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The Song Cycles of Ned Rorem: a Technical Survey.

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THE SONG CYCLES OF NED ROREM: A TECHNICAL SURVEY

The Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical Col.

D.M.A. 1986

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**THE SONG CYCLES OF NED ROREM:
A TECHNICAL SURVEY**

A Monograph

**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
Leon Austin Henry, Jr
B.M., Belhaven College, 1975
M.M., Louisiana State University, 1977
May 1986**

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ABSTRACT

This monograph includes a brief history of the development of the song cycle *genre* in general, Ned Rorem's definition of the *genre* in particular, and a brief history of Ned Rorem's contributions of song cycles. Each of Ned Rorem's published song cycles has been inspected for the following: poet(s) and literary theme(s); excerptability of individual songs; difficulty of individual songs (rated easy, moderately easy, or difficult); accompanimental instrument(s); and apparent cyclic interval(s), motive(s), or melody(ies). These data are compiled in a concise form for each song cycle and is followed by explanations of the determination of excerptability and difficulty, and the composer's comments on each cycle taken from the composer's notes which precede some of the cycles and/or a personal interview with the composer.

The survey yielded the following information about the song cycles. Seventeen use a single poet or author, and eight use a variety of poets. Eleven have a consistent poetic theme, three create a narrative, and eleven have unrelated themes. Sixteen are accompanied by piano, four are accompanied by a small group of instruments (four or less instruments), four are accompanied by orchestra, and one is unaccompanied. Twenty-one contain excerptable songs (with forty-eight excerptable songs rated easy, sixty-seven excerptable songs rated moderately difficult, and forty-two excerptable rated difficult), and four contain unexcerptable songs. Twenty-one contain no apparent cyclic

melody or melodic motive, and four contain a cyclic melody or motive. All of the cycles contain songs of varying difficulty, and all meet most definitions of song cycle. The typical song cycle composed by Ned Rorem has a single poet or author, has a consistent poetic theme, is accompanied by piano alone, contains individual songs which are excerptable and which vary in difficulty, contains no apparent cyclic melody or motive, and meets the requirements for most definitions of song cycle.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Since 1948, when Ned Rorem's (b. 1923) "The Lordly Hudson" (1947) was recognized as the best published song of the year by the Music Library Association, Ned Rorem's works have attained such stature that Rorem is considered to be one of the outstanding song composers active in the United States today. Time Magazine called Rorem "undoubtedly the best composer of art songs now living."¹

Ned Rorem, the son of Dr. Clarence Rufus Rorem, a medical economics professor, and Gladys (Miller) Rorem, an activist in projects for the Society of Friends, began to compose songs at age nine. The following year, his piano teacher introduced him to the works of Debussy and Ravel, which was the beginning of a love for French music and its philosophy of music which became the pervasive influence on his style of composition. Rorem has said of this French influence:

We all compose, probably, 'through' the first music which attracted us. That music in turn was heard through music we already knew. Because I knew Ravel before Bach, I still hear Bach as I hear Ravel: those baroque sequences become static ninth chords. Because I knew

¹"Frozen Interplay," Time Magazine, LXXXVI, November 12, 1965, p.83.

French music before German, I still hear (and judge) German music as French.²

At age eleven, while on a family trip to Europe, Rorem became interested in keeping a diary, and seven years later he began to make a serious effort to keep a journal. His literary works are an invaluable source of information about his method of composing and the influences on that method, as well as providing a penetrating look at the personal life of the composer. To date, his writing has yielded nine books: The Paris Diary of Ned Rorem (1966), Music From Inside Out (1967), The New York Diary (1967), Music and People (1968), Critical Affairs (1970), Pure Contraption (1974), The Final Diary (1974), An Absolute Gift: A New Diary (1978), and Setting the Tone (1983).

Although Rorem was interested in music and creative writing, his interest in other academic areas was low, and he found acceptance to a college difficult because of his low high school grades. In 1940, he was accepted to the Music School of Northwestern University, where he studied for two years before moving to Philadelphia to study at the Curtis Institute. In 1943, he studied composition with Bernard Wagenaar at Juilliard, where he obtained the Bachelor of Science degree in 1946, and the Master of Arts degree in 1948. Rorem studied composition privately with Aaron Copland at the Berkshire Music Center in Tanglewood and orchestration with Virgil Thomson in New York (in exchange for working as Thomson's copyist) before journeying to Paris and Morocco where he

² Ned Rorem, An Absolute Gift: A New Diary (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978), p. 23.

lived for eight years. While in Europe, Rorem continued his studies under a Fulbright scholarship with Arthur Honegger.³

That Rorem's technique of composition has been recognized as superior is affirmed by the prizes he has won: The Lili Boulanger Award, the previously mentioned Fulbright Scholarship, the Gershwin Memorial Award, a Guggenheim Fellowship, three Ford Foundation Commissions (1961-1963) and a Pulitzer Prize in 1976.⁴ Joseph Machlis says of Rorem:

Ned Rorem is one of the gifted song writers of his generation. The five years he spent in France oriented him to the Gallic view of life and art, more especially to the tradition of Satie and Poulenc . . . His songs are in the line of descent from the great French art songs of the post-romantic period.⁵

About the significance of Rorem's music, Garland Anderson says:

Ned Rorem's music is significant and merits this recognition. Above all, it is an individual utterance concerned with the finer aspects of artistic thought and ever expressive of human qualities. It is an Art with roots in the past, it embraces the principles of great Renaissance masters, it is representative of a new romanticism founded not only on the past but securely buttressed by the sounder aspects of twentieth-century techniques.⁶

³Sharon Attack, "Ned Rorem and His Songs," (Master's Thesis, University of Nebraska, 1969), pp.4-6.

⁴The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 6th ed., s.v. "Rorem, Ned," by James Holmes.

⁵Joseph Machlis, Introduction to Contemporary Music (New York: W.W. Norton, 1961) p. 561.

⁶Garland Anderson, "The Music of Ned Rorem," Music Journal, XXI, 4, April, 1963, p. 72.

Statement of the Problem

. . . when I compose a so-called cycle (has anyone ever defined that term?) the order of songs is not necessarily determined until the writing is done. I may even add a quick waltz here, a moody one there, not because the verse decrees the tempo, but because the theatricality of the whole requires contrast.⁷

According to The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, a song cycle is "a composite form of vocal music consisting of a group of individually complete songs for solo or ensemble voices, with or without instrumental accompaniment. It may relate a series of events, or a series of impressions, or it may simply be a group of songs unified by mood."⁸ In her dissertation, "The Song Cycle: A Preliminary Inquiry into the Beginnings of the Romantic Song Cycle and the Nature of an Art Form," Luise Eitel Peake further clarifies this definition by stating that "the song cycle should, by recurrence or transformation of recognizable tonal patterns, be 'designed to form a musical entity.'"⁹ Wendell Dean Buckley in his dissertation, "The Solo Song Cycle: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Published Editions, with an Historical Survey," observes that "the term 'song cycle' has been used by both composers and writers in different, often conflicting, ways. Some composers and writers refer to any collection of songs as a song cycle, but others use the term to identify

⁷Ned Rorem, Setting the Tone: Essays and a Diary, (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1983), p. 244.

⁸ The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 6th ed., s.v. "Song Cycle," by Luise Eitel Peake.

⁹The Harvard Dictionary of Music and Musicians cited by Louise Eitel Peake, "The Song Cycle: A Preliminary Inquiry into the Beginnings of the Romantic Song Cycle and the Nature of an Art Form," (dissertation, Columbia University, 1968) pp.3-4.

a series of songs that are closely related in content and form. For this research the song cycle was assumed to be a composite of songs with texts of related thought and character, and designed by the composer to form a single artistic musical unit. In principle, then, the cyclic form is a multiple-movement form in which the individual movements are so related that a larger unit results. Thus the cyclic form is distinguished from the miscellaneous set or collection of songs."¹⁰

In his dissertation, Buckley examines the history of the song cycle from its inception to the present. He explains the cycle as it developed in Europe and in the United States. Buckley's findings will be condensed in the following discussion.

The elements which are considered to form a "cycle" vary from one composer to another. Various elements which would distinguish the song cycle from a collection of miscellaneous songs include: 1) no separation between songs, as in Ludwig von Beethoven's (1770-1827) *An die ferne Geliebte*, Opus 98 (1816); 2) the return of the melody from the beginning of the cycle to the end, found in the same Beethoven cycle; 3) melodic repetitions found in augmentation, as found in Arnold Schoenberg's (1874-1951) *Fünfzehn Gedichte aus "Das Buch der hängenden Gärten" von Stefan George* Opus 15, (1908-1909); 4) the repetitions of basic motives as found in the cycles of Carl Loewe (1796-1869), and in Johannes Brahms' (1823-1897) song cycle, *Romanzen aus Tieck's Magelone* Opus 33 (1861-1868); 5) the use of the recurrent interval, such as the repetition of a fourth in Gustav Mahler's

¹⁰Wendell Dean Buckley, "The Solo Song Cycle: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Published Editions, with an Historical Survey," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Iowa, 1965), p. 2.

(1860-1911) *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* (1883); 6) the use of a single poet for the text, as found in Schubert's (1797-1828) *Die Schöne Müllerin* Opus 25 (1823); and 7) the use of a single theme or a narrative, as found in the same Schubert cycle.

