\(^{13}\) Browne, *Michael Dennis Browne*, 58.

\(^{14}\) Ibid., 59.

\(^{15}\) Ibid.
an exchange student to Helsinki University in Finland. There he met Chester G. Anderson, an American poet and Fulbright Lecturer, with whom he established a life-long friendship. Anderson encouraged Browne to pursue his writing in the United States. In 1965, Browne was accepted into the graduate program in English literature at the University of Iowa. In Iowa, he studied with Donald Justice, Marvin Bell, Robert Sward, Paul Carroll, and George Starbuck. “I learned a good deal from these teachers and I also learned from hanging around the ways and styles, some of them very new to me, of my fellow poets.”\(^\text{16}\) He also wrote poems and published them in several magazines, including the New Yorker and the Tri-Quarterly.

In 1967, Browne graduated from Iowa and was invited by George Starbuck to remain there as a visiting lecturer. In the fall of 1968, he was invited to teach for a semester at Columbia University in New York, followed by two years at Bennington College in Vermont. The poet described this latter appointment as the most difficult time of his life.

> “Though I continued to grow as a poet, though I read and heard and met many poets important to me, though I formed some fine friendships, I was often restless, lonely, and disorderly in my ways.”\(^\text{17}\)

Despite the difficult times at Bennington, in 1970, Browne managed to publish his first book of poems, \textit{The Wife of Winter}. In this book, which is dedicated to his father, he introduced the first part of his poems of “Michael Morley,” who is the sole character in Stephen Paulus’ song cycle \textit{Mad Book, Shadow Book: Songs of Michael Morley}.

In 1971, with the help of his best friend Chester Anderson, Browne was offered a teaching position at the University of Minnesota, which he quickly accepted. Since then, Minnesota has been his home. In 1975, his uncharacteristically long poem, \textit{Sun Exercises} was premiered for the Arts Festival of Saint Mark, in memory of the death of his father. In the same

\(^{16}\) Browne, \textit{Michael Dennis Browne}, 62-63.

\(^{17}\) Ibid., 64.
year, while seeking a composer for possible musical collaboration, Browne met Stephen Paulus. Paulus was studying for his doctorate in composition with Paul Fetler at Minnesota. *Mad Book, Shadow Book: Songs of Michael Morley* was one of their first works written together.

In the summer of 1976, when Browne was spending his holiday with friends Louis and Ann Jenkins in Duluth, south of Minneapolis, he was introduced to Louis’ student Lisa McLean, whom he married five years later. In 1978, Browne published his second book of poems, *The Sun Fetcher* (Carnegie Mellon Publication), which include the second part of “Michael Morley” poems. Between 1983 and 1989, Browne and his wife had three children: Peter (1983), Mary (1986) and Nellie (1989). On being a father, Browne said, “The presence of these three children is, to this day, the major gift and transformation of my life, and I find it hard to imagine how I survived all those years in which I cultivated my own loneliness.”  

He wrote a number of poems about his children and published them in his book of poems *You Won’t Remember This* in 1992.

Since then, Michael Browne has remained a poet, a librettist, and a teacher at University of Minnesota. In 1989, he became the director of the creative writing program but resigned in 1993. “I think that this position, which made new demands on me, had its effect on my writing.” He has collaborated primarily with Stephen Paulus on various works, such as post-Holocaust oratorio *To be Certain of the Dawn*, which was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in music, the operas *The Village Singer, The Three Hermits*, and *Harmoonia*, the song cycle *All My Pretty Ones*, and various choral settings. His latest collaboration is a church opera *The Shoemaker*, based on a story by Leo Tolstoy. *The Shoemaker* was performed at Plymouth Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota in April 2011. Browne’s other collaborators include John Foley.

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19 Ibid., 73.
S.J., and David Lord, who composed a song cycle *The Wife of Winter* and three other works for children.

Since 1990, Browne has explored prose writing, which he has found rewarding. He says, “...I have found prose a good place to go to assemble previously disparate, unused ideas and try to combine them into new sequences...”20 After thirty-nine years of teaching, Browne retired from the University of Minnesota in 2011. He is currently working on his new collection of poems called *The Voice*.

**Style and Characteristics of Browne’s Writing**

Though British by birth and upbringing, Michael Browne is now an American citizen. In some ways, the American influence is also seen in his writing. He began writing when he was a teenager, and was inspired by the important English poets, including Shakespeare, Keats, and Blake. Browne’s writing shows his own distinct style, which he describes as “lyrical, eclectic, [and] imagistic.”21 To him, one of the key elements of writing is rhythm. “If it doesn’t have rhythm, it doesn’t have energy.”22

“You get a kind of a shape. You get a pulse. You don’t have any words. It’ll just tell you what that rhythmical shape [is]. It must have an urgency and a flowing to it. It must be varied too.”23

The structure of his writing includes both free verse, and various types of formal verses, which are characterized by fixed meters, stanza forms and rhyme schemes. He also likes to have

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22 Ibid.

23 Ibid.
different mixtures of styles. “...poetry is very good at... complex vocabulary, and I like what Auden says... ‘Poetry is a clear expression of mixed feelings.’”^24

Browne notes that he writes about his obsessions. “One of my obsessions is my family in England, my parents... and my sisters and brother and their children.”^25 Many of his writings involve his family. The *Sun Exercise*, his longest poem, is his memory of his family, especially his father.

“I am walking by the sea with my mother.

... In a small boat my father goes by.
It is a calm sea.

... My sister Mary is standing on the beach.
She is staring into the sun.

... My sister Angela stands looking at the waves;

...”^26

His fourth book of poems, *You Won’t Remember This*, includes works about his children. *Mad Book, Shadow Book: Songs of Michael Morley*, which is from the series of Michael Morley poems, contains fragmented memories of his mother and brother. *Wild and Calm Lament for My Mother*, written in 1997, is a tribute to his mother. Many of his writings tell the stories of his own life experience. “I want my poetry to have what Denise Levertov has called ‘fidelity to experience.’...our poems should be like our lives.”^27

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^24 Browne, Skype interview by author.


Some of his poetry contains the polarity of two extreme qualities: love and hate, joy and grief, sanity and madness, and day and night. This writing style was likely developed when he travelled to France a few months after the death of his father.

“... I had a dead father and I had a life in France, and I was excited and miserable, which is a perfect combination for writing poetry, the excitement of life and... the grief of my father’s death.”28

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28 Browne, Skype interview by author.
CHAPTER 3
MICHAEL MORLEY AND THE MAD BOOK, SHADOW BOOK: SONGS OF MICHAEL MORLEY

Michael Browne began writing Michael Morley Poems in 1968. The first part of the collection was published in The Wife of Winter (1970), and the second part was published in The Sun Fetcher (1978), under the title of Mad Book, Shadow Book: Further Stories of Mr. Michael Morley. The main character of the work, Michael Morley, is a persona Browne created to express the imaginative self in his mind.

“This persona/mask was a great release from me – all sorts of strange images erupted out of the unconscious. For sure he represents, at least partially, my shadow side – subversive, mischievous, irresponsible, unruly.”

According to Browne, the concept of creating the persona models the collection of poems called Dreams Songs, which is written by American poet John Berryman (1914-1972). In the poems, Berryman wrote a persona whose name is Henry, a character that reflects the opposite personalities of himself. The name “Michael Morley” has a unique relationship to Browne and his father. While “Michael” is a direct reflection of Browne, “Morley” is tied to the place where his father died.

“...it came to me one day that the place where my father had died in April of 1960 in England was the Atkinson Morley Hospital... for six months I wrote these crazy poems not realizing that “Morley” was a significant name for me.”

Moreover, the “Mor” from “Morley” has the same pronunciation with the French word “mort,” which means death. It seems that the death of his father had influenced him unconsciously to create such imaginative character.

29 Michael Dennis Browne, Email interview by author, Baton Rouge, LA, January 10, 2012.
31 Browne, Skype interview by author.
Michael Morley, according to Browne, is “a manic man, a shadow, a persona, a crazy one, usually either running (manic) or falling asleep and sleeping (depressive).” Morley is no reality. He is an imaginative self in Browne’s mind.

“He is perhaps the ‘room inside the room’ of my own personality. All of us have many selves, many of which we are unaware of – they are truly unconscious – some of which we repress.”

“For example, ‘Michael Morley sets the fish on the fire.’ That’s a silly thought, but it’s a dream thought. I am much too respectable... I would never run up a waterfall, and set the fish on fire, but Michael Morley would.”

Before Browne published his Morley poems, American novelist Austin Wright (1922-2003) had used the name “Michael Morley” in his novel The Morley Mythology, which was published in 1968, coincidentally the same year as Browne started to write The Michael Morley Poems. “I never met him... It’s just a coincidence that one artist in prose, one in poetry chose this name... it was an amusing coincidence, but I never read it.”

The song cycle Mad Book, Shadow Book: Songs of Michael Morley is one of the first works by the collaboration of Stephen Paulus and Michael Browne. It was composed in December 1976 under the commission of Schubert Club of St. Paul. There are six movements in the cycle:

1. Michael Morley Creaked
2. Falling Asleep in the Afternoon
3. I Feel Good Running

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32 Browne, Skype interview by author.
33 Browne, Email interview by author, January 10, 2012.
34 Ibid.
35 Browne, Skype interview by author.
36 Ibid.
4. Morley’s Root Song
5. Calm, Calm
6. Et in Arcadia, Morley

The texts of the first three songs are taken from Browne’s collection of poems *The Sun Fetcher*. The fifth song *Calm, Calm* is from *The Wife of Winter*. The fourth and last song, *Morley’s Root Song* and *Et in Arcadia Morley*, were written solely for the cycle. The poem *Morley’s Root Song* was published in spring 1977, while the *Et in Arcadia, Morley* remains unpublished.

The song cycle was premiered by tenor Vern Sutton and pianist Julie Himmelstrup in a concert of Paulus’ works on February 17, 1977 at the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. Tenor Vern Sutton is a singer/actor and served as a professor of voice and opera at the University of Minnesota from 1956 to 2003. Numerous compositions have been written specifically for his voice by composers such as Dominick Argento, Libby Larsen, and others.

“Vern and Julie did a beautiful job of performing [the song cycle]... There’s no stage direction or anything but it’s just a psycho-drama in a way... In the poem drafted earlier where there’s sort of like a fantastical, ranging of those light and manic to rather dark and introspective.”

In 1978, American tenor Paul Sperry commissioned Paulus to arrange a chamber version of the cycle. However, the version of the cycle was never performed.

*Mad Book, Shadow Book: Songs of Michael Morley* is a song cycle that tells the journey of Michael Browne’s persona Michael Morley, who represents the shadowed personality of Browne. In the song cycle, each movement is a mixture of Browne’s memories of actual


39 Ibid.
experiences and the fantasies, which represent the dreams of Morley. “He is me [sic] and he is the persona. He is an aspect of myself. He is someone roaming around inside me, saying crazy things.”\textsuperscript{40} Browne compares the creation of the persona to the release of the Root chakra. From the Hindu religion in India, the chakras represent the flow of energy in different human body parts. The first of the seven chakras, located at the bottom of the human body is the Base chakra, also known as Muladhara or Root chakra, and “is associated with the element of Earth, symbolizing the basis of life.”\textsuperscript{41} It is related to sexuality, obsession, and lust. Browne uses the Root chakra to describe Morley’s characteristics. “I was trying to bring up, from the Root, a certain kind of wild craziness.”\textsuperscript{42}

Prior to writing Mad Book, Shadow Book: Songs of Michael Morley, Paulus and Browne had produced several choral works, which are lyrical and straightforward. Then, Browne suggested setting the poems of Michael Morley. “...I decided that the Morley poems should be a little different from the previous things, a little crazier, a little riskier.”\textsuperscript{43} The variety of personalities from Morley poems caught Paulus’ interest. “...it's talking about a shadowy character with different personae and so it gave me a rich palette texturally for most of the work. I enjoyed it a lot.”\textsuperscript{44} While composing the cycle, Paulus experimented with his own compositional style by using various types of compositional techniques to accommodate the complex personalities of Michael Morley.

\textsuperscript{40} Browne, Skype interview by author.

\textsuperscript{41} Patricia Mercier, The Chakra Bible (New York: Octopus Publishing, 2007), 90.

\textsuperscript{42} Browne, Skype interview by author.

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{44} Paulus, telephone interview by author, January 12, 2012.
Throughout the cycle, Paulus is adventurous in setting the music for the voice and piano. For example, at the outset of the first movement *Michael Morley Creaked*, he uses a twelve-tone row in the piano part, while the voice employs classical style singing, whispering, and *Sprechstimme*. Browne was pleased by the way Paulus brought his words to life. “I’ve no idea how Stephen found notes for all this. Rather amazing! How brave/heroic of him to tackle such words.”

The music of the cycle, while harmonically and rhythmically complicated, maintains lyricism in the vocal part. Paulus also quotes music by another composer; in the fourth movement *Morley’s Root Song*, he borrows an excerpt from Franz Liszt’s Sonata in B minor, S. 178.

The piano, according to Paulus, should be played like an orchestra, which creates a pictorial environment and supports the singer. “...one thing I’m careful to do usually is to keep the piano away or apart from fighting the voice, I want the words to be heard.” Dianne Frazer, a resident pianist at Louisiana State University, notes that “there are sudden mood changes, several rapid, technical passages that must be executed with a bit of flair, and there is whimsy and a touch of humor.”

Along with the musical score, Paulus has included performance notes that explain his method of notation for various vocal techniques that are required (See Table 1).

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45 Browne, Email interview by author, January 10, 2012.


47 Dianne Frazer, Email interview by author, Baton Rouge, LA, March 7, 2012.
Table 1. Paulus’ performance notes for *Mad Book, Shadow Book: Songs of Michael Morley*.48

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>=</td>
<td>Whispering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=</td>
<td>Sprechstimme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=</td>
<td>Notes of definite pitch different from ordinary notes in that the actual choice of pitch is unimportant so long as it is relative (in highness or lowness) to the contour of the line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=</td>
<td>Sung as high as possible or as low as possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=</td>
<td>Accelerando</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=</td>
<td>Indicates that figure inside repeated signs is to be continued to the end of the line extension, or until arrow stops at a bar line, e.g.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=</td>
<td>Signifies wavering pitch</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Michael Morley Creaked

In the middle of the night, Michael Morley was wandering through the woods. He was called and followed by the shadows. The shadows were a variety of things, from the midnight wood, to the grandfather clock, or even the shadows of his past. While trying to escape these shadows, he rushed into a classroom, took off his wheels, ran to a waterfall with photographs, and set a fish on fire. All the events happened in the dream-like state of Michael Morley’s mind. Michael Browne describes Morley as “…rather frenzied, rather maniac… [It is] showing pictures of what it’s like to be inside his head of his sensibility… [It is] very active, rather childlike…”

The movement begins with a mysterious twelve-tone passage in the piano, which sets the dark, midnight atmosphere. The tempo at the outset of the piece is slow (\(\dot{\text{\}} = 56\)), as the fantasy rises within Morley’s mind (Example 1).

\[49\] Browne, telephone interview by author.

The vocal part begins with *pianissimo* whispering in m. 6, and then incorporates *Sprechstimme* to normal vocalism in mm. 7-8. This progression of vocal techniques serves as a means of intensifying the shadows’ call. The singer may interpret this as if Morley is calling himself and awakening in his dream. In m. 9, the abrupt chords in the piano act as a wake up gesture, and Morley realizes that he is wandering through the woods at midnight (Example 2). In this passage the whispering should be as quiet as possible, but audible to the audience. The second call, which is the *Sprechstimme*, is slightly louder than the former. As it is getting louder, the vocal part reaches $C^4$ in m. 8, the final call for Morley. In mm. 9-11, the calling becomes more aggressive, as if Morley is being followed in the “midnight wood.” In order to interpret the edgy characteristics of Morley’s personality, the singer must explore fully the extreme contrast of vocal qualities.

As he feels the shadows closing in on him, “as if he were raw meat,” he begins to run away from them. The constant B♭ in the piano in m. 20 illustrates Morley’s run (Example 3). Each group of notes is accelerated within the beat, which signifies Morley’s unsuccessful attempts to flee the shadows.


In m. 23, the chase is characterized by unrelenting triplet patterns in the piano, and the voice enters in *Sprechstimme* with the self-descriptive line “He slid over the snow like a skillet down a slope...” (Example 4) Moreover, Paulus introduces a new notation for the vocal part – the square note – on the words “snow,” “slope,” and “electric.” In his performance notes, Paulus
defines the square notes as “Notes of definite pitch different from ordinary notes in that the actual choice of pitch is unimportant so long as it is relative (in highness or lowness) to the contour of the line.”⁵⁰ In other words, the singer should strive to sustain the pitch ranges indicated, but does not have to match the pitch level of the square note. He will follow the flow of the Sprechstimme, which is indicated ad lib. To intensify the drama, the singer may incorporate a panting effect, particularly in the repeated words “like a skillet.” The piano figure within the repeat signs should be played continuously until the arrow stops at the dotted bar line. On the word “electric,” the piano part comes to a sudden pause, and Morley breaks into another scene.

Example 4. Paulus, Michael Morley Creaked, mm. 22-24. The constant triplet patterns on the piano and the square notes on the vocal part.

In m. 25, the scene changes suddenly with the text “Morley broke into an empty classroom,” as the rhythmic pattern in the piano shifts immediately to a mixture of triplets and duplets, which suggests Morley stumbling around the classroom (Example 5). The singer must

maintain precise rhythmic ensemble with the pianist. In m. 28, when Morley “took of his wheels,” the pause within triplets on the piano part depicts losing his wheels. “...kids have training wheels when they are young... on their bicycle so they can be steady that it won't fall... that one wheel on either side of the bike... And so, he took of his wheels means he's free...”51 The piano part is rapid and aggressive throughout. After the break in m. 28, the figure in m. 29 shows Morley free from the shadows, and should be played brillante.

Example 5. Paulus, Michael Morley Creaked, mm. 25-30. The mixture of triplets and duplets on the piano.

After the long sustained D₄ in the piano in m. 30, Morley finds himself in an abstract world, on a ladder strewn with photographs. The shadows are no longer chasing him, and the scene is quiet and mysterious, as he examines his surroundings. Observing the dynamic level, the singer must portray his curiosity and caution. In mm. 39-47 (“against a waterfall”), Paulus brings back the opening twelve-tone passage in the piano, which rekindles Morley’s vision of the mysterious midnight wood (Example 6). The vocal passage on the word “waterfall” is unsettling

51 Browne, telephone interview with author.
and harmonically suspending, and contains unusual and harmonically unsupported intervals such as augmented fourth (B₃ to F₄) and major seventh (F₃ to E₄) in m. 41, as the piano plays the dissonant twelve-tone passage underneath.


As the vocalist is finishing the second “waterfall,” the piano part suddenly breaks the silence with a violent passage in mm. 50-52 (Example 7). In m. 53 with the return of the repeated B₃ in the piano, we realize Morley is running again as he “set the fish on fire.” Both vocal and piano parts need to accelerate separately. On the word “fire,” the singer is challenged by a *glissando* from C♯₄ to A₄, which requires a *diminuendo* to *piano* followed by a *crescendo* to *ff*. Therefore, good control of the support for the voice is essential to this passage. The singer should choose a closed vowel on the word “fire” and slowly switch to head voice while ascending into A₄. During the *crescendo* to *ff*, the singer is recommended to switch immediately to mixed chest/head quality. It is important for the piano to follow immediately at the end of the vocal line,
with its swift running note passage, similarly to the passage in m. 29. This indicates the quick escape of Morley after he “set the fish on fire.”

Example 7. Paulus, Michael Morley Creaked, mm. 50-57. The violent piano passage and the final vocal part.

_Falling Asleep in the Afternoon_

_Falling Asleep in the Afternoon_

Again I am falling asleep in the afternoon; not “falling in love again” but falling asleep in the afternoon. The glass in the window thickens until only the room is mine. And then the room inside the room, through which I begin to run.

After the wild and thrilling first movement, _Falling Asleep in the Afternoon_ is a completely different experience for Morley. It is afternoon and in his mind, he is resting in a room. As he goes deeper into himself, he visualizes himself running again. Unwilling to surrender to the chase, he decides to go back to sleep. Steven Paulus describes the song as “very
dream-like and quiet-like,\textsuperscript{52} while Michael Browne suggests that “sleep for him [Morley] is a kind of a refuge, a kind of oasis... like a place of water in the desert.”\textsuperscript{53} For Morley, after his escape from the shadows, he is taking time to restore himself. In this state, he chooses to think of nothing but rest, not even romance. Browne quotes the famous song “Falling in Love Again,” sung by Marlene Dietrich.\textsuperscript{54}

Compared with the first movement, \textit{Falling Asleep} is mostly carefree and relaxing. The piano introduction is delicate and slow ($\text{\textit{p}p}$ \( \text{= 42} \)) (Example 8). The first two measures invoke the impression of D major. From m. 3, the arpeggio-like passage descends from treble to bass, and the D major harmony begins to subside. This sinking quality of the harmony sets up a dream-like atmosphere, as the rhythmic patterns become the main theme of the piece.

\textbf{Example 8.} Paulus, \textit{Falling Asleep in the Afternoon}, mm. 1-4. The rhythmic motive on the piano part.

The vocal contour in this movement is one of the most beautiful and lyrical in the cycle (Example 9). In m. 7, the vocal line is in \textit{piano} and \textit{legato}. While approaching F\#\textsubscript{4}, the singer should delicately apply head voice and \textit{crescendo} to facilitate the transition into the \textit{passaggio}.

\textsuperscript{52} Paulus, telephone interview by author, January 12, 2012.

\textsuperscript{53} Browne, telephone interview by author.

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid.

In m. 17, the time signature changes from 6/8 to 8/8, and the musical atmosphere begins to change. With the text “The glass in the window thickens,” we find that Morley feels uncertain about peaceful rest, thus the singer should change his voice color and intensity gradually. The rising arpeggiated chords in the piano raise Morley’s troubled feeling and create a contrast to the previous figure of descending arpeggios (Example 10).


In m. 21 Morley becomes agitated as he recalls his run in the previous movement (Example 11). The singer and pianist must aggressively accelerate the phrase in mm. 22-23. At m. 24 Morley slowly returns to a relaxed state, as the piano reverts to the previous sequence of themes.

In the final section (mm. 28-44), Morley is nodding off to sleep, which is reflected in the composer’s direction for an intoned line merging into *Sprechstimme* (Example 12). The broken line suggests a yawn just before falling asleep. “...I remembered Vern Sutton when he got to the end of that, I think he kind of yawned.” The last piano passage of the piece is the augmented final gesture portraying Morley asleep in his fantasy.


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I Feel Good Running

I feel good running
so I run & run.
I run through the wood in a hood.
I run through a pie
my mother is making in England.
I run through my brother’s fingers
as he lifts his hand to his head.
And I dump & burn my winter hands.
I burn the Winter Man.
I snap Death’s stream on my knee.
I am the King who had been hiding
in the tree.
I run through the ruins,
restoring the ruins as I run.

After his sleep, Morley flashes back to his childhood in *I Feel Good Running*, when he recalls how he used to enjoy running around his house. As a more pleasant experience than the first movement, he runs through several things: the forest, his mother’s pie, and his brother’s fingers. Then Morley does what kids like to do; he fantasizes himself as English King Charles I, “...who hid from his pursuers, hid in an oak tree... he was eventually found and he was executed.”56 He sprints around the ruins and restores them before he runs away.

Michael Browne suggests that these memories are common to both Morley and himself. “...I was born in England, and I’m thinking of my mother far away or the character is thinking of his mother far away.”57 The poet describes Morley’s character as “lighthearted, in a slightly dark way.”58 Paulus suggests that Morley is “a different kind of person to walk into the room... like it feels good running...”59

56 Browne, telephone interview by author.
57 Ibid.
58 Ibid.
Set at a more rapid tempo than the previous two movements ($\ell = 100$), the singer begins with determination (Risoluto), while still playful and youthful throughout (Example 13). The vocal line is comprised of a series of developing motives from $E_3$, $A_3$ and $B^b_3$ in mm. 1-3. In this passage, the ensemble is crucial as the piano punctuates the vocal line with syncopated block chords.


In m. 7, the piano makes use of the returning gesture with groups of repeated $C_5$ in the right hand, which signifies the running gesture previously heard in the first movement. It varies, however, as the run is no longer horrifying. In this passage, the singer is required to sing in dissonance with the piano (Example 14).

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Example 14. Paulus, *I Feel Good Running*, mm. 7-10. The running gesture in the piano and the dissonant between the voice and piano.

After Morley’s childish runaround, the music slows down immediately in m. 11. The scene changes as Morley recalls flashes of his childhood in the text “And I dump and burn my winter hands.” The slow vocal line is more lyrical than the opening movement, but the singer should maintain the playfulness of the character. The piano figure, after the rapid sixteenth-note run, slows to whole-note chords in the right hand, while the left hand plays a slow eighth-note passage, which symbolizes Morley’s slow marching pace (Example 15).

In m. 15-19, the slow march gradually develops into a more majestic gesture in the piano on the text “I am the King who had been hiding in the tree” (Example 16). The singer should enjoy interpreting this with grandiosity, just as Morley enjoys playing as the King.


In the final section of the movement, after “restoring the ruins,” Morley picks up running again (Example 17). While approaching the word “run,” the rhythm is gradually slowing while the singer is moving from *forte* to *piano*. With a sudden *presto*, the singer must *crescendo* on G₄ from *piano* to *forte*. It may be technically helpful for the singer to begin with a closed vowel that slowly opens with the increasing dynamic. The last four measures of the piano presents a figure that pictures Morley breaking free.

Example 17. Paulus, *I Feel Good Running*, mm. 22-27. The challenging high note for the singer and the breaking free figure for the piano.
Morley's Root Song

Morley’s Root Song
The cats keep bringing
birds into the house; some I save.
They are not fit for flight,
they are no use for song.
Bent birds, songs without words.
Lost between wing & wing,
the knight, the rider,
doing the dark roads.

my root is rubble & barbed wire
my root is not sweet
my root is army in the snow

Now in my mad book
I do read
now in my shadow book
I do peer; all is clear
as night to me.
Every animal is sad;
sing nonny no, sing hey nonny.

my root’s a goat
my root is a cellar door
my root is bruise of jewels

The dreams I had when I was a boy
I have forgotten. Gone.
Dreaming Verboten. Going, going, gone.
E Pericoloso Sporgersi. Morley Morley Boy.
I have forgotten who I was.
Rivers run through my rooms.

my root is rust & red planet
my root’s hot
my root is crossed swords

now in my mad book I do ride,
I am King Morley of the Roads;
now in my shadow book I do sink & slip,
I am the Prince of the Sinking Ship.
Into the house the cats do creep.
O lady of the House of Sleep!
Every street is sad, sing
nonny neighborhood no, sing hey nonny.

my root is nonny
my root is no
no no no no no

Here are some people to see you.
Good evening, Dr Solstice.
Nurse equinox, Bonsoir. C’mon in.
There is a serpent asleep on the sofa,
there is an eagle asleep in me.
A thousand dogs are on watch for me,
a hundred planes take off without me.
I have been warned by a man in a mirror:
“Je suis Michel de la Mort.”
Rivers run through my rooms.

my root is tundra
my root is wriggle of padlock & Plank
my root is ladders & lizards

Now in their mad arms
they do hold me,
now in their shadow arms
I do sink;
Corporal Morley, fall in, fall in.
The cats keep bringing wings...
Every sad street without words.
Nurse, Nurse, Queen Acorn, O!
And this little Morley went

weeeeee
Mmmmmmaammmmaaaa
weeeeee
Cosa
weeeeee
Bossa
weeeeee
Mia Nostra Nova
weeeeee
nonny
weeeeee
all the way
weeee
root-toot-i-toot!
drome.60

After running off in the last movement, Michael Morley finds himself caught in multiple layers of fantasy. First, from saving the birds from the cats, his fantasies unfold like turning the pages of a book – the “mad book” and the “shadow book.” As he searches into the root of his fantasy (as described by Michael Browne as the Root chakra), the unfolding fantasies arise from fragmented memories of Michael Browne, and include his favorite poet, Shakespeare, the foreign terms “Mamma Mia,” “Cosa Nostra,” and “Bossa Nova.” Morley recalls childhood dreams; he remembers how his mother called him “Morley boy” and warned him of dangers – “E pericoloso sporgesì” (“it is dangerous to lean”); he fantasizes himself as “King Morley” and the “Prince of the Sinking Ship.” He remembers how he loved listening to classical music like Bach’s “Ich Habe [sic] genug,” and Liszt’s piano music; Morley enjoys singing oldies tunes too. Even movie excerpts creep into his mind with disjunctive monologues: “Dr. Solstice,” “Nurse equinox,” “serpent,” “dogs,” and “eagle.” Finally, as all these events have flashed through Morley’s mind, he is like a child on a swing who cries out “Weee....”

Morley’s Root Song is the longest and the wildest movement of the song cycle. “It’s a crazy piece! I can’t imagine writing that now. It’s all over the place. It’s too much... very excessive... But I think some of it is quite exciting images.”61 This is one of two poems Browne wrote specifically for the song cycle. The Root Song is the center of Morley’s madness, and a reflection of Browne’s life experience, and his memories are patched in pieces to become the

61 Browne, telephone interview by author.
madness of his persona. Paulus describes Morley in this movement as having numerous personalities.

“It starts a little bit psychologically confused person who’s having that crazy dream, you know, the cats keep bringing birds into the house... it’s like going into a state fair and you’re looking at yourself in one of the mirrors, you don’t look at all like you really are...”62

For Paulus, setting the texts into his music is a challenging task.

“I’m trying to create some darkness and intensity but I’m also trying to steer clear the voice so that you don’t have trouble projecting what [it] is that you want to be heard... The changes in harmony and texture underneath are more dramatic in this piece.”63

*Morley’s Root Song* begins in a slow (\( \dot{1} = 58 \)) and mournful manner (*Doloroso*). The entrance of the piano in m. 1 contains fragmented chords that signify the characteristics of the cats, which is mentioned in the vocal line (“The cats keep bringing birds”). The chords are then augmented rhythmically into the following two measures. The first vocal phrase, with a low B\(_b\)\(_2\) for tenor, is the key motive of the movement (Example 18a). The sequence of B\(_b\)\(_2\)-F\(_3\)-A\(_b\)\(_3\)-G\(_3\)-B\(_3\) in mm. 1-3 is frequently used throughout the movement; for instance, it repeats in mm. 37-38 (Example 18a), and appears in retrograde in m. 24 (Example 18c).