The birthplace of the song cycle is in Germany, with Ludwig von Beethoven's *An die ferne Geliebte* Opus 98 (1816). Because the songs in this cycle are joined together, an individual song cannot be excerpted. Another German composer considered to be among the first to fuse a group of individual songs into one composition was Franz Schubert. In Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin* Opus 25, the songs are in a continuous narrative, but are not linked. Robert Schumann (1810-1856) had begun to show an interest in the cyclic form with his piano music by the time he composed his first vocal cycle *Liederkreis* in 1840. *Liederkreis* forms a vague narrative expressing the hopelessness in his feeling that the composer experiences while he awaits the arrival of his lover. Schumann's cycle *Frauenliebe und Leben*, Opus 42 (1840), shows "for the first time . . . a more extensive use of musical means of unifying the work. Not only are there key and meter return with a closely related key sequence, but the piano postlude is a restatement in the original key and meter of the second half of the first song. Other examples of similarity of melodic material are the initial phrases of the first and fifth songs, and the final melodic cadence of the second and fourth songs."¹¹ This plus the narrative of the "cycle of love and life [that] will recur" in a woman's life earns the designation "cycle" for this work.

¹¹Ibid., p. 58.

In France, Jules Massenet (1842-1912) is considered to have begun the song cycle, which he designated as "*poème*."¹² Massenet's cycle, *Poème d'Avril*, Opus 14 (1866), begins with the recitation of three stanzas which are interrupted by piano interludes giving the melodic material for the songs to follow. In his *Poème du souvenir*, Opus 22 (1868), Massenet eliminates the recited sections, but he recalls the initial theme of the piano prelude at the end of the work.

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924) is considered to be one of the greatest French composers of song cycles for both the quality and quantity of his works.¹³ In his first song cycle, *Poème d'un jour*, Opus 21 (1881), the continuity of the poetry allows the designation "cycle." His *Cinq mélodies de Venise*, Opus 58 (1890), are unified by motivic repetition. In *La bonne chanson*, Opus 95 (1907-1910), Fauré uses eight motives which are interwoven throughout the nine songs, and the cycle begins and ends in triple meter, which is predominant throughout the cycle. In *La Chanson d'Eve*, Opus 95 (1906-1910), there is no narrative plan as is evidenced by the fact that the publication of the cycle is not in the order that the songs were composed. Because of the use of two recurring motives, one in the first, fourth, and ninth song; the second in the fourth, eighth, and tenth song, the title "cycle" is appropriate.

Other French composers of song cycles were not as interested in the details of the *genre*. Claude Debussy's (1862-1918) works are consistent in his usage of an Impressionistic style of composition, and sometimes contain a single poetic theme. The works of Maurice Ravel

¹²A History of Song, cited by Wendell Dean Buckley, "The Solo Song Cycle: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Published Editions, with an Historical Survey," p. 95.

¹³Buckley, p. 98.

(1875-1937) earn the title "cycle" because of a consistent poetic theme. François Poulenc's (1899-1963) song cycles are considered "cycles" also because of the use of a consistent poetic theme, but in his *Tel jour telle nuit* (1937), the influence of Massenet may be seen, with the cyclic return of melody in the last song.

In England, Sir Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900) first attempted to establish the song cycle with The Window, or the Songs of the Wrens (1871). The poetry was by Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892), and plans were to have paintings exhibited while the cycle was performed, but the paintings were never completed. The first English composer to make the song cycle fashionable in England was Liza Lehmann (1862-1918).¹⁴ Most of Lehmann's cycles are for two to four voices and are worthy of the designation "cycle" because of a single literary theme and the cyclic use of melody. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) composed eight song cycles, each considered to be a cycle because of the use of a single poet.

The leading composer of the song cycle in England was Benjamin Britten (1913-1976).¹⁵ In Britten's first cycle, Our Hunting Fathers, Opus 8 (1936), Britten establishes that the work is a cycle by the use of a motto theme and by using a single poet. Britten continued using these elements throughout his career with the added use of a common literary theme.

In the United States, the song cycles of such composers as John Alden Carpenter (1876-1951) and his contemporaries generally are unified by the literary theme.¹⁶ The works of Aaron Copland (b. 1900)

¹⁴A History of Song cited by Buckley, p. 104.

¹⁵Buckley, p. 105.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 108-110.

usually have a consistent literary theme; however, Copland says of his Twelve Poems of Emily Dickinson (1951), "the poems center about no single theme, but they treat of subject matter particularly close to Miss Dickinson: nature, death, life, eternity. Only two of the songs are related thematically, the seventh and twelfth. Nevertheless, the composer hopes that, in seeking a musical counterpart for the unique personality of the poet, he has given the songs, taken together, the aspect of a song cycle."¹⁷ Samuel Barber's (b. 1910) cycles achieve that designation by use of a common literary theme, motivic development within the individual songs, and, in some cases, a uniform structure of composition within which he places each song (for example, he may introduce a head motive in the beginning of each song).

Buckley summarizes his survey by stating that "the *genre* is anything but a rigid, stereotyped one."¹⁸ The elements which work together to create the drama of the cycle vary a great deal, and are important to vocalists when determining the excerptability of individual songs, and in presenting a song cycle so that the theatricality remains intact.

Although there have been systematic studies made of the song cycles of other composers, and studies made of other aspects of Ned Rorem's songs (listed in the bibliography), Rorem's contributions to the definition of the song cycle *genre* have not been examined in any detail. As one of the major contemporary composers of song cycles, Rorem's work is deserving of such study. This kind of examination of his works would be a valuable aid to the artist-performer or the teacher of voice

¹⁷Twelve Poems of Emily Dickinson, composer's notes cited by Buckley, p. 108.

¹⁸Buckley, p. 110.

when considering programming any of Rorem's song cycles for a song recital, especially in making decisions concerning the excerptability of individual songs from the cycle.

Significance of the Problem

A vocal instructor or concert artist faced with planning a recital program must consider the difficulty of the works which he anticipates including in the program, and he must determine the mood or theme of the song or song cycle so that there will be contrast in the program, and the *gestalt* of the program will be varied and interesting. As the recital program is being structured, the performer should be aware of the composer's intent of theatricality, both in terms of the meaning or theme of the cycle and the composer's use of cyclic melody or motives in the work in order to make an informed and artistic interpretation of that composer's music. In addition, the composer's intent must be determined in order to make decisions as to whether or not individual songs may be excerpted, in situations in which the performer would not wish to program the entire cycle.

Delimitations

The works which Ned Rorem designates as song cycles and which are available in publication are examined in this study. Those works, preceded by the year during which each cycle was composed, and followed by the number of individual songs in each cycle, are:

(1948) Three Incantations from a Marionette Tale . Boosey
and Hawkes (3)

(1950) Six Irish Poems. Southern Music (6)

- (1950) Flight for Heaven. Boosey and Hawkes (10)
- (1951) Cycle of Holy Songs. Southern Music (4)
- (1951) From An Unknown Past. Southern Music (7)
- (1953) Poèmes pour la paix. Boosey and Hawkes (6)
- (1953) Six Songs for High Voice. Boosey and Hawkes (6)
- (1954) Four Dialogues. Boosey and Hawkes (4)
- (1954) Three Poems of Capetanakis. Boosey and Hawkes (3)
- (1957) Five Poems of Walt Whitman. Boosey and Hawkes (5)
- (1960-1961) King Midas. Boosey and Hawkes (10) ("The
Princess' Song," 1956)
- (1962-1963) Poems of Love and the Rain. Boosey and
Hawkes (17)
- (1963) Four Poems of Tennyson. Boosey and Hawkes (4)
("The Sleeping Palace," 1949)
- (1965-1966) Hearing. Boosey and Hawkes (9)
- (1966-1967) Sun. Boosey and Hawkes (8)
- (1968) Some Trees. Boosey and Hawkes (3)
- (1969) War Scenes. Boosey and Hawkes (5)
- (1970) Gloria. Boosey and Hawkes (9)
- (1971) Ariel. Boosey and Hawkes (5)
- (1971-1972) Last Poems of Wallace Stevens. Boosey and
Hawkes (8)
- (1975) Women's Voices. Boosey and Hawkes (10)
- (1978-1979) The Nantucket Songs. Boosey and Hawkes (10)
- (1979-1980) The Santa Fe Songs. Boosey and Hawkes (12)
- (1982) After Long Silence. Boosey and Hawkes (10)
- (1984) Pilgrim Strangers. Boosey and Hawkes (9 sections)

Ned Rorem's early song cycles are not included in this study because they are not in publication. Rorem says that during his youth he "was going to write a cycle or bust in the attempt. Flight for Heaven was my first published cycle."¹⁹

Rorem's first unpublished cycle, In Piazza Palladio (1944) was written for voice, piano, violin, and flute using the poetry of a high school classmate, Bruce Phenister. According to Rorem, In Piazza Palladio was "sort-of my Opus one. I did them on the radio first, on WNYC in 1944. Nell Tangeman later sang them in public, and they've been done other times, but I never published them and I don't know quite where they are. The titles of those three songs are 'Hell,' 'Noon,' and 'Spring,' three locations: one in fantasy, one in time, and one in the seasons."²⁰