![Example 18a](image)

**Example 18a.** Paulus, *Morley’s Root Song*, mm. 1-5. The fragmented piano entrance and the vocal motive.

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63 Ibid.
Mm. 19-21 (“My root is rubble and barbed wire...”) act as a separate section from the main text body, which is Morley’s self-reflection of his root (Example 19). In this section, tempo is relative. In the manuscript, the spaces between notes in the piano part are gradually widened. Paulus notes that the “proportionally notated figures should be played so that a noticeable slowing occurs as the notes become more widely spaced.”64 The singer may enter freely but must maintain the indicated rhythm regardless of how the piano part is performed. The vocal line is more provoking and agitated. After mm. 19-21, the reflection reappears three more times in this movement: mm. 34-36, mm. 54-56, and mm.122-124. As the movement progresses, each reflection is more aggressive than the former. In Browne’s original texts, there are five reflecting sections, but Paulus uses only four of them.


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**Example 18c.** Paulus, *Morley’s Root Song*, mm. 24. The retrograde version of the opening motive.

In mm. 45-47, the vocal line portrays the calling of Morley’s mother in his dream (Example 20). For Morley, this moment is the dearest to him because he is very close to his mother. The figure in m. 46 “Morley, Morley Boy,” $F_4^b-A^b_4-G^b_4-B^b_4-A_4$, is a cyclic motive, which also appears in the final movement. The whole passage should be sung freely in head voice (or falsetto) as if imitating his mother’s cautionary voice. On the text “E pericoloso sporgersi,” the singer should be anxious and frantic, and immediately lyrical on “Morley, Morley Boy.” In the last “Morley Boy,” the singer should gradually switch from the head voice quality into a full, forte quality on “Boy.”

Example 20. Paulus, Morley’s Root Song, mm. 45-47. The cyclic motive in the vocal part.
After this exclamation, the music is intensified by the piano's constant triplets in mm. 48-52 (Example 21). In the texts “I have forgotten who I was,” Morley begins to lose himself in all the outpouring of memories and fantasies. In mm. 54-56, the self-reflection moment gives way to violence both in text and music; the vocal and piano parts have the same accelerating figures (Example 22). The dash line between measures indicates that the performance of this section should not be limited by the time signature given (2/4 time).


Example 22. Paulus, *Morley’s Root Song*, mm. 54-55. The accelerating figures in the vocal and piano.

In m. 57, the piano plays a rapid dissonant passage of arpeggiated cluster figures as Morley is taken to a different fantasy. In mm. 58-63, Morley is brought into the classical music of Liszt, as he imagines himself being the King and the “Prince of Sinking Ship.” Paulus portrays the grandness by quoting Liszt’s Piano Sonata in B minor, S. 178. “That particular part always sounds like it’s really grand and unctuous and triumphal and ceremonial. So I use it to
indicate another aspect of Morley’s personality… at this point he is feeling very triumphant.”


After the Liszt reference, Morley is taken again into a totally different genre of popular music. In m. 73, on text “Ev’ry street is sad sing nonny neighborhood no…,” the music is in crooner style, which is a common style used in the popular music of the 30’s to 40’s. The piano part contains syncopated chords in 3/4 time, while the vocal line is in 4/4 time (Example 24). This section is the only lighthearted moment in the movement, so the performer, while singing in the manner of the crooner, may attempt to imitate the famous singers of the style in the 40s, such as Frank Sinatra.

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Example 24. Paulus, *Morley’s Root Song*, mm. 76-86. The crooner style that imitates the popular music in the 40s.

After the fun Morley is now surrounded by fragmented dialogue. In m. 101, The vocal part is a rapid whispering which resembles a manic movie dialogue. Paulus indicates that all the text should be recited within approximately 15 seconds. The singer may recite using various styles and personalities. The music in the piano resembles an old, out-of-tune music box, which creates an eerie atmosphere for listeners.

Example 25. Paulus, *Morley’s Root Song*, mm. 100-110. The dialogue in the vocal part, which is accompanied by the piano figures that signifies old music box.
Immediately after the dialogue, mm. 111-117 is one of the most dramatic sections of the movement (Example 26). Morley experiences an overlapping of memories in three foreign languages. First is the French text “Je suis Michel de la Mort,” (“I am Michael from the Death”) followed by the Italian “pericoloso” (“danger”). Then, Morley expresses his frustration with the German “Ich Habe [sic] genug!” (“I have enough!”). The French text (mm. 111-115) should be sung slowly and with less motion. In the Italian “pericoloso,” the singer must accelerate and crescendo the passage intensely while reaching the high A\textsubscript{b} m. 116. Finally, the singer reaches the high B\textsubscript{4} on the German text in m. 117.

Example 26. Paulus, Morley’s Root Song, mm. 111-117. The most dramatic section for the vocal part.

In the final stanza of Browne’s poem “Now in their mad arms they do hold me...” Morley’s confusion is reinforced by flashes of previous scenes: the cats, the birds, the sad street, and the nurse. Finally, in m. 129, Morley is absolutely zany and cries out “Weee...” like a child (Example 27). The singer must portray this final section mostly in head voice, especially on the high B\textsubscript{4}. The wavering line on the B\textsubscript{4}, according to Paulus, indicates that the singer must waver the pitch around the given note.

In m. 132, on the text “all the way drome,” Paulus uses the triangle-shaped notes (Example 28), which are to be sung “as high as possible in the singer’s range or going up higher and higher”⁶⁶ or as low as possible. In m. 132 (“all the way”), the singer should portray the passage in a manner of squealing from low to high. On the last note “drome,” which Browne describes as a combination of the words “dream” and “home,” the singer must plunge into his lowest pitch and sound “almost like a growl.”⁶⁷ The pianist plays the last chord immediately after the singer and lets the sound of the piano gradually diminish.


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⁶⁷ Ibid.
Calm, Calm

Calm, Calm
Calm, calm, a great calm came. Morley wanted it. Everyone else wanted it, for him & for themselves. And so a great calm came.

Each man has washed his house! They have got up early like sailors scarlet at dawn, & they have with mops & strange warm cloths done in their good business; see how the wet wood shines!

O fine green house where Morley lives, white fur of wolf & Snow Queen, & true forest with its wind-kings of emptiness. In such calm drapes are drawn across great windows without sound; and through air flies even the broken bird, he with the least wing. Each creature walks shining on the ice of his life in the darkest wood even. The furnace gathers to a pure roar in the night, & pain flees from all portraits; even the pained dead man on the wall is bland; the heart has the thump of a friend in the dark. And all in a great calm lie.

After the relentlessness of Morley’s Root Song, Morley is physically and mentally exhausted. The fifth movement Calm, Calm gives the much-needed rest for Morley, and he falls into a hypnotic state, where he is living in a house in a peaceful neighborhood. Morley’s house has a direct connection with Michael Browne. “This house is a place I was renting in New Milford, Connecticut, in the fall of 1968, when the Morley material began.”\textsuperscript{68} Near Morley’s house, the forest is covered by snow, and the surroundings are quiet and still. The “Snow Queen”

\textsuperscript{68} Browne, Email interview by author, January 10, 2012.
is from the fairy tale by Hans Christian Andersen, which Browne adapted, along with the Morley poems, as a play for the Children’s Theater Company in Minneapolis.⁶⁹ Despite being in the forest, as in the frightening first movement, the woods seem calm to him. As the hypnotic state deepens, he is unaffected even by the pained dead man. During the final phrases, everything peaceful around him is gone, and he is isolated.

Similar to the second song *Falling Asleep in the Afternoon*, this movement acts as a resting place for Morley. “…here’s the sleepy man again, finding refuge and relief from his wildness in sleep.”⁷⁰ The slow opening seven measures of the movement \( \frac{4}{4} = 48 \) is written for voice only, reinforcing the image that Morley is alone, as he has found the calmness in his dream (Example 29). In the first two measures, Paulus states that the singer must accurately observe the time signature indicated, and then beginning in m. 3, the singer should sing lyrically with rhythmic freedom.

⁶⁹ Browne, Email interview by author, January 10, 2012.

⁷⁰ Ibid.


After the solo, Paulus musically organizes the movement in three stylistic sections. Within each section, the setting of the piano is unique, and the vocal line begins in the low range, followed by ascension of pitch, and ends with a high range exclamation. The first section begins
in m. 8, where the piano enters with a twelve-tone like passage in a faster tempo \( (\text{dotted quarter note} = 88) \)

(Example 30). It portrays the dreamlike atmosphere in Morley’s mind. In this movement, the piano part should be lighter and more lyrical.

Example 30. Paulus, *Calm, Calm*, mm. 8-10. The twelve-tone like piano figure.

In mm. 19-24 (“done their good business...”) the singer is challenged by a passage that requires the use of *falsetto*. Even though Paulus indicates that the passage is sung in *falsetto*, it may be practical for the singer to use full voice in the middle range \( (B^b_3-E_4) \). In m. 19, while approaching the \( A_4 \), the singer should switch quickly to head voice and continue for the \( B^b_4 \) in m. 20, then switch back to full voice while singing *piano* in m. 21, before doing a similar sequential switch for mm. 22-24.

Example 31. Paulus, *Calm, Calm*, mm. 19-24. The vocal passages that require the use of *falsetto*. 
The second section is relatively shorter and slower (\( \dot{\text{j}} = 72 \)) than the first (mm. 26-32). This section begins with an atmosphere of an enchanted forest. Paulus illustrates this new setting by using the pentatonic scale (D\(_b\)-E\(_b\)-A\(_b\)-B\(_b\)) in both the vocal and the piano parts to portray the atmosphere of a “green house” with all the pitches on the black keys of the piano.

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Example 32. Paulus, \textit{Calm, Calm}, mm. 26-27. The pentatonic figure in the piano.}
\end{array}
\]

At the end of the second section the final section in m. 32 begins almost as an interruption. The piano part is written in the style of a chorale, which symbolizes the harmonious scene described in the text “In such calm drapes are drawn across great windows without sound.” However, the syncopation of the vocal line disrupts the stability of the music, and gives an impression of nervousness. It seems as if the peacefulness in Morley’s hypnotic state is short lived. The chorale figure in the piano gradually dissolves and the vocal line becomes more agitated, and evolves into an exclamation at m. 51. Even though the piano part is lyrical, it is suggested that the singer create a vocally unsettled contrast against the piano.

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Example 33. Paulus, \textit{Calm, Calm}, mm. 32-35. The chorale style in the piano.}
\end{array}
\]
Example 34. Paulus, *Calm, Calm*, mm. 48-52. The exclamation in the vocal part.

After the exclamation (m. 55), the chorale returns to the piano, but is followed by a series of clusters in “the lowest octave of notes on the piano”\(^{71}\) (Example 35). This signifies the hypnotic state of Morley’s sleep. As the passage progresses, the chorale figure gradually fades away, as if Morley is losing his awareness.


At the end of the movement (mm. 67-70), the opening vocal passage returns on the text “And all in a great calm lie.” Even though this is a restatement of the opening phrase, the final phrase has no relationship to calmness, and is filled with isolation. Underpinning the vocal line are the fragmented piano chords, which reflect Morley’s loneliness.

\(^{71}\) Paulus, *Mad Book, Shadow Book: Songs of Michael Morley.*
**Et In Arcadia, Morley**

**Et in Arcadia, Morley**
The annual Swedish Association for the Refusal of a hotel requests the pleasure of Mister Morley’s pumpkin to wrinkle the princess.

> the islands between here and birth

A. A. Dariero Hudson crossed the river in a spoon. You can’t drag a horse up hill during an opera. Your poems are wigs!

> the islands between here and birth

The peacocks bloom
> the islands
and plant their cries;
> the islands
all fire.
> the islands between here and birth

In *Et in Arcadia, Morley*, Michael Morley is in the last place he could ever be – paradise, or Arcadia. Some specific memories flash back to him: the Swedish Association, the princess, opera, and poems. The memories which are flashing through Morley’s mind are from Browne’s experience. “...the annual Swedish Association, A. A. Dariero Hudson... those are the things I dreamed.” As he is lost in the “islands between here and birth,” he witnesses peacocks and fire, which symbolize heaven and hell. And as a final textless statement, he hears his mother’s call before he sleeps forever.

The title of the movement *Et in Arcadia, Morley* is inspired by a famous painting by Nicolas Poussin’s *Et in Arcadia ego*.

> “Present in the Poussin painting are shepherds stopped in their pastoral joys by coming upon the tomb of an earlier inhabitant, an experience that has cast them into somber contemplation; present is the phrase upon the tomb, *et in Arcadia ego*...”

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72 Browne, telephone interview by author.

73 Harry Morris, “As You Like It: Et in Arcadia Ego,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 26, no. 3 (Summer 1975): 270.
The conflict between joy and grief in Poussin’s painting fascinates Michael Browne. In Browne’s texts, Morley is in paradise, where he finds peace; however, the listener experiences the grief of his death throughout. “Although he’s in the paradise, asleep, death is even there in a sense...”

The flash back of Morley’s memories not only happens in the text, but also in Paulus’ music. Although this movement is short (forty measures in length), it includes materials from all the previous five movements.

In the opening of the movement, the vocal part features a long whispering passage, which is followed by a brief Sprechstimme (Example 36). A similar compositional technique can be traced back to the first movement. However, in this movement, Paulus notes that the “actual vocal technique should be a compromise between whispering and speaking.” In contrast to the first movement, the singer should blend the whispering and the Sprechstimme for the crossed stem notes in this movement.


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74 Browne, telephone interview by author.

While transitioning to the next section, the piano part in mm. 4-7 resembles the transition in the second movement (Falling Asleep in the Afternoon, mm. 26-27). It is played in the tempo of vivace (ca. $\frac{3}{4}$ = 140) and pianissimo, as though all the events he experienced flash back in his mind. In mm. 8-10, the main motive of the movement, which repeats throughout, is introduced in the vocal part with the text “the islands between here and birth” (Example 38).

Example 37. Paulus, Et in Arcadia, Morley, mm. 4-7. The piano figure that signifies the flashing memories of Morley.

Example 38. Paulus, Et in Arcadia, Morley, mm. 8-10. The main motive of the song.

In m. 20 (Example 39), Morley sees a very different scene, where “the peacocks bloom and plant their cries.” The peacocks are the symbols that lead Morley to eternity. In this section, the singer has a short phrase that requires the use of head voice (“The peacocks bloom”). Set in higher pitch levels, both the vocal and the piano parts are light and staccato, which depict the characteristics of peacocks.

In the final section (mm. 34-40), Morley is ascending towards eternity. The repeating D\(^\#\)/6 in the piano is played at a very fast tempo but quickly slows down, indicating Morley’s ascent to heaven (Example 40). For the vocal line “all fire,” the singer begins in *ppp*, followed by an intense *crescendo* to *ff*, which evolves into a *diminuendo* to *pp* towards A,\(_4\). While approaching the high note, the singer must transition to head voice during the *glissando*. This short vocal line is interpreted as Morley’s final struggle and ascension to heaven. The next vocal line, which is the primary motive of the movement, is sung as if Morley has finally arrived, and eternal peace awaits him. The last five measures represent the final gesture for Morley’s rest, and in the last measure, the right hand piano is the final call from his mother, whom he loves and misses so much.