Seven Little Prayers (1947) was Rorem's next unpublished cycle, on poems of Paul Goodman (1911-1972). Using the same poet, Three Blues of Paul Goodman (1947) "was published only last year under the title Paul's Blues. It was published by a press in New York for private consumers with a lithograph by Larry Rivers and a prose introduction and a prose epilogue by me. They pressed only one hundred fifteen copies and then broke the plate. The poems don't fit into any category: they can't be sung in night clubs, and they can't be sung in recital; they are sort of ambivalent."²¹

Penny Arcade (1948), which is not published, written on poems of Harold Norse (born 1916), "was written in collaboration with the poet, the

¹⁹Ned Rorem interviewed by Leon A. Henry, Jr., in his apartment, New York, New York, February 22, 1986.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid.

only time I have ever done this. He wrote each poem for me to set to music."²²

The next of Rorem's cycles, Another Sleep (1951), composed on the prose of a novel by Julien Green (born 1918), is not published because "Julien Green will not bestow the rights. I would like it to be published; it's a good piece."²³ Written in the same year, To A Young Girl contains "six settings of Yeats poems conceived for the bass Doda Conrad. (The title song is published alone by Boosey & Hawkes)."²⁴

About Ecologues (1953), which is also unpublished, on poems of John Fletcher (1886-1950), Rorem says that "each of the songs is in b minor. It's like a suite in b minor." Anacreontiche (1954), "on poems in Italian by Jacopo Vimorelli (1749-1835), is unpublished because it is in Italian."²⁵

Two Poems of Plato (1964) was written on a commission for someone "whose name I cannot recall, for the birthday of a friend of his who was in Greece. Because it seemed so touching, I did it. He [the man who had commissioned the work] came to visit me, and told me phonetically how the words were pronounced, so I set them to music in ancient Greek."²⁶

"There are two other song cycles that I have not listed anywhere. The soprano Ann Ayer gave to me two poems by her brother, Ethan Ayer. (I forget the year; in the sixties sometime.) I did not like the poems, but I set them to music, anyway. Then, on a commission from the Christian

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ned Rorem to Leon A. Henry, Jr., 25 November 1985.

²⁵Ned Rorem interview.

²⁶Ibid.

Science Church, I set to music the poetry of Mary Baker Eddy [1821-1910]. I thought the poem was no good, and I thought the music, as a result, was no good. The only other time I set poetry that I did not like was when C.F. Peters asked me to set the words to the Lord's Prayer. I think that it's necessary for a composer to be convinced of the poetry he is using, and if he's not convinced, nobody else will be."²⁷

About these early cycles, Rorem has said that he "will never publish them, but they are interesting (at least to me) historically."²⁸ Certainly in a historical context, these song cycles should be mentioned here; in an artistic context, the early song cycles may merit more attention than Rorem will give them.

Definition of Terms

Because the *genre* of the song cycle is flexible in terms of the definition, and may, in fact, change in definition from one composer to another, it is necessary to establish Ned Rorem's description of the *genre*. Rorem has said that order of songs in a song cycle "is terribly important. If you would take Winterreise and play it backwards, it would lose all its effect.

"The order of songs, the order of keys, even the length of time that you stop between songs (if you stop too long it can kill the momentum) is important. Writing a song cycle is very different from writing a song: a song cycle is a miniature opera, and the choosing of poems, which poems 'go together,' which one needs to be fast, which one needs to be slow,

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ibid.

which one needs to be loud and soft and strong and so on: all that is crucial. Those are not musical decisions; those are theatrical decisions.

"Perhaps the reason Fauré, a great song writer, never wrote operas is because his sense of theatre wasn't strong enough. Maybe the reason that Verdi never really wrote songs was because his sense of song wasn't strong enough. The 'song cycle' is somewhere in between song and opera.

"Theatricality is urgent in everything you write. Even if it is a one page song, it's a little piece of theatre; but if it is going to be two pieces of theatre that 'go together,' then you have to know why: which song comes first, which comes second. For example, when I wrote War Scenes, I wrote four songs. When I played them for James Holmes, he said that it needed a fifth song; so I wrote a fifth song, and that made all the difference. Without that fifth song, which was 'Inauguration Ball,' there would be missing that moment of hysteria which is necessary to precede the kind of motionless final song, which has no effect unless it is preceded by something with a lot of motion. I knew, in some way, that the fifth song was needed; I don't listen to other people's advice much, but in that case, I did."²⁹

In summary, Rorem's definition of song cycle establishes it as a theatrical work in which the order of songs is significant. In having chosen poetry that works together to create a particular mood or feeling, it is then the duty of the composer to make musical choices based on dramatic requirements so the songs will blend together into a whole by providing contrast within the context of that whole. Likewise, it is then the duty of the performer to be aware of the theatrical implication that the composer is trying to create, and to allow his performance to convey

²⁹Ibid.

this idea by making choices (such as length of time between each song) that will not interfere with the theatricality of that idea.

Other terms will be defined as needed within the context of the report.

Method of Investigation

The method of investigation used in this study will be analytical within a pedagogical context. Each song cycle is inspected under the following criteria:

I. Poetry

- A. The poet (s)**
- B. The literary theme**

II. Music

- A. Excerptability of individual songs (linking of the songs)**
- B. Difficulty (rated: easy, accessible to young students; moderate, accessible to intermediate students; or difficult, accessible to advanced singers) of the vocal line determined by:**
 - 1. Range**
 - 2. Wide intervallic leaps**
 - 3. Rhythm**
 - 4. Relationship to the accompaniment (or if unaccompanied)**
 - 5. Tonality**
 - 6. Tempo**
- C. Instrument (s) used for accompaniment**
- D. Cyclic elements**

The song cycles are examined for the above information. This information is included in a concise format, with an example of the format shown at the beginning of chapter two. As part of examining the cycles to determine the above information, the composer was interviewed for verification of the findings and to discuss his definition of a song cycle.

Organization of the Study

The following is an outline of the remainder of this report.

Chapter

II. Results of the Examination of the Song Cycles of Ned Rorem

III. Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Bibliography

CHAPTER II

EXAMINATION OF THE SONG CYCLES OF NED ROREM


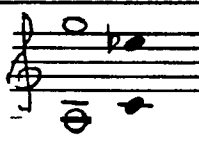

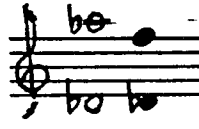



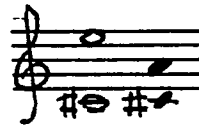

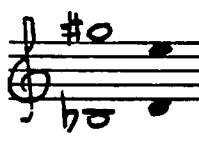

This chapter includes the findings for which the published song cycles of Ned Rorem were examined. The song cycles are included in alphabetical order. On page 19, there is an example of the format in which data from each song cycle and its individual songs are presented. Following the data from each song cycle is a list which discusses: 1) the excerptability and musical linking of the individual songs; 2) the determination of the difficulty of the individual songs with the reason(s) given for that determination; 3) any apparent cyclic elements (melody, motive, or interval); and 4) the composer's comments concerning the individual song cycles.

Name of Song Cycle, publisher, date of publication

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|--|-------------|---------------------|--|--|---|--|
| Title of individual song, or if names of individual songs are not given, sections are listed by rehearsal number | Name, dates | A brief description | Instrument(s) listed, or "none" if unaccompanied | Rated: easy, accessible to beginning students; moderate, accessible to intermediate students; or difficult, accessible only to advanced students | Metronome indications and tempo markings for the different sections of the individual songs | Range given in whole notes; tessitura given in black notes |

After Long Silence



Boosey & Hawkes, 1982

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|------------|--|---|
| 1. "After Long Silence" | William Butler Yeats (1865-1939) | The ignorance of young love | String orchestra | Moderate |  -c.46 |  |
| 2. "Bitter-Sweet" | George Herbert (1539-1633) | The pain of love | String orchestra, oboe | Easy |  -144 (Allegro) |  |
| 3. "Mediocrity in Love Rejected" | Thomas Carew (c.1595-c.1639) | The superiority of either loving or hating to feeling nothing | Two solo violins, string orchestra | Moderate |  -52 (Allegretto) |  |
| 4. "A Red, Red Rose" | Robert Burns (1759-1796) | One man's constant love | Oboe | Easy |  -104 (Enthusiastic) |  |
| 5. "On Monsieur's Departure" | Queen Elizabeth I (1533-1603) | The superiority of death to lost love | String orchestra, oboe | Moderate |  -138 (Fast and angry) |  |
| 6. Interlude for strings | | | | |  -60 (Slow) | |


After Long Silence, continued

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|--|--------------------------|------------|--|-------|
| 7. "The Darkling Thrush" | Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) | The promise of the return of happiness after sad times | String orchestra oboe | Moderate | ♪-58, 5 measures; ♪-c.72 (Free and Bleak) 13 measures; ♪-58, 6 measures; ♪-c.72, 13 measures; ♪-58, 6 measures; ♪-c.72, 4 measures; ♪-58, 20 measures; ♪-c.72, 11 measures; ♪-58, 7 measures | |

After Long Silence, continued

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|---|------------|---|---|
| 8. "The Sick Rose" | William Blake (1757-1827) | The destruction of beauty | String orchestra oboe, 2 solo violins | Easy | ♩ -56. (Violently slow) 4 measures; ♩ -184, (Fast) 9 measures; ♩ -56, 6 measures; ♩ -184, 12 measures; ♩ -56, 8 measures; ♩ -184, 9 measures |  |
| 9. "Vitae Summa Brevis" | Ernest Dowson (1867-1900) | The brevity of life | String orchestra | Easy | ♩ -50 (Very calm) |  |

After Long Silence, continued

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------|------------|---|---|
| 10. "After Great Pain" | Emily Dickinson (1830-1886) | The calm formality after intense pain | String orchestra, oboe | Moderate | ♪ -40, (Intense) 7 measures; ♪ -58, 9 measures; Free, 6 measures; ♪ -58, 9 measures; Free, 6 measures; ♪ -58, 9 measures; Free, 8 measures; ♪ -58, 6 measures |  |

After Long Silence

Excerptability, linking: Songs are musically linked, and the cycle is through-composed with the interludes (or sometimes the postlude) establishing the key of the following song.

Difficulty:

1. "After Long Silence": moderate; some difficult rhythms.
2. "Bitter-Sweet": easy.
3. "Mediocrity in Love Rejected": moderate; an easy, tonal vocal line is sung against a different tonality in the accompaniment.
4. "A Red, Red Rose": easy.
5. "On Monsieur's Departure": moderate; drama of the song makes it vocally demanding.
6. "Interlude for Strings"
7. "The Darkling Thrush": moderate; contains 30 unaccompanied measures.
8. "The Sick Rose": easy.
9. "Vitae Summa Brevis": easy.
10. "After Great Pain": moderate; contains 13 unaccompanied measures.

Cyclic elements:

Contains the interval of a fourth a great deal. The fourth is in the perfect form most of the time, but sometimes is augmented or diminished; contains many major and minor ninths.

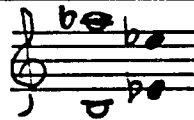
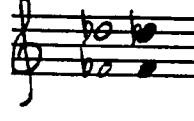
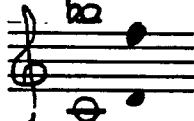
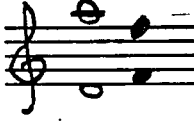

Composer's comments:

Composed on a commission from a group in Dade County, Florida, during the summer of 1982, After Long Silence was premiered by Katherine Ciesinski and an Argentinian String ensemble during the "big war between Argentina and England; and yet here were all these Argentinians playing by settings of English poets, or mainly English poets, and there was something very moving about it.

"It is quite a high piece . . . It was written with her [Katherine Ciesinski] in mind after a certain point. The very fact that it begins on an unaccompanied note (because Katherine has perfect pitch) was in my mind."¹

¹Ned Rorem, interview held at his apartment, New York, New York, February 22, 1986.

Ariel Five poems of Sylvia Plath for Soprano, Clarinet and Piano
Boosey & Hawkes, 1974

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|--|-----------------|------------|---|---|
| 1. "Words" | Sylvia Plath (1932-1963) | The power of words | Clarinet, piano | Difficult | ♩ - 72 (Not fast) |  |
| 2. "Poppies in July" | S. Plath | The power of opium despite the beauty of poppies | Clarinet, piano | Moderate | ♩ - 58 (Langourous) |  |
| 3. "The Hanging Man" | S. Plath | Man's inability to control his fate | Clarinet, piano | Difficult | ♩ - 184 (Fast) |  |
| 4. "Poppies in October" | S. Plath | Description of the beauty poppies | Clarinet, piano | Moderate | ♩ - 56 (Restrained, but don's drag) |  |
| 5. "Lady Lazarus" | S. Plath | Reincarnation | Clarinet, piano | Difficult | ♩ - 132 (Fast and frantic, but mechanical) |  |

Ariel

Excerptability, linking: no musical linking, nor does the meaning of any song depend on the meaning of another; any song is easily excerpted.

Difficulty:

1. "Words": difficult; wide range, large intervallic leaps, tonality difficult to establish from accompaniment, vocally dramatic.
2. "Poppies in July": moderate; simple vocal line is not related to accompaniment.
3. "The Hanging Man": difficult; wide range, difficult rhythm, tonality difficult to establish, vocal line not related to accompaniment.
4. "Poppies in October": moderate; wide range.
5. "Lady Lazarus": difficult; wide range, vocally dramatic, tonality difficult to establish, difficult rhythm, wide intervallic leaps.

Cyclic elements: none apparent.

Composers comments:

"Ariel was composed in New York during May of 1971, and presented as a gift to my friend Phyllis Curtin."²

Ariel "was one of the last pieces that I've written that was not 'paid for'. Almost everything I've written in the last twenty years has been on commission. However, Phyllis Curtin is a long time friend of mine, and when she asked me to write something for her, clarinet and piano, I did, as a gift.

"Phyllis Curtin is one of my very favorite singers, and a singer whom I've worked with almost more than any other singer. Phyllis' voice in the early seventies was less beautiful than it was dramatic. Sylvia Plath's poems had just come out, and were widely written about, but nobody, at that time, had ever thought of setting them to music, and I decided that I

²Ned Rorem, **Ariel**, (New York: Boosey & Hawkes, 1974) , composer's notes.

would do so. Phyllis' voice, at that time in her life, the Plath poems, which are extremely tense, about a woman in *extremis* with the clarinet giving a sort of schizophrenic edge to it all, seemed appropriate.

"I probably will never use Sylvia Plath's poems again, but they suited my needs at that point. I thought that they were appropriate and theatrical.

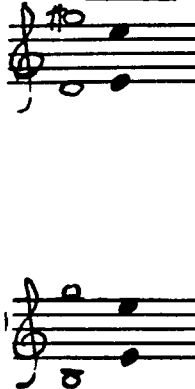
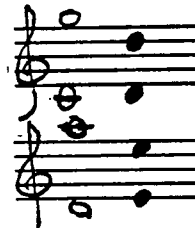

"As much as one can say these things (and it's very hard for a composer to see his own music as an outsider), Ariel is a sort of a one of a kind piece, not a conventional 'Rorem piece', but kind of crazy."³

Ariel is available on a DESTO recording.

³Ned Rorem interview.

Cycle of Holy Songs

Southern Music Publishing Co., Inc., 1955

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|-------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|------------|---|---|
| "Psalm 130" | David (c. 1010-970 B.C.) | Praise to the Lord | Piano | Easy | ♩ - 100, (Allegro moderato maestoso) 26 measures; Poco più mosso, 14 measures; Tempo I, 12 measures; ♩ - 56, (Poco meno mosso) 5 measures |  |
| "Psalm 142" | David | Supplication to the Lord | Piano | Moderate | ♩ - c. 69 | |
| "Psalm 148" | David | Praise to the Lord | Piano | Moderate | ♩ - 160 (Allegro con brio) |  |
| "Psalm 150" | David | Praise to the Lord | Piano | Easy | ♩ - 72 (Maestoso) 47 measures; ♩ - 88 (Più mosso) 7 measures |  |

Cycle of Holy Songs

Excerptability, linking: no musical linking; any song could be easily excerpted, a fact which is important because of the accessibility of "Psalm 130" and "Psalm 150" to beginning students.

Difficulty:

"Psalm 130": easy.

"Psalm 142": moderate; some passages in a matter of a few notes cover the entire range of the song, the final phrase ascends to next to the highest note in the range sung *piano* with a *decrescendo*.

"Psalm 148": moderate; driving tempo, some difficult rhythm.

"Psalm 150": moderate; vocally dramatic.

Cyclic elements: the following melody is found in "Psalm 130," "Psalm 142," and "Psalm 148: stated either exactly or in augmentation:



Composer's comments :

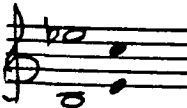

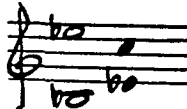


"Three of the four Cycle of Holy Songs are based on the same thematic material. If I were to write this cycle now (but I wouldn't write them now because I wrote it then), I would simply call them 'Psalms'; but I was very anxious to let it be known that I had written a 'cycle'; so, I called it Cycle of Holy Songs, which is very pretentious.

"The last page of the amended edition, I have rescored a tiny bit, so the voice could hold the last D until the end.

"The Cycle of Holy Songs was first sung for me by the tenor Hugues Cuenod [to whom the final song, "Psalm 150," is dedicated], who still at the age of eighty-three is singing in public."⁴

⁴Ibid.

Five Poems of Walt Whitman for Voice and Piano
Boosey & Hawkes, 1970

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---|---------------|------------|----------------------|--|
| "Sometimes With One I Love" | Walt Whitman (1819-1892) | The power of love, even if unrequited | Piano | Easy | ♩ -46 (Lento) |  |
| "Look Down, Fair Moon" | W. Whitman | The beauty of nature, despite man's inherent warring ways | Piano | Easy | ♩ -40 (Very slow) |  |
| "Gliding O'er All" | W. Whitman | The voyage of the soul through life and death | Piano | Easy | ♩ -76 (Allegro) |  |
| "Reconciliation" | W. Whitman | Reconciliation with enemy after war | Piano | Moderate | (Quietly) |  |
| "Gods" | W. Whitman | Moving through life, one has various and sundry gods | Piano | Moderate | (Declamatory) |  |

Five Poems of Walt Whitman

Excerptability, linking: No musical linking of songs; individual songs easily excerpted, but because of brevity of first three, "Sometimes With One I Love," "Look Down, Fair Moon," and "Gliding O'er All," cycle is best performed in entirety.

Difficulty:

"Sometimes With One I Love," "Look Down Fair Moon," and "Gliding O'er All": easy.