Example 40. Paulus, *Et in Arcadia, Morley*, mm. 34-40. The final motive in the vocal part and the cyclic motive that indicates the calling of Morley’s mother.
CONCLUSION

Mad Book, Shadow Book: Songs of Michael Morley is a very challenging and dramatic song cycle for tenor and piano. Yet, it is colorful and filled with beautiful melodies. The vocal range of the cycle is wide (from B♭₂ to B₄), and the singer must portray different vocal styles. Therefore, it is recommended for advanced level recitalists with solid singing technique and musicianship. According to the composer, the cycle can be performed either in its entirety or excerpted. Some of the songs, such as Falling Asleep in the Afternoon and I Feel Good Running, are more accessible for less experienced singers.

Throughout the song cycle, the scenes change rapidly. The singer and the pianist must be coordinated in the timing and spacing of their respective entrances. When performing the entire song cycle, which takes approximately twenty-five minutes, vocal pacing is of utmost importance. At the same time, the singer must actively portray the drama. “It’s not the kind of things where you stand in the little elbow of the piano with one hand on the piano and look out. You can’t sing all these crazy things and just remain stoic...” Together with his collaborator Michael Browne, Stephen Paulus has brought the dramatic fantasies of Morley to a new landscape with his masterful compositional techniques. It is both a crazy and a thrilling experience for the performers and the listeners. It is hoped that this performance guide, which offers technical and interpretive suggestions, will draw attention to this work and promote further performances.

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76 Frazer, Email interview by author.

77 Paulus, telephone interview by author, January 12, 2012.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Morris, Harry. “As You Like It: Et in Arcadia Ego.” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 26, no. 3 (Summer 1975): 269-275.


______. “Mad Book, Shadow Book.”

Michael Morley Creaked
Michael Morley creaked through the midnight wood like a grandfather clock. All the shadows followed as if he were raw meat. He slid over the snow like a skillet down a slope, he was electric! Morley broke into an empty classroom & took off his wheels. He broke into a ladder full of photographs, he set up a photograph of a ladder against a waterfall. He ran up the waterfall & set the fish on fire!

Falling Asleep in the Afternoon
Again I am falling asleep in the afternoon; not “falling in love again” but falling asleep in the afternoon. The glass in the window thickens until only the room is mine. And then the room inside the room, through which I begin to run.

I Feel Good Running
I feel good running so I run & run. I run through the wood in a hood. I run through a pie my mother is making in England. I run through my brother’s fingers as he lifts his hand to his head. And I dump & burn my winter hands. I burn the Winter Man. I snap Death’s stream on my knee. I am the King who had been hiding in the tree. I run through the ruins, restoring the ruins as I run.

Morley’s Root Song
The cats keep bringing birds into the house; some I save.
They are not fit for flight,
they are no use for song.
Bent birds, songs without words.
Lost between wing & wing,
the knight, the rider,
doing the dark roads.

my root is rubble & barded wire
my root is not sweet
my root is army in the snow

Now in my mad book
I do read
now in my shadow book
I do peer; all is clear
as night to me.
Every animal is sad;
sing nonny no, sing hey nonny.

my root’s a goat
my root is a cellar door
my root is bruise of jewels

The dreams I had when I was a boy
I have forgotten. Gone.
Dreaming Verboten. Going, going, gone.
E Pericoloso Sporgersi. Morley Morley Boy.
I have forgotten who I was.
Rivers run through my rooms.

my root is rust & red planet
my root’s hot
my root is crossed swords

now in my mad book I do ride,
I am King Morley of the Roads;
now in my shadow book I do sink & slip,
I am the Prince of the Sinking Ship.
Into the house the cats do creep.
O lady of the House of Sleep!
Every street is sad, sing
nonny neighborhood no, sing hey nonny.

my root is nonny
my root is no
no no no no no

Here are some people to see you.
Good evening, Dr Solstice.
Nurse equinox, Bonsoir. C’mon in.
There is a serpent asleep on the sofa,
there is an eagle asleep in me.
A thousand dogs are on watch for me,
a hundred planes take off without me.
I have been warned by a man in a mirror:
“Je suis Michel de la Mort.”
Rivers run through my rooms.

my root is tundra
my root is wriggle of padlock & Plank
my root is ladders & lizards

Now in their mad arms
they do hold me,
how in their shadow arms
I do sink;
Corporal Morley, fall in, fall in.
The cats keep bringing wings...
Every sad street without words.
Nurse, Nurse, Queen Acorn, O!
And this little Morley went

weeee
Mmmmmmaammmaaa
weeee
Cosa
weeee
Bossa
weeee
Mia Nostra Nova
weeee
nonny
weeee
all the way
weeee
root-toot-i-toot!
drome.
Calm, Calm
Calm, calm, a great calm came.
Morley wanted it.
Everyone else wanted it, for him & for themselves.
And so a great calm came.

Each man has washed his house!
They have got up early
like sailors scarlet at dawn,
& they have with mops & strange warm cloths
done in their good business;
see how the wet wood shines!

O fine green house where Morley lives,
white fur of wolf & Snow Queen,
& true forest with its wind-kings of emptiness.
In such calm
drapes are drawn across great windows without sound;
and through air flies
even the broken bird,
he with the least wing. Each creature
walks shining on the ice of his life
in the darkest wood even. The furnace

gathers to a pure roar in the night,
& pain flees from all portraits; even the pained
dead man on the wall is bland; the heart
has the thump of a friend in the dark.
And all in a great calm lie.

Et in Arcadia, Morley
The annual Swedish Association for the Refusal of a hotel
requests the pleasure of Mister Morley’s pumpkin to wrinkle the princess.

the islands between here and birth

A. A. Dariero Hudson crossed the river in a spoon. You can’t
drag a horse up hill during an opera. Your poems are wigs!

the islands between here and birth
The peacocks bloom
the islands
and plant their cries;
the islands
all fire.

the islands between here and birth
APPENDIX B
SONG LIST OF STEPHEN PAULUS

Song Cycles

*All My Pretty Ones*
Song Cycle for Soprano and Piano
Publisher: European American Music

*Art Songs*
Song Cycle for Tenor and Piano
Publisher: European American Music

*Bittersuite*
Song Cycle for Baritone and Piano
Publisher: Paulus Publications

*Dickinson Songs*
Tenor and Piano
Publisher: Paulus Publications

*Dylan Thomas Songs*
Song Cycle for Soprano and Orchestra
Publisher: Paulus Publications

*Erotic Spirits*
Song Cycle for Soprano and Piano
Publisher: Paulus Publications

*A Heartland Portrait*
Song Cycle for Baritone and Piano
Publisher: Paulus Publications

*Letters from Colette*
For Soprano and Chamber Ensemble
Publisher: Paulus Publications

*The Long Shadow of Lincoln*
Song Cycle for Bass Baritone and Violin, Cello, Piano
Publisher: Paulus Publications

*Mad Book, Shadow Book: Songs of Michael Morley*
Song Cycle for Tenor and Piano or Chamber Ensemble
Publisher: Paulus Publications
Songs of Love and Longing
Song Cycle for Solo Voice and Piano
Publisher: European American Music

Individual Published Songs

An August Night
Voice and Piano
Publisher: Paulus Publications

Be Still My Soul
Voice and Piano
Publisher: Paulus Publications

Beloved Home
Soprano and Piano
Publisher: European American Music

Flying at Night
Baritone and Piano
Publisher: Paulus Publications

Hos Gud Er Ide Glede (In Heaven is Joy and Gladness)
Voice and Piano
Publisher: Paulus Publications

How Great Thou Art
Baritone and Organ
Publisher: Paulus Publications

Lullaby for Pearl
Soprano and Piano
Publisher: Paulus Publications

Shall I Compare Thee?
Voice and Piano
Publisher: Paulus Publications

Three Elizabethan Songs
Soprano and Piano
Publisher: Paulus Publications
APPENDIX C
LIST OF WORKS BY MICHAEL DENNIS BROWNE

*How the Stars Were Made*
Composer: David Lord
Published: J.W. Chester Ltd., London 1968

*The Wife of Winter*
Composer: David Lord

*The Sea Journey*
Composer: David Lord

*Nonsongs*
Composer: David Lord
Published: Universal Edition Ltd., London 1970

*Carol of the Hill*
Composer: Stephen Paulus
Published: AMSI Music, 1976

Carol of the Candle
Composer: Stephen Paulus
Published: Hinshaw Music, 1977

*Mad Book, Shadow Book*
Composer: Stephen Paulus
Published: Paulus Publications, 1976

*Fountain of My Friends*
Composer: Stephen Paulus
Published: Paulus Publications, 1976

*Canticles: Songs and Rituals for Easter and the May*
Composer: Stephen Paulus
Published: Paulus Publications, 1977

*North Shore*
Composer: Stephen Paulus
Published: Paulus Publications, 1977

*The Bird Inside*
Composer: Monica Maye
Premiere: 1983
The Village Singer  
Composer: Stephen Paulus  
Published: European-American Music Inc., 1984

Sitting on the Porch  
Composer: Carolyn Jennings  
Premiere: 1984

All My Pretty Ones  
Composer: Stephen Paulus  
Published: European-American Music, 1986

Silver the River  
Composer: Stephen Paulus  
Published: European-American Music, 1986

Artsongs  
Composer: Stephen Paulus  
Published: European-American Music, 1986

Able-to-Fall  
Composer: John Foley S.J.  
Premiere: April 20, 1988

The Nightingale  
Composer: Juliana Hall  
Premiere: 1988

Harmoonia  
Composer: Stephen Paulus  
Published: Paulus Publications, 1991

Little Heart of Ages  
Composer: John Foley S.J.  
Published: G.I.A Publications, 1993

We Know You Are the Lamb  
Composer: John Foley S.J.  
Published: GIA Publications, 1993

The Three Hermits  
Composer: Stephen Paulus  
Published: Paulus Publications, 1997

Pilgrims’ Hymn
Composer: Stephen Paulus  
Published: Paulus Publications, 1997

*As a River of Light*  
Composer: John Foley S.J.  
Published: Oregon Catholic Press, 1997

*Savior of All of Us*  
Composer: John Foley S.J.  
Published: Oregon Catholic Press, 1998

*Like Winter Waiting*  
Composer: John Foley S.J.  
Published: Oregon Catholic Press, 2000

*The Road Home*  
Composer: Stephen Paulus  
Published: Paulus Publications, 2002

*Hymn for America*  
Composer: Stephen Paulus  
Published: Paulus Publications, 2004

*To Be Certain of the Dawn*  
Composer: Stephen Paulus  
Published: Paulus Publications, 2005

*Lux Aeterna*  
Composer: David Dickau  
Published: Santa Barbara Publishing, 2007

*For the Young Men to Sing*  
Composer: Craig Hella Johnson  
Premiere: June 2011

*The Shoemaker*  
Composer: Stephen Paulus  
Published: Paulus Publications, 2012

*Flowers Over the Graves of War*  
Composer: James Eakin III  
Published: James Eakin Publications, 2012
APPENDIX D
TRANSCRIPTIONS OF PHONE INTERVIEW WITH STEPHEN PAULUS

S = Stephen Paulus
J = Jin Hin Yap

Telephone Interview, January 12, 2012

S: Hello, Jin Hin.

J: Hi, Mr. Paulus.

S: Yes.

J: I’m now on a speakerphone and I have a recording device to record our interview.

S: Ok.

J: And I would like to start the interview by asking your biographical background and then afterwards we will go to your music and your “Mad Book Shadow Book”

S: Ok. Born in Summit, New Jersey... studied piano a little bit with my parents, starting when I was 8. And started formal lessons at age 10, continued to study through my undergraduate Bachelor of Arts degree, which I received in the year of 1971 in University of Minnesota. Went to Macalester College for my first year then the next to University of Minnesota. Took a year off to work. Then went back for a Master Degree in Theory and Composition, received in 1974. And Ph.D. in 1978. Principal teacher, Paul Fetler. F-E-T-L-E-R. And, er, let’s see, what other biographical stuff? Co-founded the Minnesota Composers Forum, as it was called then, in 1973. Worked there for 11 years, with Libby Larsen and other people, and then 1983-87 was the composer-in-residence of the Minnesota Orchestra. 1988-1992, residence composer for the Atlanta Symphony.

J: Do you mind telling me the names of your parents?

S: My parents’ names were… My dad’s name was Harrison, H-A-R-R-I-S-O-N. And my mom’s name was Patricia.

J: So, you were born in New Jersey. When did you move to Minnesota?

S: At age 2.

J: Age 2. So after that, you stayed in Minnesota for your entire life?

S: Except the living 4 years in Atlanta from 1988-92.

J: 1988-92. So, were your parents musical, like you?
S: Apparently. Both parents studied piano and my father studied organ and he was an avocational organist, playing for churches around town.

J: Oh, great! So, how was your childhood as a musician?

S: I just studied piano all the time.

J: And then when did you start writing music?

S: I think it’s about 12 years old. Just on my own, you know.

J: When you were studying about composition, who would you consider as your mentors, when you were like going through the process to become a composer?

S: Paul Fetler was my professor at the University. I didn’t have any mentors before that.

J: I read from your biography, you studied with Dominic Argento.

S: I studied a little bit with him, yes.

J: Can you tell me anything about your relationship with him?

S: With Dominic?

J: Yes.

S: I only studied with him occasionally. Once in a while Dr. Fetler would refer me to him by saying, “You’re setting words here and Dominic is a real expert in that.” And Paul is too, but he would say you ought to take this down the hall and talk to him about it. So once in a while I would study with him. He wasn’t my primary teacher, as it was, but you know, we’re good friends, we go to lunch once in a while, and meet each other.

J: So, Mr. Paul Fetler would be your real mentor?

S: Yes. Primarily the main teacher I had at college. I had another fellow that I studied with that time when I was in Macalester College for two years, named Thomas Clemen, C-L-E-M-A-N. You know, he was the first teacher I ever had, and that was the freshman and sophomore. And you know, it was an unusual time, most of it very much an experimentation, trying things out.

J: Could you tell me something about Mr. Paul Fetler?

S: Yeah, he was a wonderful teacher and a terrific composer. He taught by the Socratic method. He wouldn’t say that, but basically he just asked you questions. Finally, led you to enlightenment. And his gift was to be able to teach you to become a self-critic, so you can be eventually be on your own.
J: How would you describe his composition style?

S: It’s lyrical and quite tonal but then with dissonance. Very well orchestrated. Very sensitive to texts and colors of the orchestra.

J: When I try to learn your piece, “Mad Book Shadow Book,” I also noticed that you have all the influence by Mr. Paul Fetler. And then, very lyrical and very sensitive to the text.

S: Oh, Thanks.

J: Aside from that, how would you describe your compositional style? Along with all the influence by your mentor.

S: Well, my style is my own. And it’s probably… some people will call it, you know, romantic. I look at it as lyrical and anchored in some tonalities but also able to dart in and out of dissonant things. I don’t like constant dissonance or constant tonality. I like, like a mix of it.

J: And I find it very fascinating, the pieces you have composed.

S: Oh, Thank you. It’s an old piece.

J: Actually I really like it. In the beginning, I found it really difficult to get it into my voice, and then after a while, the music and the text, actually they all make sense, and then there’s a sense of direction in every pieces.

S: Oh, good.