"Reconciliation": moderate; some rhythmic difficulties, sudden changes in dynamics.

"Gods": moderate; five unaccompanied measures, some rhythmic difficulties.

Cyclic elements: none apparent.

Composer's comments :


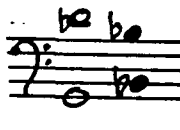


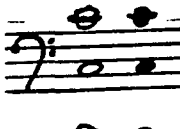
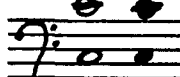
"In the mid-fifties, the American baritone, Wilder Burnap, asked me to write five songs for him to sing that he would accompany himself on the virginal.

"Around that same period, I wrote four or five other songs on Whitman texts. The Five Poems of Walt Whitman did not necessarily 'go together' when I wrote them: I didn't plan them out as 'fast, slow, medium' so that they would contrast, and even less do they 'go together' in the published version, because they were not even written at the same time.



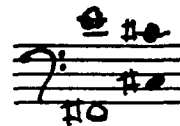
"I've set probably thirty texts of Walt Whitman, but, with the exception of War Scenes, none of them were conceived as cycles; they were conceived as individual songs."⁵

⁵Ibid.

Flight for Heaven for Bass and Piano
Mercury Music Corporation, 1952

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|--|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------|------------|--|---|
| I. "To Music, to becalm his Fever" | Robert Herrick (1591-1674) | The calming effect of music | Piano | Moderate | ♩ - 144 (Rather fast moving) |  |
| II. "Cherry Ripe" | R. Herrick | The sensous- ness of a lover | Piano | Easy | Lento, 2 measures; ♩ - 63 (Allegretto) 30 measures |  |
| III. "Upon Julia's Clothes" | R. Herrick | The sensous- ness of a lover | Piano | Easy | ♩ - 66 (Con Spirito) |  |
| IV. "To Daisies not to Shut so Soon" | R. Herrick | Love of life because of a lover | Piano | Moderate | ♩ - 126 (Very fast, light) |  |
| V. "Epitaph upon a Child that Died" | R. Herrick | Epitaph | Piano | Easy | ♩ - 40 (Andante) |  |
| VI. "Another Epitaph" | R. Herrick | Epitaph | Piano | Easy | ♩ - 42 (Semplice) |  |

Flight for Heaven, continued

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|---|------------|--------------------|---------------|------------|----------------------------------|---|
| VII. "To the Willow Tree" | R. Herrick | Lost love | Piano | Easy | ♩ -c. 54 (Moderato) |  |
| VIII. "Comfort to a Youth that has lost his Love" | R. Herrick | Lost love | Piano | Moderate | ♩ -84 (Melancholy, very slow) |  |
| IX. Piano Interlude | | | | | | |
| X. "To Anthea who may command Him Anything" | R. Herrick | All consuming love | Piano | Easy | ♩ -60 (Gentle, passionate) |  |

Flight for Heaven

Excerptability, linking: no musical linking, nor does the meaning of one song depend on the meaning of another; therefore, any song may be easily excerpted. However, some of the songs are very brief, especially III. "Upon Julia's Clothes," V. "Epitaph," and VI. "Another Epitaph."

Difficulty:

I. "To Music, to becalm his Fever": moderate, shifting rhythmic accents between duple and triple could be confusing to young students.

II. "Cherry Ripe": easy.

III. "Upon Julia's Clothes": easy.

IV. "To Daisies, not to shut so Soon": moderate, very quick tempo.

V. "Epitaph upon a Child that Died": easy.

VI. "Another Epitaph": easy.

VII. "To the Willow Tree": easy.

VIII: "Comfort to a Youth that had lost his Love": moderate; some unaccompanied measures, difficult tonality, very slow sustained vocal lines.

IX. Piano Interlude

X. "To Anthea, who may command Him Anything": moderate; accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line.

Cyclic elements: the piano interlude repeats the accompaniment to I. "To Music, to Becalm His Fever."

Composer's comments:

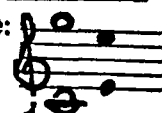


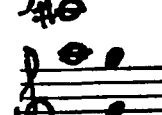
"**Flight for Heaven** was conceived with the deep bass Doda Conrad in mind.

"I do about four to five of those on recitals now, so this is the proof that

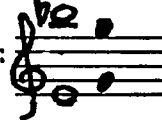

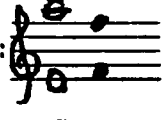
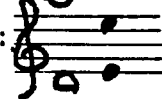
you don't have to do the whole cycle if you don't want to. They can be extracted. When I do the whole cycle, I eliminate the piano interlude. I have also shortened the last page; there's a little piano epilogue that I think is too long."⁶

⁶Ibid.

Four Dialogues for Two Voices and Two Pianos (the voices being one male and one female)
Boosey & Hawkes, 1969

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|--|---|------------|--------------------------------|--|
| 1. "The Subway" | Frank O'Hara (1926-1966) | The meeting of a man and a woman on a subway. At the insistence of the man, the woman agrees to go parking with him. | Two pianos (Rorem says "As for the pianists, they may consider themselves of equal importance to the singers: the music was created as a Quartet of Dialogues.") ¹ | Difficult | ♩-144 (Fast and violent) | Male:  Female:  |
| 2. "The Apartment" | F.O'Hara | The man is filled with desire for the woman, as she is for him, but she is afraid of their desire. | Two pianos | Difficult | ♩-84 (Slow and sentimental) | Male:  Female:  |

Four Dialogues, continued

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|-------------------------------|----------|--|---------------|------------|----------------------------|---|
| 3. "The Airport" | F.O'Hara | The woman begins by ex-postulating about her love for the man. Eventually, he becomes annoyed with her, and he announces that he is leaving for Spain. | Two pianos | Difficult | ♩-c.152 (Allegro molto) | Male:  Female:  |
| 4. "In Spain and in New York" | F.O'Hara | Separated, the man and the woman think of each other and long to be reunited. | Two pianos | Difficult | ♩-56 (Lento maestoso) | Male:  Female:  |

Four Dialogues

Excerptability, linking: no musical linking; however, 3. "The Apartment," has little meaning without the narrative of the preceding songs.

Difficulty:

1. "The Subway": difficult; accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line, difficult rhythm, wide range for the woman's part.
2. "The Airport": difficult; six unaccompanied measures, difficult rhythm.
3. "The Apartment": difficult; twenty-three unaccompanied measures, fast tempo, wide range for the woman's part.
4. "In Spain and in New York": difficult; accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line.

Cyclic elements: none apparent.

Composer's comments:

Four Dialogues are "of a nameless genre that falls somewhere between concert cantata and stage opera . . . The form is strict sonata whose four sections relate the old comedy of boy meets girl . . . [this] may be illustrated without action, as at a straight recital. But I have often found effective this minimal staging: the pianists face each other in normal fashion. At the side of the stage an easel contains five cards large enough to be read by the audience. On these are written the title of the work and of each movement, placed one on top of the other. The first card is removed by one of the singers as they enter. The following cards are removed at the correct moment. The audience is thus always aware of location.

"The vocalists, in street clothes, are provided with two chairs. At the start they stand back to back, perhaps jiggling slightly as with the trepidations of a train, he reading a newspaper (which may be his music score), she merely musing; the ensuing development suggested by the text may be mimed narrowly or broadly, depending on taste. For movement two they are seated closely side by side. Third movement: he sits reading, she moves about--dusting or something. During the prelude

to the last movement they move to opposite sides of the stage, leaving their chairs.




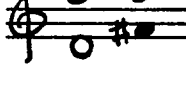
"The singers should not limit themselves to classifications of tenor and soprano. If negotiable, they may be baritone and mezzo. In fact, anyone who wants to sing the piece may sing the piece. Vocal music, like all music, should not restrict itself to 'appropriate' tessitura nor even to sex, but only to inclination. As for the pianists, they may consider themselves of equal importance to the singers: the music was created as a Quartet of Dialogues."⁷

Four Dialogues is available on a DESTO recording.

⁷Ned Rorem, Four Dialogues, (New York: Boosey & Hawkes, 1969), composer's notes.

Four Poems of Tennyson

Boosey & Hawkes, 1969

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|------------|---|--|
| "Ask Me No More" | Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809-1892) | Love for a suffering, dying lover | Piano | Moderate | ♩-c.50 (Passionate, smooth and supple) |  |
| "Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal" | A. Tennyson | Bidding a dead lover to return | Piano | Moderate | ♩-112 (Allegretto scherzando) |  |
| "Far-Far-Away" | A. Tennyson | Lament for one who has died | Piano | Easy | ♩-126 (Fast and poignant) |  |
| "The Sleeping Palace" from <i>The Day Dream</i> | A. Tennyson | Description of a tomb | Piano | Easy | ♩-c.48 (Quietly) |  |

Four Poems of Tennyson

Excerptability, linking: no musical linking, nor does the meaning of one song depend on the meaning of another; therefore, any song may be easily excerpted, a fact which could be important because "Far-Far-Away" and "The Sleeping Palace" are accessible to beginning students.

Difficulty:

"Ask Me No More": moderate ; difficult to establish tonality, wide range.

"Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal": moderate; wide range.

"Far-Far-Away": easy.

"The Sleeping Palace": easy.

Cyclic elements: none apparent.



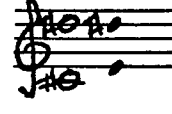

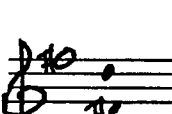

Composer's comments:

"The first three of Four Poems of Tennyson were commissioned by Ellen Faull, and I knew that she would sing them together; however, I didn't write them necessarily to 'go together.'

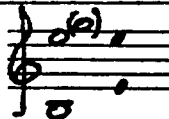
"The fourth song, 'The Sleeping Palace', was written twenty years earlier in Morocco, and obviously was not written to go with the others. Because they are under the same cover, people often sing them together, but they are definitely extractable."⁸

⁸Ibid.

From An Unknown Past for Voice and Piano
 Southern Music Publishing Co., Inc., 1953_

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|--|---|--|---------------|------------|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. "The Lover in Winter Plaineth for the Spring" | XVI Century Anonymous | The desire to be at home with a lover | Piano | Easy | ♩-84, (Lonely and Smooth) |  |
| 2. "Hey Nonny Nol" | Christ Church Manuscript | The merit of being merry despite the passage of time | Piano | Easy | ♩-104, (Allegretto Grazioso) |  |
| 3. "My Blood So Red . . . (The Call)" | Anonymous | A call for the return of a lover | Piano | Easy | (Very Slowly) |  |
| 4. "Suspira" | Anonymous | A longing to be in another place | Piano | Easy | ♩-76, (Fastish) |  |
| 5. "The Miracle" | Anonymous | The effect of beauty on love | Piano | Easy | ♩-100, (Allegro non troppo) |  |
| 6. "Tears" | Poem from John Dowland's Third Book of Songs and Aires (1603) | Sleep is the anecdote for sadness | Piano | Easy | ♩-84, (Melancholy) |  |

From An Unknown Past , continued

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|-------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| 7. "Crabbed Age and Youth" | William Shakespeare? (1564-1616) | A comparison of age and youth | Piano | Moderate | ♩ - 144 (Allegro con spirito) |  |

From An Unknown Past

Excerptability, linking: not musically linked, nor does meaning of one depend on meaning of another: easily excerptable.

Difficulty:

1. "The Lover in Winter Plaineth for the Spring": easy.
2. "Hey Nonny, No!": easy.
3. "My Blood So Red . . . (The Call)": easy.
4. "Suspira": easy.
5. "The Miracle": easy.
6. "Tears": easy.
7. "Crabbed Age and Youth": moderate; very fast tempo, fast melismatic passages.




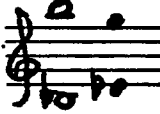
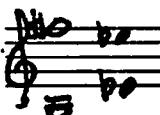



Cyclic elements: none apparent.

Composer's notes:

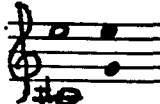

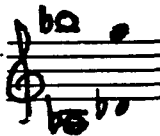

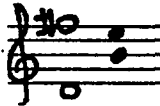

"From An Unknown Past was originally written for unaccompanied mixed chorus. The piano-vocal arrangement was made a year or two later, for an American baritone named Christopher O'Malley. I transposed, and rearranged (obviously), two or three of the songs."⁹

⁹Ned Rorem to Leon A. Henry, Jr., 25 November 1985.

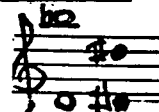
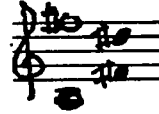


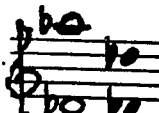

Gloria for Two Voices and Piano
Boosey & Hawkes, 1972

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|------------|--|--|
| 1. "Gloria in excelsis Deo" | Part of the Roman Catholic Mass | Glory to God | None, piano postlude | Difficult |  -69 (Fairly free, but not slow) | 1.  |
| 2. "Laudamus te" | Part of the Roman Catholic Mass | Worship to God | Piano | Difficult |  -126 (Very Fast) | 1.  2.  |
| 3. "Domine Deus" | Part of the Roman Catholic Mass | Lord God, Lamb of God | Piano | Difficult |  -80 (Allegretto) | 1.  2.  |

Gloria, continued

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|---|----------------------|-------------------|---|--|
| 4. "Miserere nobis" | Part of the Roman Catholic Mass | Have mercy on us | Piano | Moderate | ♩ -40 (Very Slow) | 1.  2.  |
| 5. "Qui tollis" | Part of the Roman Catholic Mass | Who takes away the sins of the world | None | Difficult | ♩ -76 (Rather fast, free, joyful) | 1.  2.  |
| 6. "Qui sedes" | Part of the Roman Catholic Mass | You are seated at the right hand of God | Piano | Moderate | ♩ -88 (Very fast and dangerous) | 1.  2.  |

Gloria continued

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|-----------------|--|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|--|--|
| 7. "Interlude" | Part of the Roman Catholic Mass | Glory to God | Piano | Easy | ♩ -46 (Moderato) | 1.  2.  |
| 8. "Cadenza" | Part of the Roman Catholic Mass | Glory to God | Piano | Difficult | ♩ -c.88-126 (Swift and supple) | 1.  2.  |
| 9. "Quoniam tu" | Part of the Roman Catholic Mass | You alone are holy | Piano | Easy | ♩ -66 (Quite slow) | 1.  2.  |

Gloria

Excerptability, linking: the songs are linked, with the entire cycle being in a through-composed form. The postludes of the songs flow directly into the introduction (or beginning) of the following song. Excerptability would be possible, but the theatricality of the whole is so important as to discourage excerption of individual songs.

Difficulty:

1. "Gloria in excelsis Deo": difficult; difficult rhythm. wide range.
2. "Laudamus te": difficult; fast tempo, difficult tonality, wide range, accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line.
3. "Domine Deus": difficult; difficult rhythm, difficult tonality, wide leaps for part 1.
4. "Miserere nobis": moderate; very slow sustained vocal line.
5. "Qui tollis": difficult; difficult rhythm, wide range, unaccompanied vocal line.
6. "Qui sedes": moderate; fast tempo.
7. "Interlude": easy.
8. "Cadenza": difficult; fast tempo, coloratura passages, ten unaccompanied measures.
9. "Quoniam tu": easy.

Cyclic elements: none apparent.

Composer's comments:

"Any combination of two voices (for Gloria) is acceptable to me, including two men's voices. It is a 'sexless' piece. It was written in the abstract; I had no singers in mind when I wrote it.

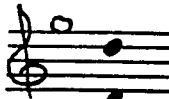

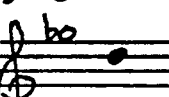
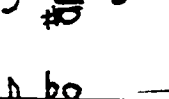
"The timing is listed incorrectly in the score. The piece is no longer than fourteen minutes."¹⁰

Gloria is available on a DESTO recording.

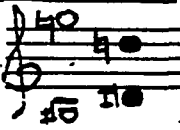

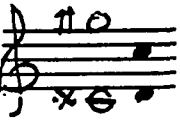
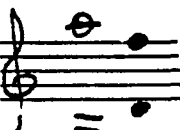
¹⁰ Ned Rorem interview.

Hearing

Boosey & Hawkes, 1969

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|---|---------------|------------|--|---|
| I. "In Love With You" | Kenneth Koch (b.1925) | | | | | |
| 1. | | The effect of love | Piano | Difficult | Large, free, enthusiastic |  |
| 2. | | The effect of love | Piano | Moderate | Allegretto semplice |  |
| 3. | | The effect two people have on each other when in love | Piano | Difficult | Straightforward, not too slow, 42 measures; 9 measures |  |
| II. "Down at the Docks" | K. Koch | Compares the source of wood with the source of love and the source of music | Piano | Moderate | Moving, like a Barcarolle, but more animated |  |

Hearing, continued

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|-----------------|---------|---|---------------|------------|--|--|
| III. "Poem" | K. Koch | The future of love affair | Piano | Moderate | Con conversationally |  |
| IV. "Spring" | K. Koch | Sensual description of a walk through the city with a lover | Piano | Moderate | Rather fast, strict tempo, yet casual and gracious |  |
| V. "Invitation" | K. Koch | Sensual description of a boat trip on the Mediterranean | Piano | Moderate | Quite slow |  |
| VI. "Hearing" | K. Koch | Sensual description of sounds | Piano | Difficult | Madly exuberant ♩-♩ always |  |

Hearing

Excerptability, linking: except for I. "In Love With You," in which the sections lead directly into the following sections, there is no musical linking, nor does the meaning of any one song depend upon the meaning of another; therefore, any song could be easily excerpted (even within I. "In Love With You" the different sections could be excerpted). This fact could be important, since some of the songs are accessible to intermediate vocal students, while other are more difficult.

Difficulty:

I. "In Love With You":

1. difficult; wide intervallic leaps, difficult rhythms, except for the tonality, the accompaniment is not related to the vocal line.

2. moderate; occasionally, the vocal line is sung one half step above the accompaniment.

3. difficult; wide intervallic leaps, difficult rhythms, except for the tonality, the accompaniment is not related to the vocal line.

II. "Down at the Docks": moderate; some difficult rhythms.

III. "Poem": moderate; some difficult rhythms.

IV. "Spring": moderate; some difficult rhythms.

V. "Invitation": moderate; wide intervallic leaps, slow sustained vocal line.

VI. "Hearing": difficult; wide range, difficult rhythms, intense vocal line, accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line.