J: Before we really get into the music of “Mad Book Shadow Book”, I would like to talk about the text. I already had a brief interview with Mr. Brown a few days ago and I would like to just ask about your thoughts about the text.

S: Ok. It’s a fairly… I don’t want to say crazy… It’s a wide ranging psychological text, sort of invites music into it.

J: Yes.

S: Because it’s talking about a shadowy character with different personae and so it gave me a rich palette texturally for most of the work. I enjoyed it a lot. It was my first work with Michael. Maybe not the first but it’s one of the first. Anyway, this went back to 1978 and it really allowed me to get to know the wide range of his ability.

J: How did you meet Michael?

S: My composition professor, Paul Fetler, told me about him and said that he’d suggest that I give him a call, and so I did.
J: Can you tell me about your collaboration with him on this “Mad Book Shadow Book”? 

S: It’s so long ago, it’s hard to remember... One thing I always did was get together with him and had him to read the text and then record it on a tape recorder at that time. And then I would get his inflexion and that would tell me about what he thought was important in the text and then I create my own setting. I probably got together and played the first one, I wrote the things chronologically, I tried to play the first one for him to get his feedback, then I played the second song and third and so on, all the way through.

J: In his poems, there are so many texts. How did you choose some of the text?

S: This one is all set. I think there were several. I’m pretty sure there were several poems that made up this Michael Morley text. I think it was kind of set, in another words. Had a certain number of poems. Maybe there were a couple more that I didn’t choose but I don’t know, I don’t recall. But the way I choose it is to create… When you choose several poems, you want to create an overall shape that goes some place.

J: From the text, all the 6 pieces over here, the first three are from his poem “Sun Fetcher”, a collection of his poem, and then the 5th one “Calm, Calm” is from “The Wife of Winter.”

S: Oh, that’s right. I forgot about that.

J: Actually the last one “Et in Arcadia”, according to Michael, I talked to him a few days ago, he said that was written primarily for your cycle.

S: Yeah, I remember that now. Maybe it’s the first 4 were already in existence, and then “Calm, calm” from “The Wife of Winter” which is a cycle, I think, set by another composer named David Moore, and then he wrote 1 for the cycle. It is kind of a mix. You’re right.

J: Can you tell me about the premiere of the “Mad Book Shadow Book”? 

S: I think I can. I think it was at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis. And it was a concert sponsored by the Schubert Club at St. Paul, Minnesota, which is the oldest recital organization in the United States, older even than anything in New York. And I come up with an idea of having a concert of all of my work, which is surely audacious but, that would have been, I guess, 76 so I was 20 something 6 or 7 maybe, 27 I guess. I was still in graduate school. And I thought it would be nice to have a concert of my work. And there were people who walked right in front and said, “sure!” It was a time I was a pianist for the Schubert Club Boys Choir, which is how they got involved. So I got the Schubert Club to sponsor the concert, to pay for some of the cost, and then I use the Schubert Club Boy Choir and played something. Michael and I have written a little cycle of songs for boy choir called “Sulligent of My Friends” and it was about 5 or 6 pieces and I think I played those and then the boys sang. And then there were maybe a couple little pieces, I can’t remember for sure, and then the second half was this song cycle Michael’s “Mad Book Shadow book”. And a guy Vern Sutton sang it and woman named Julie Himmelstrup played it. It was sort of a bold thing to do because I had friends and colleagues at that time, you know composers like Libby Larsen and Randall Davidson and others. And we’re all kind of writing
little pieces for performance on the composer’s forum, which we’re running. But this is kind of like stepping out a little bit in that I decided, “oh, do a concert of my works.” And then when I looked back to it, that was fairly bold but it kind of helped start some part of my career, if you will.

J: I thought it was amazing. To have everything put in a concert. For you, it must have been a wonderful experience.

S: I think it was. I was sort of shocked by it after it was over. Not big shock but it was a… I sure look back and I was like wow, you know. Audacious is kind of the word, I guess. I just thought, “I have this boy choir and couple other performers and I know I got… It was like a composer’s forum concert except it was one composer. And it’s not very mid-western to promote a concert of their own work, we rather share. Anyway, Vern and Julie did a beautiful job of performing and Vern is an actor anyway and this piece requires a little bit of… there’s a little bit of dramatic something rather to it. There’s no stage directions or anything but it’s just, I mean, it’s a psychodrama in a way. And it goes into the…In the poem drafted earlier where there’s sort of like a fantastical, ranging of those white and manic to rather dark and introspective. It’s sort of a semi fictitious characterizing. And the music and the words are a sort of a window into this person, which might be an element of other people.

J: Michael Morley is definitely a shadow of Michael Browne when he mentioned this to me. I think his characteristic is everything, I mean, there’s lot of fantasy, a lot of images in his text. I would say it is very pictorial.

S: I think you’re right.

J: Before we go into the songs, just now you mentioned something about Libby Larsen and I forgot to ask you about it. How did you get with her to found the composer forum?

S: How did I get with her? We were both graduate students at the University of Minnesota and we were writing pieces for our composition lessons. I was writing for Fetler and she was writing for Argento and nobody was playing them and we just kind of like go in and play them on the piano, or you know, reasonable facsimile of it, you know. If it’s a song cycle then you kind of plays out of it or if it’s a string quartet. What we decided to do is a need to be met, which was to get some of our colleagues together and play our music so we could hear it. So as graduate students we decided to do that and anyone else did a little fund raising and one thing led to another and we organized this group.

J: What was the primary objective of the composer forum?

S: To hear our music.

J: Are you still running the composer forum now?

S: I haven’t had anything to do with the composer forum since 1983, except to see if they need any help. It’s 37 years old.
J: Oh wow. That’s amazing.

S: It’s still going and I’m proud of that. And I think Libby is too, probably, but I don’t… I haven’t spoken to Libby recently. But, you know, we had lunch every once in a while and it hasn’t been recently.

J: That’s great. Now let’s go to the songs and would you mind telling me about how you composed each piece?

S: I did it by the same method I would use today which is begin with the text, to read it, to listen to Michael’s reading of the text, which I still do till this day if I’m working on a big piece. I’ll say read through the libretto, read through whatever. And I’ll just listen. It tells me what the poet thinks is important. It may not be exactly what I think is important in musical form; Michael may have told you already, is different from the poetical form. And then I just started in and get an idea. At that time this was written, people were still very academic and orientation and so quite a few people were still writing twelve-tone music, that’s kind of passé now, but I mean, the piece opens because I did the left hand with the tonal. And I just adapt because in my way of using the tonal row is to try and make it sound a little more lyrical and maybe harmonically palatable than many people who write twelve-tone music. Twelve-tone music can sound terribly grey and without a personality. Probably political to say that and apologies to anyone whose really into it but, you know, I try to give it more and then I… After doing that I didn’t stick with atonal for the rest of the piece, so I just was like, “oh, ok I can do that,” because it kind of has worked and served my needs, which is to create help being somebody creep into a house or whatever, somebody’s mind. It’s kind of like moving quietly. That’s why it’s… it had some ominous undertones but it’s kind of quiet to begin with.

J: That entrance for me, when I first played it, it didn’t sound twelve-tone at all.

S: Yeah, that was the idea.

J: Until I try to analyze it, it was like “oh this is twelve-tone.”

S: Surprise!! Which is what I wanted to create. That’s why I said it’s twelve-tone but somehow it doesn’t sound that way. That is because of how the notes are grouped. You know, I’m not trying… in twelve-tone, it seems like they… a true twelve-tone composer is trying to make each note sound as far from the other one as possible so that… It’s like twelve people sitting in a row, make sure that they’re all equal distant apart in a way. That may be true in a debate, but it’s just ends up feeling of you’re never getting pinned to a certain area enough, I don’t know what area this is pinning to but… you know, it has all kinds of tri tones and semitones. It just sets the mood to what comes what comes in…

J: Besides the twelve-tone, I also noticed, especially in some of the middle pieces, you also device some of the pentatonic scale.
S: Yes, it’s sort of a beginning of a… well actually, in 1973 was when I started to create my own style. I wrote some songs, three Elizabethan songs for Libby Larsen and me to sing and play in the composer’s forum concert, for our first concert I think. In that one, I kept using dissonant thing I was trying to involve at that time but I also started ravel a little bit with some innovation of harmonic, direction. And this piece has some of that too. It’s much crazier in terms of its style and something I would write today... But it’s ok; it’s a raw kind of piece.

J: But it fits into the character of Michael Morley, I mean, there’s no rule about it.

S: Yeah, well ok, I like that.

J: Talking about there’s no rules, you are very adventurous on the… setting on the voice. How did you come up with… like the whispering, the *Sprechstimme*, and the square note, which you defined it pretty…very well on your legend.

S: Let’s see… I’m looking at it now. I don’t know how I came up with that. I mean it’s not really “sprech” like yet but... especially when you have to sort of approximate the area that the pitches in, I would say. And... I’m trying to find where that is, the square notes... Oh Yeah! I don’t know how I... I’m not sure what started me to do that. I think, I wanted the pitch, but it doesn't have to be the one that the note is on. So I just didn't what the performer to worry about that.

J: You use a lot of vocal variation, like some kind of vocal effects, in every piece. And then, for singer, it’s incredibly. I think it is very challenging. How would you advice to device all the musical expression in the vocal part?

S: I think just focus on what’s on the page and trying to become the character for each movement... The texts and the voice part were so committed or intense that there were times I don’t even notice what the piano was doing but obviously the piano is very important. It sets the mood and it drives things, you know... It’s like a nervous tick somebody has... But then the voice comes out like you are almost completely distracted. I think the two are melted together. So I think the easiest way is, each one, with each movement, to just simply set your mind to become the character, you know what... like the one “Calm, Calm,” you know, after that explosion from before and everything. So, you know, it’s an odd psychological adaptation, suddenly turn around and be a completely different person. But I think that’s part of what Michael was trying to get at, the many different personalities of this character he created, are examples by approach of the voice. So, they are very calm and lyrical things, there are things, you know, speech like and other forms with the, you know, all of the violence or explosive qualities. I don't know what quality that requires of the singer, you know. It is a character piece, you know. It’s not just a song cycle.

J: One last thing for the vocal part. I wonder if you can describe how I can do it on page 57 of the orchestra version, when you have the *glissando* into a B natural, and then after that you have rolling pitch on the word “Weeee.”

S: I would say it’s slow to moderate, you know... it can vary a little bit, you know, because all the happening... (Playing piano) there’s so much activity going on in the piano, that’s the version you are doing. The singer should... we’re sort of looked a little bit out of control, I would think.
J: Yes, it is very... adventurous for singer (laugh), I must say.

S: I realize that. I don’t know what it would be like to even share this piece. I think I probably would enjoy it. It’s a different era of my composition, but... you know, it is adventuresome. I think it would probably be seen as much more out going and adventuresome today than it was in 1976. People were writing all kinds of crazy stuff then. Now they kind of retrench a little bit, and I think if you were to go to a performance, then you hear a singer going “Weee... Weee...” yeah, you can free that as much as you want. You can say it wasn't a whacky piece... (laugh)

J: I think it’s great! I mean, it really makes me think outside the box from the traditional vocal piece. I think it’s great.

S: Well, thank you. When I looked at it yesterday and I said, “Wow, I wrote this, huh...” (laugh)

J: Just now you were talking about some of the collaboration between the vocal and the piano part. What kind of role does the piano play?

S: The piano is like an orchestra, and I use the color from, you know, like the low octave and... You know, high in the little notes, and then the others... that’s why when I created, a guy asked me to do, Paul Sperry, the tenor in New York asked me to create the orchestrated version, which I don’t think he was able to arrange a performance but I never heard. So, it sits there unperformed, but... the piano is like an orchestra, that’s how I treated it.

J: Ok. When did you arrange this orchestral version?

S: Actually I think it’s in 1978. So I think maybe it was a couple of years later.

J: So, I think that’s all I would ask. I’m wondering if there’s anything you would like to add on to this piece, any performance advice that you would summarize.

S: Yes. Let me think here. I guess I would have to say, even though the style is different than what I would like today, the approach is same than I would use on any song cycle, and that I try to create variety, and structure, and direction; very big in its form. And I sort of do it by feeling my way, like the opening piece “Michael Morley Creaked,” he’s characterized, I would say, by mystery and yet foreshadowing. The character has some sporadic elements. Otherwise you wouldn't get, you know, in the (Play piano)... something like that. You know... (play piano) I don’t even write that way anymore, these accelerando and whatever you call them, the repeated notes. But in this piece, that added intensity. I like doing that. So... I’m just working through this... And one thing I often do, since my theory is that, we learned to enjoy certain pieces, most pieces, by association so that we relate things. So like the first movement, you know like the little actor thing comes back at the end. And one thing I’m careful to do usually is to keep the piano away or apart from fighting the voice, I always want the words to be heard. So the 2nd piece “falling asleep”, you ought to notice is it’s very dream-like and quiet-like, it’s like word painting in a way. I think this little thing of (play keyboard)...that comes back in the final movement. So that’s what I mean of writing associate to, I mean that’s a little... in the final
moment of islands of peace, think this figure appears there. I think this moment is mostly pretty lyrical but it has sort of a, you know the piano has different things at once playing under the voice. And then when I got to the 3rd one, I feel that running of that obviously should move again so that you got the contrast. So you got the creaky opening, the serious one, and no.2 is lyrical and sort of … all the suppression you can have, and this one I feel like running allows me to move the piece again. So that interest doesn’t wane. And you know you go from falling asleep in the afternoon, and I remembered Vern Sutton when he got to the end of that, I think he kind of yawned, and some people, a guy like that you would think he’s funny... and that’s fine though, it is a character. And “I feel good running”, it’s a different kind of person, because it’s a different kind of person to walk into the room you know, like it feels good running (singing)…The “root song” was something that Michael does well, and thought was the crux of the whole thing, and it’s the most… it’s the longest part and it’s sculpted so that…It starts a little bit psychologically confused person who’s having that crazy dream, you know the cats keep bringing birds into the house, yeah well, whatever. “Lost between my wing,” “the knight,” “the rider,” “doing the dark roads” all that starting to suggest something and then in the orchestra version on page 33, you know we’re getting the piano with the (playing keyboard)...so you know I’m trying to create some darkness and intensity but I’m also trying to steer clear of the voice so that you don’t have trouble projecting what is that you want to be heard (playing keyboard), yeah that’s on page 36. You know the singer, the tenor has this (sings)...what’s going on against it, the piano is trying to emphasize, it’s specified... it’s like going into a state fair and you’re looking at yourself in one of the mirrors, you don’t look at all like you really are, like (playing the keyboard)...The changes in harmony and texture underneath are more dramatic in this piece. It uses, you know, repeated notes, sometimes these (playing keyboard)...you know that’s to give some sort of a variety, you can’t stop it, you know. It’s a little bit crazy, Michael. And then, let’s see, (singing)…, I mean again this is the first one whose going to some pretty dramatic psychological changes which implies it’s a little bit out of control. And I do that if somebody is, you know, (play keyboard)... again, That’s totally to drive the singer and then when it gets more intense, listen to this (play keyboard)... you know that kind of stuff. But the singer is on top of the, you know (sings), this little monument, then it goes into the wee, and the person has lost his grip. (laugh)

J: It is wonderful. It's like flying into the sky or something.