Cyclic elements: in I. "In Love With You," song 3 ends with a section of song 1 (both melodically and with the accompaniment.)

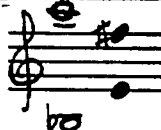

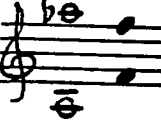
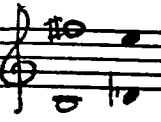

Composer's comments :

"**Hearing** was written on a commission by Carolyn Reyer who suggested that I use the poetry of Kenneth Koch, who is a friend of mine; and since I was wanting to use Kenneth Koch, I did.


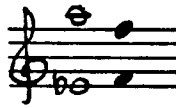
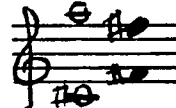
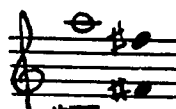
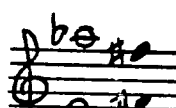
"James Holmes has made a little opera out of this cycle by eliminating one song and changing the order of the others, and I orchestrated it for nine instruments with four solo singers. It has been recorded by the Gregg Smith Singers, but the recording is not available yet. It has been performed in this setting, but never staged." ¹¹

¹¹Ibid.

King Midas for Voice and Piano (ideally for two voices, tenor singing numbers 1,5,6,8,9,10;
soprano singing numbers 2,3,4,7)
Boosey & Hawkes, 1970

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|---|--------------------------|---|---------------|------------|--|---|
| I. "The King's Speech" | Howard Moss (b. 1922) | The curse of Midas' touch; the desire to no longer have the touch | Piano | Difficult | ♩-44 or more (massive, slow solemn) |  |
| II. "The Queen's Song" | H. Moss | Description of the king before he acquired Midas' touch | Piano | Moderate | ♩-132 (Allegro molto) |  |
| III. "The Princess' Speech" | H. Moss | Praise of all moving, living things | Piano | Moderate | ♩-c.40 (Lilting) |  |
| IV. "The Queen's Speech" | H. Moss | King Midas' folly | Piano | Difficult | ♩-66 (Strong and vicious) |  |
| V. "The Huntman's Song, the Gardener's Refrain" | H. Moss | The ruining of nature by the Midas touch | Piano | Moderate | ♩-138 (Fast) |  |

King Midas, continued

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|--|---------|---|---------------|------------|---|--|
| VI. "Address by Dionysus" | H. Moss | The cruelty of the lesson learned by King Midas | Piano | Easy | ♩ - 100 (Allegretto) |  |
| VII. "The Princess' Song" | H. Moss | Lament for unrequitted love | Piano | Moderate | ♩ - c. 100 (Quietly) |  |
| VIII. "The King's Song" | H. Moss | King Midas' regret | Piano | Moderate | ♩ - 63 (Strong, heavy, moving) |  |
| IX. "Dionysus' Song" | H. Moss | The desire for riches is the worst desire | Piano | Moderate | ♩ - 138 (Allegro) |  |
| X. "The King to the Princess, at the River Bank" | H. Moss | If one gains what men want most, he should give it back | Piano | Moderate | ♩ - 56 (Calm, solemn, and sustained) |  |

King Midas

Excerptability, linking: no musical linking; each song could be easily excerpted. Because of the narrative (the story of King Midas and his relationships) , the cycle is best performed in its entirety.

Difficulty:

I. "The King's Speech": difficult; 26 unaccompanied measures, wide range, wide intervallic leaps, difficult rhythms.

II. "The Queen's Song": moderate; fast tempo, time signature changes constantly.

III "The Princess' Speech": moderate ;wide range.

IV. "The Queen's Speech": difficult; vocally dramatic..

V. " The Huntsman's Song, the Gardener's Refrain": moderate; dialogue aspect is difficult.

VI. "Address by Dionysus": easy.

VII. "The Princess' Song": moderate; accompaniment does not help the vocal line.

VIII. "The King's Song": moderate; dramatic vocal line.

IX. "Dionysus' Song": moderate; fast tempo, wide range.

X. "The King to the Princess, at the River Bank": moderate; very sustained vocal line.

Cyclic elements: none apparent.

Composer's comments :

"**King Midas** may be performed by one singer but ideally by two, with the poems divided as follows:

1,5,6,8,9,10.....Tenor

2,3,4,7.....Soprano

"The individual poems should, of course, be sung by a single voice, except that a second singer may interpolate "The Gardener's Refrain" in No. 5. However, up to four voices may be used, in which case the distribution should be:

King Midas.....Tenor
 The Queen (and the Gardener).....Mezzo-Soprano
 The Princess.....Soprano
 The Huntsman, Dionysus.....Baritone

"The cycle was composed in Paris in 1960 and 1961 with the exception of 'The Princess' Song' which was written on October 6, 1956 and was published in 1958 by Henmar Press, Inc. under the title 'See How They Love Me.' "¹²



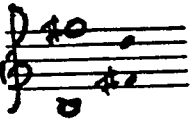

"Between 1959 and 1961, there was a series of concerts here in New York City with my works and the works of William Flanagan, called the Rorem-Flanagan recitals of American Vocal Music, and King Midas was composed to go on one of those concerts.

"This is definitely a cycle, because the poet conceived of it as a cycle, which American poets do not write much." ¹³



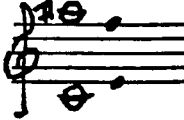
¹²Ned Rorem, King Midas , (New York: Boosey & Hawkes, 1970), composer's notes.

¹³Ned Rorem interview.

Last Poems of Wallace Stevens for Voice, Cello, and Piano
Boosey & Hawkes, 1974

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|---|---|---|-------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------|---|
| 1. "Not Ideas but the Thing Itself" | Wallace Stevens (1879-1955) from <i>The Palm at the End of the Mind</i> | The struggle of the mind to grasp infinity | Cello, piano on final measure | Difficult | ♩ -58 (Very free) |  |
| 2. "The River of Rivers in Connecticut" | W. Stevens | The futility of struggling against the flow of life | Cello, piano | Difficult | ♩ -138 (Rapid and surging) |  |
| 3. "A Child Asleep in Its Own Life" | W. Stevens | The omnipotence of an infinite being | Cello, piano | Easy | ♩ -66 (Intense and gentle) |  |
| 4. "The Planet on the Table" | W. Stevens | Nothing new is ever invented, only discovered | Cello, piano | Moderate | ♩ -80 (Strong and sharp) |  |

Last Poems of Wallace Stevens for Voice, Cello, and Piano, continued
Boosey & Hawkes, 1974

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|----------------------------------|------------|--|---------------|------------|--|---|
| 5. "The Dove in Spring" | W. Stevens | The search for individual identity | Cello, piano | Difficult | ♩ - 144 (Very fast) |  |
| 6. "Of Mere Being" | W. Stevens | The acceptance of what one knows without acknowledging that he possesses knowledge | Cello | Difficult | ♩ - 100 11 measures, ♩ - 116 10 measures, ♩ - 88 |  |
| 7. "A Clear Day and No Memories" | W. Stevens | The meaning- less of individual existence | Cello, piano | Difficult | ♩ - 66 (Sostenuto) |  |

Last Poems of Wallace Stevens

Excerptability, linking: songs are linked with interludes which establish tonality of the following section; songs may be excerpted easily and beginning and ending place is marked obviously (important since "A Child Asleep in Its Own Life" is accessible to beginning vocal students, and "The Planet on the Table" is accessible to intermediate students).

Difficulty:

1. "Not Ideas About the Thing, but the Thing Itself": difficult; wide range, difficult to establish tonality.
2. "The River of Rivers in Connecticut": difficult; extremely wide range.
3. "A Child Asleep in Its Own Life": easy.
4. "The Planet on the Table": moderate; some difficulty with time signature changing often, fairly wide range.
5. "The Dove in Spring": difficult; very wide range, very fast tempo, difficult rhythm, tonality difficult to establish.
6. Interlude
7. "Of Mere Being": difficult; tonality difficult to establish, vocal line is unaccompanied.
8. "A Clear Day and No Memories": difficult; wide range, difficult rhythm, long vocal phrases.

Cyclic elements: none apparent.

Composer's comments :

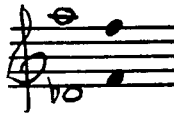


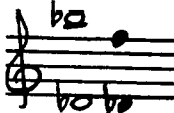
"This piece was commissioned by the David Ensemble, and is now recorded on Leonarda Records. It is a serious piece, and (I like to think) an effective one.

"This is the first time I ever used Wallace Stevens' poetry.

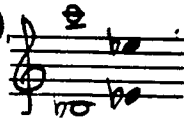

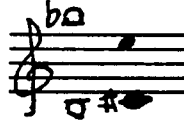

"Except for the third song, 'A Child Asleep in Its Own Life,' which is published separately and the cello interlude, the music is not excerptable, with the piece flowing nicely from beginning to end in a non-stop fashion in about twenty-four minutes."¹⁴

¹⁴Ibid.