S:Yeah, I would like to hear, after you perform this, what the reaction was from people. (laugh) Don’t be surprised. Now, when that piece ends, It is like the Beetle’s “Hey Jude” would end with the big chord, I mean the very end of the movement is this (play keyboard)...Since it’s the lower of the piano and you have all the overtones and resonance, you know, it expanded most of the emotional expenditure to a higher degree, and of course it’s great for that chord just to ring out and almost till it dies away. And then what you want, and it’s the way I think, you know, you can’t just settle like going to piano and voice in the next one, “Calm, Calm.” That’s why I had this...(play piano and sing) “Calm, calm, the great calm came... Morley wanted it...” so did the audience, you know. They are about to go bonkers, watch this guy go more nuts... and then this is a little bit like the second movement, that it has some of the quieter and more settled things. But even so, you know, “white fur wolf and snow queen and true forest with its wind kings...” You know, the guy’s still doesn't have a grip, but, this is better. And then the last one, “Et in Arcadia, Morley” is sort of like... it’s yet another personality... sort of punch speech thing, and
yet he comes back to... where is it? (sing) kind of settle, and the little (play piano and sing) you can do that, if you are think in reference of those words without having to actually say them, you know. It’s a personal psychological journey that the audience is invited to experience by watching and hearing the singer play, and the pianist is very much a part of the program, because... literally there are times when the piano...(play piano). The piano just sort of driving like a hammer stroke. Anyway, I just kind of want to talk through a little bit. And then when is your recital?

J: My recital is probably in the mid of March.

S: Oh, ok. Well, couple of things. If you could, I would love to hear. You can send me the date and I’ll be thinking good vibes about your performance, and I’d love to hear your performance, how it is, if it’s recorded, if you feel like doing that. And also a phone call or email about what the reaction was, ‘cause I don’t think the piece has been done for years... years... years...

J: It would definitely be recorded since this is a lecture recital, and I would definitely send you a copy. Even before that, I probably would record some of the rehearsal with the pianist, and I’ll try to come out with an excerpt of it, and then maybe we can talk about it.

S: That would be great! And if you want to call again some time between now and the recital and say, “I’m not sure what to do here” or “what do you think” I’ll be happy to talk again.

J: Just now you mentioned in the premiere, Vern Sutton put a little bit of acting, the dramatic gesture, when he performed it. Do you want some kind of gesture or acting when I perform this?

S: If you did any of that, I would say subtle. But, it also would be... I don't want it in the sort of a way to move when you’re singing something. But, you know, I would say, sometimes you would use a hand or maybe at some point you’re becoming crazy that you’re like...you make a fist. I would say go with what feels natural to you. It’s at some point where in, you look up more as if you are in the dreamy state, or you’re scowl and... But sometimes thing’s just naturally. It’s not the kind of things where you stand in the little elbow of the piano with one hand on the piano and look out. You can’t sing all these crazy things and just remain stoic, I guess that’s what I’m saying. Just be yourself, and if you feel like putting something into it, and if it’s a hand gesture or throwing you hand out, or making a fist or scowling while you’re singing. That’s how I would make it convincing to the audience. What you basically need to do is convince them that you are this Michael Morley. You should go for it.

J: Ok. One last question. This piece was written as a song cycle. I’m wondering if you specifically want this to be performed as a whole, or sometimes it can be performed individually, I mean, in separate piece?

S: I’m not fuzzy about that, because people sometimes say, “Oh, we only want the complete things on.” If you can pull it off, this is from our song cycle where you... you could easily do the movement “Calm, Calm” or “Falling Asleep in the Afternoon” or any number of them would work separately or two movements. That’s all fine. I don’t mind that at all.
Telephone Interview, February 21, 2012

J: I’m just wondering when you found your publication company?

S: 1997 July.

J: Did you found the company by yourself or did you found this company with other friends or colleagues?

S: Myself.

J: Where did you found your publication? Is it in Minnesota?

S: St. Paul Minnesota.

J: Was Erik already with you? The director of the company? Erik Pearson?

S: The company was just me when it first started.

J: Before that, how did you publish your music?

S: I was a, and I still am, a composer in the European American Music Corporation. Catalogue that based in Manhattan and they all have our sixty of copyright, which they want to keep it, and they still publish those works. I don’t think I’ve given them anything new since I started my own company. So I have 2 companies. One New York base, one base in St. Paul, which is my own.

J: I would like to ask you something about your... Something after 1992 after you served your residency in Atlanta. After that, did you go back to St. Paul?

S: Yes. I moved with my family back to St. Paul.

J: Since then you’ve been in St. Paul all your life, right?

S: Prior to 1988, I was in St. Paul except the first two years I spent in New Jersey where I was born.

Telephone Interview, March 3, 2012

J: I just have a few questions about the performance directions in the piece, especially the 4th movement “Morley’s Root Song.” At the end of the “Morley Root Song,” there is triangle shaped note, when you have “all the way...” I’m just wondering what is the performance direction you would like to have for the triangle shaped note?
S: I think it means as high as possible in the singer’s range or going up higher and higher.

J: As high as possible?

S: I think so, yes. That’s my recollection. I don’t have the score in front of me. That part “all the way…. (demonstrate)

J: What about on the word “drome”. That is the last note of the piece. You had it pretty low. Do you want it to be very high as well?

S: No. It should be low. It’s kind of like “drome…” (demonstration)  
J: Like “all the way... Drome…”(imitate and reconfirm), like that?

S: Yes. Almost like a growl.

J: Okay. Can I include this performance direction into the list of your performance direction?

S: Yes. It should have been there already. I don’t know why it wasn’t but you can add it.

J: Ok. Thank you.

S: You’re welcome.

J: The other one is, in the same movement you have borrowed some of the music by the other composers, such as Liszt?

S: Liszt. Yes.

J: What is crooner style? Where is that from?

S: Well, it’s kind of like in the 40s, you know like Frank Sinatra?

J: How did you use the music by other composers in that 4th movement? What is your main objective?

S: I think it’s from the B minor sonata. And that particular part always sounds like it’s really grand and unctuous and triumphal and ceremonial. So I use it to indicate another aspect of Morley’s personality. You know, at this point he is feeling very triumphant but... you know, it’s pleading. It doesn’t last for very long. It is a brief moment of, like open arm gesture, you know ceremonial. He quickly retrieves into another personality, I think, rather, it’s like person here, flashing through different moods and personalities.

J: Okay. Actually I completely agree with you because when I reached that part, I really feel grand with that music you borrowed. It’s completely adequate, I mean legit.
S: Yes. And it’s also…. I don’t know why I used the Liszt because I thought of that as it needs octaves and chords and things like very tall stuff there. But it’s helpful.

J: It’s great.

S: Thank you.
J = Jin Hin Yap  
M = Michael Dennis Browne

**Interview via Skype (Voice Over Internet Protocols), January 8, 2012**

J: Hello?

M: Hello? I can see your face.

J: oh, you can see my face?

M: that’s good! I can hear you well. So you are at LSU in Baton Rouge.

J: That’s right. I’m now in my last year of my doctoral studies.

M: yes.

J: And the reason I decided to work on this song cycle of Mr. Paulus is because I think it is very interesting, first of all, and I find the music and the poem, they actually really work together. So, that’s why that it could allow me to work on this project.

M: I think I explained to you that I began in the words... Before 1968 they [Morley’s poems] just started coming to me... the character, persona of Michael Morley. And they... poems poured out in kind of a crazy way. Umm... it’s some of the craziest writing I have ever done, And in the following Spring, umm... Spring of 1969, it came to me one day that the place where my father had died in April of 1960 in England was the Atkinson Morley Hospital. So the name “Morley” had been lying around inside me. And, but umm... for six months I wrote these crazy poems not realizing that “Morley” was a significant name for me.

J: wow!

M: I was influenced by John Berryman. Have you heard of John Berryman’s *Dream Songs*? John Berryman wrote *Dream Songs* and he had about four hundred of them, and he had a character called Henry, who did things, crazy things that John Berryman would not do; the way, for example, Michael Morley would run up a waterfall and set the fish on fire, but Michael Dennis Browne is far too nice to do something like that. So, the persona allows you... a kind of a dream... a freedom... a behavior... of that kind you have in your dream.

J: Yes! Anyway, I would like to... actually try to interview you, your life and your work, before we go the discussion of Michael Morley.

M: You want to know about my life?
J: Yes. Is that ok?

M: It’s good! I’m thinking though, I could probably find and email you an autobiographical article that was published about... that I wrote years and years ago that keeps up to about 1995. It tells you anything about my life in a thousand words. Now speak anything you like, but I can mail you, if you like, the autobiographical article. Would that be helpful?

J: That would be great!

M: If I can find it. What else can I send you? Something else?

J: Would you be able to send me a list of work you have done?

M: With Stephen Paulus?

J: Your work list.

M: In my poetry books?

J: Yes.

M: I put all these stuff somewhere. It might take a day or two (laugh). Anything you want, I can send you if I can find it.

J: Ok, thank you so much.

M: But ask me any question from now. And I call you... What’s your name, your first name that I should say it?

J: It’s Jin Hin.

M: Jin Hin. I can do that. Jin Hin, ask me anything you like.

J: Ok! When did you move to United States?


J: 1975?

M: 65.


M: When I was 25 years old. And, I went to the University of Iowa in Iowa City, which is a very famous, probably still the best-known creative writing program in the country. And I began to read American poetry in early 60s, and I was very excited about it. So I wanted to go and see the
place for myself. So I went to Iowa City. I did a Masters degree in English and I studied in the workshop, and I had a great opportunity to teach the workshop for a year. So I went from a graduate student, 1967, when I finished, to being a visiting faculty of the workshop. And then, 68, I moved to the East coast. I taught at Columbia University, and it was when I was teaching at Columbia University, in the fall of 68, that the Morley poems started to come, and this was eight years after my father’s death. So I spent three years on the East coast. I taught at Columbia, and Bennington College in Vermont, and then I moved to Minnesota in 1971. I have been here ever since. I retired last year after thirty-nine years of teaching at the University of Minnesota.

J: Before that, did you spend your life in England?

M: Well, I was at a university in England, a place called Hull University in the North of England, and a year at Oxford University. I also spend a year in France, teaching when I was a student, and I was in Finland, in Helsinki from 63 to 64, and I had begun reading American poetry there in a Foreign Service Library, and got very excited about that kind of freedom I saw in contemporary American poetry, and I wanted to write like that. So I came to the States in 65 like a kind of a pilgrimage – go to the kind of a place where the poetry hasn’t written that I found so exciting.

J: Were your parents writers?

M: No. My father was a businessman, but he was also an organist, and a pianist, and a choirmaster, and a painter.

J: Wow!

M: So he was gifted artistically. My mother also loved to sing, and she had been an amateur actress in her youth. Three of my four grandparents, including both my father’s parents, were born in Ireland. I have only one grandparent, my mother’s father who was born in England. So I feel very Irish in someway and visited Ireland a few times over the last years to look for family. So I am English born, Irish ancestry, become American. I’m Anglo-American I guess, or call me somewhat “Anglo-Sotan,” which is a mixture of Anglo-Saxon and Minnesotan, and if you run the two words together, “Anglo-Sotan,” seems to describe me.

J: Whom would you consider your mentors when you were going through the process of becoming a writer?

M: Oh, well... I was very interested on English poetry. I got some very good teachers in high school, so... I love Shakespeare, and Keats, and Blake... earlier British poetry. I love them completely... early teachers of mine. And I discovered Yeats, I read the poetry, and then I began to read the French poetry. I had a degree in French. I read Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Mallarmé, twentieth century French poet Claudel, and others. So, the first one was English, old English, then Irish, then European. Then I began to read American poetry in the early 60s. I will send you some writings about that... James Wright, Theodore Roethke, Ann Sexton, and so forth... Robert Bly, W.S. Merwin... I just was so excited, and I must go to America.
J: You said you began writing in high school. When did you start your writing?

M: Oh, I started writing bad poetry in high school (laugh), when I was about fourteen or fifteen. The bigger event was... when I was nineteen, almost twenty, my father died, Eddie... He died in the Morley Hospital... I was terribly upset, because he was a lovely man and a good musician. Then I went to France for a year, just after he died, and I found the only poetry really helped me, apart from prayer, which I like to do. I like to pray. Reading poetry and writing poetry helped me with the complexity of feelings, because I was young and excited about being young, and... but I also mourned my father. And poetry is very good at... a very complex vocabulary... and I like what Auden says, W.H. Auden. He says, “Poetry is a clear expression of mixed feelings.” Like Catullus says “Io odio e amo”, “I hate and I love.” So then when I was twenty, just been nineteen, I had a dead father and I had a life in France, and I was excited and miserable, which is a perfect combination (laugh), for writing poetry, the excitement of life and... the grief of my father’s death.

J: How do you describe your writing style?

M: I think one of the words to use is eclectic. That is it’s got many aspect to it. I’m certainly a lyrical poet, and I have done a lot of writing for music, for Stephen Paulus and others, mostly Craig Hella Johnson, if you know him. In Austin, he has a choir called Conspirare. I like sound in poetry, I like pattern. I’m lyrical. I like the writing to flow. It must have the rhythm called energy. If it doesn’t have rhythm, it doesn’t have energy. I am also very imagistic. I am always been brought upon the imagery, like Baudelaire or Garcia Lorca, The Spanish American poet I love, I didn't mention that. Jiménez, Michado and all those others. So, lyrical, eclectic, imagistic... those are some of the word. But to me the rhythm is very important. The rhythm, the flow. I like to write formal verse. I write hymns, you know, and rhyming poems. But I like beats and measures. I like fixed verse. I like Shakespeare’s blank verse where it’s five beats. But even in my free verse, I like that to be what I call the presence of a passion of stresses. The presence of a passion of stresses. And I haven’t got the Morley texts in front of me, but I know it pretty well, and I think you will find there a mixture of free stressed rhythm, and occasionally more traditional rhythm, four or five each line. I am a real mix. I am very eclectic, and I like to be that way.

J: I think the rhythm really interests me, because Paulus’ works are very rhythmical too.

M: Yes. It’s a key concept for me. I have lots of writing I have done. But no one would ever see, because I could not find the right rhythm, and some times... I could send you a little piece I’ve written on it, I’ll make you a note, “Why poetry?” It talks about how rhythm is the essential. You get a kind of a shape. You get a pulse. You don’t have any words. It’ll just tell you what that rhythmical shape. It must have an urgency and a flowing to it. It must be varied too. A lot of English poetry, well, it’s varied, with its quatrains, and its varied text blurbs. I like “ebb and flow.” One of my big marbles in my writing of course is music, the way a symphony can have an allegro and an adagio, and rondo, and a scherzo, and it will have dynamics, and it will be mezzo-forte and... The range of dynamic in music while he’s singing in choir... I’m a tenor... was a tenor. Now I am a baritone. I have sung in the Bach’s St. John’s Passion. I’ve sung in works by Handel. I’ve sung In Purcell’s Dido and Aeneas. The way you have in the Passion, for example, or
Handel, whom I love, when you have arias, recits, chorale, you know, the way a major choral work goes from place to place, changes its tempo, different combinations of entrance in the orchestration. All of them are very important models for me, non-verbal models for my writing, the kind of variety you get in a big choral work.

J: Great! You also enjoy singing. Will it help you in your writing?

M: I think very much so. I always want to sing. How do you explain it? Yes! Because what you sing, the pitch variation, when it goes up and down the scale and all over the place, and that kind of range, I want in my imagination: quiet moments, dark moments, high moments, low moments. And variations by folksongs, by a lot of composers like Vaughn Williams, Bartok and others. I love the simplicity of folksong, I always love to sing. I love settings at words. I was talking to a formal student yesterday, recommended Benjamin Britten to him: the War Requiem, settings of Thomas Hardy, settings of Christopher Smart... rejoice of the lamb... Elgar is very influenced by choral music in general. And when I listened to them, I would sing along with them (laugh).

J: Lets talk about your collaboration with Stephen Paulus, because you and Stephen Paulus have worked on so many works.

M: Yes, we will have a new world premier church opera, premiered in April in Minnesota. The new one. We’re working on the music right now. So we’ve worked for about thirty-five years. When I came to Minnesota, I’ve already worked with a young British composer called David Lord... We did The Wife of Winter. Wife is a song cycle. It was performed and commissioned by Dame Janet Baker, who is a famous mezzo-soprano from a while ago. When I came to Minnesota, I went to try and find a composer to work with. Then I went to Dominick Argento, who is a composer. He wasn’t interested, but he said there was a student in the PhD program called Stephen Paulus, who was very good, and he put us in touch. And so I met Stephen in about 1976, I was on his PhD committee. We started working together in about 1977. We did the song cycle, the pilgrim, choral works, and we have done about more than fifteen works together. Have you heard any of our recordings?

J: I have not yet.

M: Ok. There is lots of stuff. The one I would recommend is the most recent one, and the largest work. It’s very fine. It’s published by BIS record. B-I-S. Do you know that, the Swedish company?

J: No, but I will find that out.

M: B.I.S. They have a website. It’s an oratorio called To Be Certain of the Dawn. And it was premiered in 2005, and Minnesota Orchestra and Osmo Vänskä have recorded on B.I.S. Records. And if you listen to that, you’ll hear, I think, our largest and possibly our best work.

J: Ok. I’m looking forward to it.
M: Yeah. Go to YouTube. We have a couple of pieces that are very popular that you can listen to or see choir performing. One is called *The Pilgrim’s Hymn*. If you Google “Pilgrim Hymn,” “Stephen Paulus,” there are dozens of recordings in the international repertory. And there is another one, that’s another opera called *The Three Hermits* that we did in 1997. The other possible one is called *The Road Home*. That’s all over Google, you can find it everywhere. That’s a tune from 1835, that Stephen has to find new words for, and he reharmonized it. So those are two of our very popular works that many choir sing and many have recorded – *Pilgrim’s Hymn* and *The Road Home*. And I can send you all the stuff. I will get some emails stuff to get together with you.

J: Thank you!

M: So, I love working with Stephen. We get to a very good place. We had some fights early on, like a marriage or something, but we survived. The first work was an opera for the opera theater of St. Louis in 1979, called *The Village Singer*, and it hasn’t been recorded, but it’s a good work. And now we got us the new work *The Shoemaker*. We did *To Be Certain of the Dawn* in 2005. In 1997 we did *The Three Hermits*, which is another story from Tolstoy, which has the beautiful pilgrim hymn in it. That was so successful, *Pilgrim’s Hymn*, that Stephen started his own publication company called Paulus Publications. We have a wonderful friendship and relationship. I am older than he is; I’m seventy-one years old. He is sixty-two, I think. So there are some years between us. Every four or five years, we will do a big work, like *The Shoemaker*, or the oratorio. We are going to hear the oratorio next month in Madison, Wisconsin, at a conference of ACDA, the American Choral Directors Association, and we are going to Madison. Three college choirs, and it’s going to be very nice.

J: Would you tell me the process of the work, your collaboration with Stephen?


J: He was the one who premiered the work.

M: And he commissioned it, I think, from Stephen. And I decided that the Morley poems should be a little different from the previous things, a little crazier, a little riskier. So I think of the... How many pieces are there? Are there six pieces? I’m sorry I don't have it here.

J: Six pieces.

M: I think four already existed, and I wrote two. The ones I wrote were “Et in Arcadia, Morley,” the big main section there, and then the one in the end, “...The Island Between Here and Birth.” I think I wrote those for the work but the other four, as I remembered, I am sorry I don't have the texts here, I need to find it.

J: I have “Michael Morley Creaked,” “Falling Asleep in the Afternoon,” “I Feel Good Running,” “Morley’s Root Song,” “Calm, Calm,” and “Et in Arcadia, Morley.”
M: Yes. “Morley’s Root Song” and “Et in Acadia Morley” are the two I constructed for Stephen to set the music. The other four you can find it in the books of mine you have, you said, the book “The Wife of Winter” and “The Sun Fetcher.”

J: Yes, I have the books.

M: There they are! (laugh)

J: I’ve bought them.

M: So I wrote the “Root Song” for Stephen, and “Et in Acadia,” and the “Root Song” is really a crazy piece, and I can’t believe we constructed. He quotes in there, says Liszt he uses, or Brahms, some quotes from classical composer in there. Are you going to talk to him to talk about? Will you have a conversation with him?

J: Yes. I will talk to him on this coming Thursday.

M: Check who he is. He is quoting someone there, Schumann or someone in the middle. I was feeling very free with my mind, and allowing crazy things on to the tape. I don't think I can write like that now. I was, you know, twenty-five years old, twenty-six years old of youth, and craziness. For example, the “root song,” main section, does it work for you, the craziness? Or is it too crazy? Does it not make sense to you?

J: I think it makes sense. It is just incredibly challenging.

M: Well, it will want to challenge you. This is good! What is the challenge for you? The notes, or the words, or both?

J: I think it’s both. It’s everything I think. And then he wrote something crazy at the end, and I have to do some sliding up and down in the high notes. That is pretty challenging.

M: Yes. The “Root Song” is kind of a mad scene. There is a piece called, is it Pierrot Lunaire, by... the composer has a... and eight tons of mad scenes by Pina Colades. It’s a kind of mad scene, a kind of things people say in their sleep. You know, when people fall asleep, and they are just waking up, they call that hypnopompic, hypnagogic. Strange images come to you as you’re falling asleep, and strange images come as you are waking up. And especially in the last section, I mean, “A. A. Dariero Hudson” did something with the “spoon,” what was that? A few “dream” phrase, something you would dream. So a lot of the wildness of it is... the wildness of the crazy guy who is half awake and half asleep, and you can’t make conventional sense. The “Root Song,” by the way, do you know what Chakras are? In the Asian medicine, the seven Chakras?

J: Chakras?

M: C-H-A-K-R-A-S. There are seven Chakras in what’s called the Astro-body, and the top of the head is the Crown Chakra, and the Heart Chakra in the middle. But the bottom Chakra is the
Root Chakra, it’s just right at the bottom of your body, underneath where your genitals are, it’s the Root Chakra. And so, I was trying to bring up, from the Root, a certain kind of wild craziness. But “Root” comes from Root Chakra called... what is it called? I forget the name now. Look up Chakras, you’ll find the word “Root” there. That’s where the words come from.

J: Ok.

M: I was letting out from the bottom of myself, almost anything that it occurred to be. I like madness portray in music. I like it in literature when Hamlet is kind of crazy, for example. I like dream state and dream imagery, and I kind of indulge it there. I think it is little over indulge. I think some of the writing is a little too ripped, but that’s me being an older man, you see.

J: I think it’s acceptable. I think it’s fascinating.

M: Well I hope so. It’s not your usual song cycle material. It’s a... of course it’s a persona, you know. It’s a persona, it’s not me. It’s a mask, which is what the persona means. What a persona tends to do, when you write one, is it brings out your shadow side, all the subversive thoughts that we often repress. For example, “Michael Morley sets the fish on the fire.” That’s a silly thought, but it’s a dream thought. I am much too respectable. Michael Dennis Browne, with three names. I would never run up a waterfall, and set the fish on fire, but Michael Morley would. It’s my shadow side, my hidden side. Sometimes it’s quite funny, it’s like, you know, like Charlie Chaplin, the actor, the persona often releases a joke... a trickster, a joker... someone who is irresponsible. We all have these selves in us, but most people don’t express them. But I was expressing my playful, mischievous side in this work.

J: I think there are so many elements in this music, and also in your poems, and I absolutely agree with you; it can be anything, and you absolutely put everything in it. I think it’s very fascinating.

M: I think Stephen was very right to set it to music (laugh). I think it really pushed his limits. It’s the craziest thing we have done. I don’t remember how he complained or changed anything, but he set it. It’s heroic, I think. It’s not easy to set to music, I’m sure. He will tell you.

J: I wonder if you published the last poem Et In Arcadia, Morley?

M: I don’t think so. I don’t remember. I don’t think it is published. No, I don’t think so.

J: Because I found all five poems. The “Morley’s Root Song” I found it in Chicago Review in 1977, and I didn’t find the “Et In Arcadia.”

M: Really? I don't think the “Root Song” is in the book, I can’t remember now. “Et In Arcadia...” no. It was the last thing I wrote. It’s not in the other books. It’s the last thing I wrote, I wanted him to fall asleep, and I love the refrain “The islands between here and birth.” I think it’s a beautiful line. It kind of came to me, and then I was tossing those dream phrases. No, I don't think it appeared either any of the books. Did you enjoy singing it?
J: First of all, when I first try to sing through it, it was really hard to digest everything. And I took some time to imagine if I were the poet or the composer, how I would do things with Michael Morley, and it started to make sense, and it’s very picturesque.

M: Pictorial in other words.

J: Yes. Pictorial. And I think it’s fascinating, and it’s like a fantasy.

M: Well, here is one of my favorite quotes. When I teach... no I don’t teach that way. It’s from Andre Gide, French writer. He said, “The only beautiful things are those that madness dictates and reason rights.” So my inner voices are giving me plenty of madness, but I was trying to find a shape for them poetically, and maybe sometimes I crossed that line and it doesn't work. But madness is the source of... like night imagery, night dreams... a certain madness is the fuel of fire for many poems. You have to organize it, that’s where reason comes in, the form comes in. And occasionally in Michael Morley, I probably overstepped a little bit, and some of the madness are a little bit undigested. If I had to edit it, I could probably go through it and... say in “Root Song,” it’s too long. I could lose a few lines, not lose the wildness. I love wildness. Maybe some parts are just a little too bizarre, possibly. But you can’t delete it. It’s too late (laugh).

J: Anyway, you mentioned Austin Wright’s “The Morley Mythology” in our first email. Is your persona of Michael Morley correspondent with his?

M: Austin Wright... I never met him. He’s dead now. And I got the book, but I never read it. So I have no idea. It’s just a coincidence that one artist in prose, one in poetry chose this name, and we had one name in difference. I have no idea what it is about. Have you read it?

J: I started to read about it but I don't find any similarities.

M: No. I don't think so. It’s pure coincidence, and it was an amusing coincidence, but I never read it. I had a great time, Jin Hin, writing the Morley poems. It releases some qualities in me. I think a lot of the little bits are not very good, but they are fun to write. But after the second wave, I didn't do it more, but I think I hope that I incorporated some of Morley’s wildness into my work later even though it doesn't have the character of Michael Morley in there. It opened up some doors from the inside in other words. But I didn't need the persona after say, the second book. It doesn't work. But I think the origin of the Morley thing is like a little children’s rhyme, “Michael Morley he’s so good, chop him up for fire wood.” You know... it’s like a little chant... a naughty boy in me... it’s a birth, came out in those poems, and I’m proud of that. I don’t regret it.

J: When I read through the poems of Michael Morley, I noticed that there is a first person writing, and sometimes there is a third person writing like “he.” When you mentioned of first person writing, is that kind of really close to you?

M: It’s very hard to say. You know, we all have several selves. He is me... and he’s me and he’s the persona. He’s an aspect of myself. He is someone roaming around inside me, saying crazy things. Like I said before, most people have selves. I think we all do, but don't let it out. But I
open the sack and let him out (laugh). So it’s me, and it’s not me. Because I’m crazy, but I’m not
crazy. It’s like Andre Gide, “The only beautiful things are those that madness dictates and reason
rights.” Sometimes I wrote the actual madness, I think.

**Telephone Interview, January 13, 2012**

J: Today I would like to really dig into the poems related to... from this song cycle, the six poems,
I would like to just ask for your description about every piece.

M: Oh, good luck.(laugh) I don’t know. That’s a long time ago...(laugh) Ok. I do have them in
front of me.

J :Ok, that would be great.

M: So... you know, we are talking about the kind of a fine line here between... normal behavior
and crazy behavior, I mean. All the... whole section, creaking and sliding and breaking and... It’s
pretty maniac behaviors, you know. A lot of the pieces is about sleep and dream, but here is
being rather frenzied, rather maniac... showing pictures of what it's like to be inside his head or
his sensibility... very active, rather childlike... “Sliding like a skillet down the slope...” of course
there is a “classroom” in there. It’s a kind of things that you could dream and when you woke up,
you could tell someone, “Oh, I had this weird dream that I was sliding down the slope, so I got a
photography of the ladder.” I mean, nothing in this piece... all the six pieces, but especially in
this piece, is stranger than what most people could dream on an average night. It’s strictly dream
material. Does that make sense?

J: Yes! It does make sense in this piece, because when Stephen Paulus composed this, every
poem he picks and you wrote for him... they are all about dreaming and about the fantasy.

M: Yes, very much about fantasy. And the inner life... as I said, everybody has several selves
inside them, and everybody dreams every night. Sometimes it’s very... strange thing of a most
respectable people... someone has the wildest dreams. In that first one... he can’t be justified...
just, he is having fantasy of... a certain kind of freedom. I mean, it’s midnight, he’s sliding... he is
kind of anarchist. He can do anything he wants. In dreams, he is empowered to do any of these
wild things.

J: So, when you say, “All the shadows followed as if he were raw meat,” what shadows... whose
shadows was it?

M: Well, you know, he is himself a shadow aspect of personality, you know... That idea by Carl
Jung, “We have a shadow self, who appears in fantasies in dreams.” Well, it’s midnight wood,
it’s midnight forest. There’re always full of shadows. It’s just, I mean, the shadows of the forest,
but it could be also, since he mentioned, the grandfather clock, it could be shadows of ancestors.
I mean, I don't want to specify of who the shadows are, but that the shadows have been... that it
hungry for him, and that he encounters in the midnight wood.
J: I think it’s... that would be a very imaginable shadows. Like, It could be anything.

M: Yes, it could be anything, but I think it’s a scary, it’s a lot frightening, because raw meat, I mean. It’s like hounds following, chasing, wolves that chasing you to eat you. And so, it’s a little predatory and scary. But most of the first part is, although it’s bad behavior, it’s pretty lighthearted, it is supposed to look funny, even. I mean, he’s having a good time in his dreams. He took of his wheels, he breaks into a classroom and took of his wheels, his training wheels, you know, kids have training wheels when they are young, on their bicycle so they can be steady that it won’t fall, that one wheel on either side of the bike. And so, he took of his wheels means he’s free, so I think the whole first section is about freedom in dream, doing things you must too polite to do during the day.

J: That gives another dimension to my thoughts, because the first piece, I always thought it’s pretty dark. And when you say freedom, and it’s kind of like... in that kind of the dark situation, you are chasing for a specific kind of a freedom.

M: Right. It’s dark, but it’s not tragic dark. It’s the darkness of dream and fantasy, but... he’s having a good time breaking all these rules, taking off the wheels, setting up photographs. He’s free!

J: Great! Ok, let’s talk about... I think I can get what you mean in the first piece. What about the second one, “Falling Asleep in the Afternoon?”

M: Well, you know, sleep and dreams occur throughout the piece, in this and number five, the calm one, especially. I guess, I like to take nap, I still... I take naps quite a bit now, because I am older, but I always like to take naps, and let everything go and fall asleep in the afternoon. And so, I think sleep for him is a kind of a refuge, a kind of oasis, you know, like a place of water in the desert. Or it’s like a sanctuary, a place where you can hide, safe from the world. You know the word “sanctuary?”

J: Yes.

M: So it’s an oasis. It’s a sanctuary, it’s a safe place. And I don’t know if I can say more than that. “Falling in love again” is a famous old song Marlene Dietrich used to sing, “Falling in love again (singing)... du du du.. duh duh duh...” can’t help it. It’s an old song, an old Cabaret song I think. So, it’s just a little... and then he recovers himself. He gets his kind of strength back. And then in the third part he is off and running again... He’s restoring himself, it says in the “Root Song,” “Restoring the ruins...” no no... the next one, “restoring the ruins as I run.” Sleep restored him, because you can’t keep up that pace so much, that first pace: creak, slid, broke... that’s exhausting!

J: Now and then he goes into the sleeping.

M: He has to restore himself in sleep, and then he can start again and be crazy some more. (laugh)

J: Yes! That leads to the third piece. I think this was a very straightforward and very fun piece.
M: Oh, it’s fun! It’s crazy! Running through pie and running through fingers, and snapping streams.

J: Is there a special meaning when you say, “I run through a pie my mother is making in England?” because you are from England.

M: That’s all. Yeah, I take that light out now. It’s simply because I... yes, I was born in England, and I’m thinking of my mother far away or the character is thinking of his mother far away. That’s all. Speaking of England, “I am the King who had been hiding in the tree” is a historical illusion to King Charles I.

J: King Charles I.

M: In the seventeenth century England, who hid from his pursuers, hid in an oak tree I think. I think he was eventually found and he was executed. So, it’s a little reference of Charles I. But “running through the ruins and restoring the ruins as I run...” I mean, there is something life giving about his fantasy. “Feels good running,” “he burns the winter man,” it’s a kind of mythical figure. He conquered death. He’s a king. It’s fun... it’s empowering again. It’s lighthearted, in a slightly dark way. But I think it’s important to see that second section as a, as I said before, the way to gather his strength again before he takes off.

J: Yes. Here he has, according to Stephen’s music... he definitely, like when you said to the last part of the third piece, he runs and then the music, the accompaniment picks up and then getting ready for the craziest one, the “Morley’s Root Song.” (laugh) Yeah, so I think we all agree that the piece is really long and probably all over the places, I mean... the dreaming of it.

M: The “Root Song?”

J: Yes!

M: Oh, it’s a crazy piece! I can’t imagine writing that now. It’s all over the place... it’s too much! It’s too much! Someone... I think one review mentioned that it was overwrought, a little bit too much. It’s very excessive... it’s a younger poet excess. But I think some of it has quite exciting images.


M: Yes. Well, I mean, the whole cycle really is some revealing his madness, and the shadow aspects of his character, which is being image, as the book of some kind. You know, turning pages of the shadow book... but this is certainly a mad scene, I mean, “Hey nonny, hey nonny...” That’s from Shakespeare’s “Hey nonny nonny no.” Sweet lovers love the spring. And then, you know, “Mama Mia, cosa nostra, bossa nova...” it’s just kind of gibberish. It’s a bit like in a playground, with little kids making up rhymes. And then, it goes on a spurn “E pericoloso sporgers, on a train in Europe leaning out the window. I always like nonsense poetry, nonsense writing, and Edward Lear in the nineteenth century and Lewis Carroll who wrote the “Alice in
the Wonderland...” I like that traditionally eccentric, mad kind of writing. And I mentioned on
my notes to you also, John Berryman’s “Dream Songs.” Not very many read them, but they are
very difficult. But they are very wonderfully strayed; it’s like a kind of jazz on the page. Not
everything can be explained, but it’s just some of the sounds and images are really... and rhythms
are exciting. So I was going a little crazy here.

J: When you said “Alice in the Wonderland,” you actually spoke my thoughts, because I was
thinking about the same thing too.

M: Oh, good! So that was the reason I was raised. I was loved, off with the hat, you know, the
Cheshire Cat, and the Rabbit, I mean. For most people of my generation, English or not, that
writing made an indelible impression that showed you how you could put on a page such inner
world, such freedom, such fantasy. So, certainly, an influence here. What else? Yeah, it’s pretty
crazy stuff. “Ich habe genug,” that’s a Bach’s cantata, “Ich habe genug.”

J: That’s a lot. It’s sometimes you go to the dream, and then sometimes you go to the classical
music. Actually for me it’s... when you say crazy, I would say fascinating.

M: Yes. I don't remember how I wrote this, I mean. It’s a wild piece, and I can see how
somebody of a certain mind set could be aspirated by it, ‘cause it’s just a little too crazy. But...
there is a little page or two, “The cats bringing birds,” and at the end it says, “The cats keep
bringing wings, ev’ry sad street without words...” I mean, clearly there is a melancholy woven
into the excitement and the craziness.

J: Actually I find this one is the most extreme. When I say most extreme, it’s like... it's totally out
of the box.

M: Yes, I agree.

J: Actually it was really exciting, because sometimes I like things really totally out of the box.
It’s like if you want to do it to the extreme.

M: I agree. I always like to, as I said in my notes, I always like traditional things and less
traditional. Some of my lines are quite traditional in their rhythms, in long... and then some are
really very short. I like mixture of things and different dynamic. So, it’s certainly an extreme
piece of writing for me, and there’s an excess that comes from being younger, and one could
probably edit it and make it a little less extreme. But it is what it is... written in 1976 or
something (laugh). I don’t think I could change anything now.

J: When I talk to Stephen Paulus, he also said, “I don’t know how I... why I did that. It was a
crazy one.”

M: It’s a great miracle. I’m amazed he did it.

J: Actually I’m glad he did it. After he wrote this one, and then nobody would perform it. When I
saw this piece, I just think there’s a lot to offer and there’s a lot to say about.
M: Yes, I think so. I am pleased you feel that.

J: I do feel that.

M: At the end of “Root Song,” there is this “Wee wee wee” “Mam-ma...” You know, that is from the nursery rhyme, and this little pig went... you know, when they count children’s toes, babies’ toes, this little pig went from market, this little pig went home, this little pig ate roast beef, and this little pig went “Wee wee wee wee wee!!” all the way home. That’s the direct quote from a nursery rhyme.

J: Yeah, there’s a lot of “Wee wee wee...”

M: Yes, but that’s from a little rhyme that you told kids.

J: I do have a question at the end. After the “Mamma mia... Wee wee... Ma...” and then after that there is a “Root-toot-i-toot?” is that right?

M: Yes.

J: “Root-toot-i-toot” and then “wee...” and then come down with... in the final one you have drome.

M: Which is just a made up word from dream and home. The “Root-toot-i-toot” is somewhere from popular song from jazz, I can’t remember... “Root-toot-i-toot... Root-toot-i-toot...” It’s some kind of... you know where it’s from? I can’t remember.

J: I’m not sure. I don’t remember too.

M: But also I used it because it’s the “Root Song,” the Root Chakra... the “Root-toot-i-toot...” I am just being, you know, just decoding that and... “Toot” is like when you toot your... what is the phrase? Toot your own trumpet or something, when you talk about yourself a lot. “Toot,” suggests being a little bit arrogant, maybe, or self absorb, something like that.

J: Lets talk about the fifth piece, “Calm, Calm” after the craziness.

M: Yes. That was one of the four of the six that were already written. I remember writing that in Connecticut. And again, it’s like the first one... after the first one we have “Falling Asleep.” And then after the craziness of the “Root Song,” once again we have the refuge or the sanctuary of something... I think. I love Stephen. I love the chords in that, so beautiful.

J: This is one of the most beautiful pieces of the cycle.

M: Yes! I think it’s very beautiful. And it’s just restoring himself with tons of images. People are washing their houses; the sailors have done their business, they have cleaned their ship, the wood shines.
J: Is he on the ship when you say you have... oh, in his house, I'm sorry.

M: Yes, “they have got up early like sailors scarlet...” So, it’s making an analogy of a house or a ship of some kind. And then there’s a “white fur of wolf...” A wolf, I think, it’s a benign image, it’s a pleasing kind of wolf. And the “snow queen”, which is from Hans Andersen... “wind kings of emptiness” I’m not sure about that (laugh)... not sure what that means. “And through air flies even the broken bird...” We’ve got the... the cats were destroying the birds in the “Root Song,” but here he has a bird, a broken bird that can fly. And the word “broken” is there. Remember the first song it talks about “breaking in to the classroom...”

J: That’s right.

M: Then we got “broken bird that flies.” “...walks shining on the ice of his life in the darkest wood even...” we have the “midnight wood” in the earlier piece, so we got some motives here, of... we got a return to the forest, but this time it’s not scary shadows or raw meat. It’s “shining” and “walking” and “flying,” and the “roar is pure” and “pain flees from all portraits,” “the heart has the thump of a friend...” it’s supposed to be a huge... it’s in a sense, like the second poem “Falling Asleep in the Afternoon,” much amplified, much more image, much more restoring the confidence. “All in a great calm lie” means Morley is a fairly isolated character. It’ll be islands between here and birth in the end. Island, meaning me... me, my land. But “all in a great calm lie” is somewhat compassionate, you got the each creature, all in a great calm. You got the sailors. He’s the least isolated here, of anywhere I think in the cycle. He sees himself in a more human context, one of many.

J: For me this one is a kind of like a peaceful into himself, reflecting himself with the surroundings.

M: Yes, exactly, and the real comforter. I think the music is beautiful.

J: Yes.

M: And then the last section... you know, “Et in Arcadia, Morley...” you know the phrase “Et in Arcadia Ego?”

J: No, not really.

M: It’s a work you might want to Google it. It’s a well-known phrase.

J: Can you repeat that? “Et in...”

M: “Arcadia Ego,” E-G-O, ego. “Et in Arcadia Ego” is to do with the idea that... “Arcady” is kind of an image of paradise, but often “Et in Arcadia Ego” has an image, I think, of greeneries and flowers, and then there’s a little skull, what they call “memento mori,” a reminder of death. And “Et in Arcadia Ego” means that, even in heaven, Ego, I am here. Death is here. Death is he who’s dead in paradise. I think if you Google it you’ll find that up, someone there will explain it better than I can, but it’s typically little skull thing... “I’m even here in Arcadia, in heaven...” but
for me now, the meaning here is... of course “Morley” means “death,” so that’s that. But... he is in kind of a paradise of sleep and dream, having these weird phrases, but there is a little under told... there is a good phrase by Gerald Manley Hopkins, he calls it “the under thought.” When you have a plain statement, often it has a double hidden meaning in it. So, although he’s in the paradise, asleep, death is even there in a sense... “The islands between here and birth...” that kind of lost... he remembers them nostalgically, but it’s not all paradise. It’s a little bit of darkness.

J: Ok.

M: And I think I dreamed all those phrases as though they were hypnogogic or hypnopompic, going through sleep, coming from sleep... because once again, you couldn’t possibly sustain the energy of something like the “Root Song” and he calms down in “Calm, Calm,” then he falls asleep in... It’s intrinsic wildness there again, even in sleep. Even in sleep, the mind, or you’re especially in sleep... the mind is very free agent, very wild. But if anyone asks you those phrases, the annual Swedish association, A.A. Deriero Hudson... those are the things I dreamed. As if everybody, most ordinary person, if there is such a word, most ordinary person has very wild dreams, because the mind is a large imagining organ, then we’re built to imagine large things. So... it’s a lot more crazy I think than anything you could dream. Do you have dreams? Oh, you have dreams!

J: Yeah of course, we all have dreams.

M: Yes. Do you remember your dreams?

J: Sometimes I remember. It’s a mixture of so many events. I mean, those events kind of like... you experience something in your life, and this happened in this time, and than happened in a different time. Sometimes in the dream, those overlapped together.

M: Yes, those absolutely overlapped together. I think it’s true to say that for me, the author of these words, I find some of these now still quite mysterious. I have no idea where it came from, but I let it on to the page, I released it on to the page, and although I think there is some excess, as I said in my comment, I liked the wildness and I liked the mixture of lyricism and raw images. I liked to try and write that way.

J: I think this is definitely like... I mean, it’s very original... it’s everything about your dream, and I think it’s very fantastic.

M: Well, thank you. You know, I may give you a quote last time from Andre Gide, who said, “the only beautiful things are those that madness dictates and reason rights.” And then here is the cycle in six poems of the certain sequences to it. It’s probably too wild for some people, but there is a certain kind of method to the madness, to include Hamlet as a method in the madness... But I never wrote like this again. I just wrote differently. I got it out of my system, maybe. (laugh)
January 4, 2012

Mr. Jin Hin Yap
5151 Highland Road, #284
Baton Rouge, LA 70808

Dear Jin Hin Yap,

This letter is to confirm that you do have my permission to publish your dissertation (with musical excerpts) concerning my work, MAD BOOK, SHADOW BOOK: MICHAEL MORLEY’S SONGS. I know that you have been in touch with our Editor and Manager at Paulus Publications, Mr. Erik Pearson and will let us know which examples you decide to include just for our records.

Thanks very much for your interest in my work! I will look forward to working with you on this project.

All good wishes,

[Signature]
Stephen Paulus
1719 Summit Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55105

(651) 260-3246  sp@stephenpaulus.com
Jin Hin Yap has my permission to reprint the poems from Mad Book, Shadow Book in his doctoral monograph.

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Professor Emeritus
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This letter is to grant you permission, on behalf of myself and Paulus Publications, Inc., for the right to print excerpts of my work Mad Book, Shadow Book: Michael Morley’s Songs (both the voice and piano version as well as the voice and chamber orchestra version) in your dissertation on the work. Thank you kindly for your interest in my music and also for presenting it on your recent recital! I will look forward to hearing your performance when you have an opportunity to send me an archival CD. Again, thanks so much and good luck in snaring the "perfect" job.

With all good wishes,

Stephen Paulus
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Jin Hin Yap, tenor, is an active vocalist for both opera and classical recital. He has performed numerous operatic roles, including Don Ramiro (La Cenerentola), Rodolfo (La Bohème), Tamino (The Magic Flute), Anatol (Vanessa), Count Almaviva (The Barber of Seville), Alfredo (La traviata), Roméo (Roméo et Juliette), Male Chorus (The Rape of Lucretia), and Ferrando (Così fan tutte). His oratorio repertoires include Handel’s Messiah, James Eakin III’s Flowers Over the Graves of War (World Premiere), Dubois’ Seven Last Words of Christ, and Rossini’s Stabat Mater. As a recitalist, Jin Hin has performed in Louisiana, and several states of Malaysia, such as Penang, Kuala Lumpur and Johor Bharu. Jin Hin is currently a teaching assistant of Louisiana State University School of Music.

Jin Hin received his Bachelor of Music and Master of Music from Louisiana State University, and is completing the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts in vocal performance with a minor in vocal pedagogy.