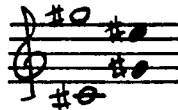

The Nantucket Songs ten songs for Voice and Piano
Boosey & Hawkes, 1981

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|------------------------|---|--|---------------|------------|---|---|
| 1. "Song" | Theodore Roethke (1908-1963) from <i>The Far Field</i> | The source of song, love, death | Piano | Moderate | ♩-48 (free) 2 measures, ♩-63 2 measures, ♩-48 2 measures, ♩-63 2 measures, ♩-48 2 measures, ♩-63 7 measures |  |
| 2. "The Dance" | William Carlos Williams (1883-1963) from <i>Collected Later Poems</i> | Description of dances in a picture | Piano | Difficult | ♩-160 (exuberant) |  |
| 3. "Nantucket" | William Carlos Williams from <i>Collected Later Poems</i> | Description of a room | Piano | Easy | ♩-69 (Lilting, nostalgic, austere) |  |
| 4. "Go Lovely Rose" | Edmund Waller (1606-1687) | The brevity of beauty and youth | Piano | Easy | ♩-112 (Allegretto) |  |

The Nantucket Songs, continued

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|-------------------------------------|--|------------------------|---------------|------------|--|---|
| 5. "Up-Hill" | Christina Rossetti (1830-1894) | Rest for the weary | Piano | Difficult | ♩-c.72 (question sections) ♩-c.60 (answer sections) |  |
| 6. "Mother, I Cannot Mind My Wheel" | Walter Savage Landor (1775-1864) | The pain of lost love | Piano | Easy | ♩-80 (fast) |  |
| 7. "Fear of Death" | John Ashbery (b. 1927) from <i>Self Portraits in a Convex Mirror</i> | Fear of death | Piano | Difficult | ♩-66 |  |
| 8. "Thoughts of a Young Girl" | John Ashbery from <i>The Tennis Court Oath</i> | Love of life and women | None | Difficult | ♩-c.69 (Freely, effusive, not slow) |  |

The Nantucket Songs, continued

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|---|---------------|------------|---|---|
| 9. "Ferry Me Across the Water" | Christina Rossetti | Dialogue between a ferry man and a woman | Piano | Difficult | ♩-48 (very very slow) |  |
| 10. "The Dancer" | Edmund Waller | The sun and the moon described as dancers | Piano | Difficult | ♩-138 24 measures, ♩-112 4 measures ♩-138 12 measures (Big and quick, nervous, always strict) |  |

The Nantucket Songs

Excerptability, linking: no musical linking, nor does the meaning of any song depend upon the meaning of another; therefore, any song may be easily excerpted, which is important because of the wide diversity in the difficulty of the songs, with some being accessible to beginning or intermediate students.

Difficulty:

1. "Song": moderate; opening vocal line is unaccompanied, the vocal line is not related to the accompaniment, which is usually a single sustained chord.
2. "The Dance": difficult; very fast tempo, wide intervallic leaps, wide range.
3. "Nantucket": easy.
4. "Go Lovely Rose": easy.
5. "Up-Hill": difficult; difficult rhythms, wide range.
6. "Mother, I Cannot Mind My Wheel": easy.
7. "Fear of Death": wide range.
8. "Thoughts of a Young Girl": difficult; difficult rhythms, unaccompanied.
9. "Ferry Me Across the Water": moderate; high sustained note at end is difficult, conversation aspect is difficult.
10. "The Dancer": difficult; very fast tempo, constantly changing time signature, wide intervals, the singer must sustain the highest note for four measures.

Cyclic elements: none apparent.

Composer's comments :

"The cycle was commissioned by the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation. It was composed between November, 1978 and May, 1979

on the island of Nantucket, hence the title. An apt subtitle might be *Popular Songs*, insofar as 'Popular' means 'entertaining' as opposed to 'classically' indirect. Indeed, these songs--merry or complex or strange though their texts may seem--aim away from the head and toward the diaphragm. They are, as collegians say emotional rather than intellectual, and need not be understood to be enjoyed."¹⁵

"Since the songs are not all the same poet, I do not mind that they are extracted . . . In fact, Leontyne Price has extracted 'The Dancer' and 'Ferry Me Across the Water' and performs them on recital programs.

"The unifying element of these songs is psychological, because I was in Nantucket when they were composed, and because they were written all at once.

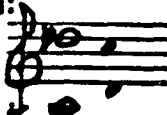


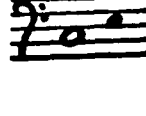


"The Nantucket Songs seem to be less of a problem for both singers and audiences than some of my other works."¹⁶

The Nantucket Songs are recorded on CRI Records.

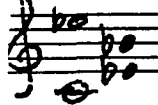
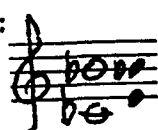

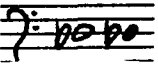
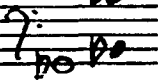
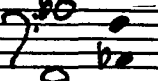
¹⁵Ned Rorem, The Nantucket Songs, (New York: Boosey & Hawkes, 1981), composer's notes.

¹⁶Ned Rorem interview.



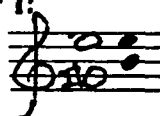
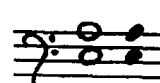
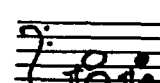
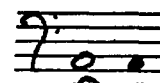
Elgrim Strangers for six male voices
Boosey & Hawkes, 1984

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|--|--------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|------------|--|---|
| 1. (Titles not listed; sections, given here by rehearsal numbers): begin | Walt Whitman (1819-1892) | The horrors of war: the casualties | None | Difficult | ♩ - c.72, 11 measures; ♩ - 132, 50 measures | <p>Alto 1:</p>  <p>Alto 2:</p>  <p>Tenor 1:</p>  <p>Baritone 1:</p>  <p>Baritone 2:</p>  <p>Bass:</p>  |

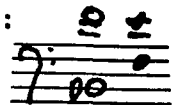
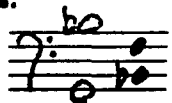

Pilgrim Strangers, continued

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|-------------------------|------------|------------------------------|---------------|------------|--|--|
| 2. 10 measures before ⑤ | W. Whitman | Var: description of the camp | None | Difficult | <p>♩-56, Calm, 16 measures; ♩-63 17 measures; ♩-72, 4 measures; ♩-56, 6 measures</p> | <p>Alto 1: </p> <p>Alto 2: </p> <p>Tenor 1: </p> <p>Baritone 1: </p> <p>Baritone 2: </p> <p>Bass: </p> |

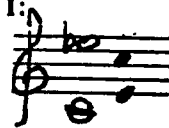
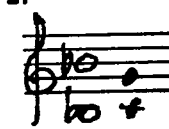
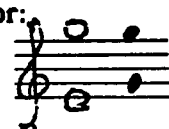
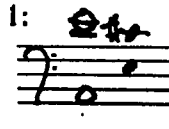
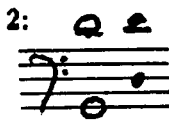
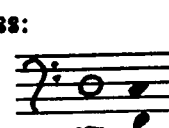
Pilgrim Strangers, continued

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|---------------------------|------------|-------------------------------|---------------|------------|-------------------------------|---|
| 3. 3 measures before 8 | W. Whitman | War: the pas- sage of time | None | Difficult | ♩ -72, 3 measures | <p>Alto 1:</p>  <p>Alto 2:</p>  <p>Tenor 1:</p>  <p>Baritone 1:</p>  <p>Baritone 2:</p>  <p>Bass:</p>  |



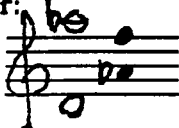


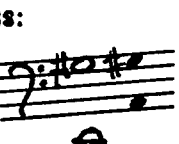
Pilgrim Strangers, continued

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|------|------------|----------------------------|---------------|------------|------------------------|---|
| 4. ⑧ | W. Whitman | The Civil | None | Difficult | ♩-66, Simply | Baritone 1:  |
| | | | | | | Bass:  |
| 5. ⑩ | W. Whitman | War: care for the dying | None | Difficult | ♩-c.72, (Very free) | Tenor:  |

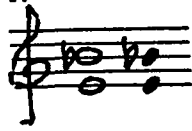



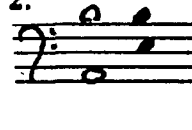
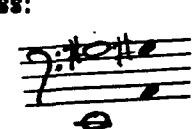
Pilgrim Strangers, continued

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|------|------------|-----------------------------|---------------|------------|--|--|
| 6. ⑪ | W. Whitman | War: the death of a soldier | None | Difficult | <p>♩-69, (Rather Cold), 17 measures;</p> <p>♩-50, (Safer, more personal) 68 measures;</p> <p>♩-69, 5 measures;</p> <p>♩-50, 6 measures;</p> <p>♩-63, 20 measures</p> | <p>Alto 1:</p>  <p>Alto 2:</p>  <p>Tenor:</p>  <p>Baritone 1:</p>  <p>Baritone 2:</p>  <p>Bass:</p>  |


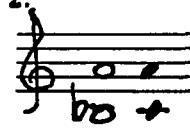



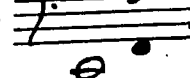
Pilgrim Strangers, continued

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|----------------------------|------------|---|---------------|------------|--|--|
| 7. 10 measures before (19) | W. Whitman | War: hymn singing in a hospital ward for wounded soldiers | None | Difficult | <p>♩-c. 46, (Free), 9 measures; ♩-76, 10 measures; ♩-c. 46, 4 measures; ♩-76, 8 measures; ♩-c. 52, 5 measures; ♩-80, 11 measures; ♩-48, 26 measures; ♩-84, 43 measures</p> | <p>Alto 1:</p>  <p>Alto 2:</p>  <p>Tenor:</p>  <p>Baritone 1:</p>  <p>Baritone 2:</p>  <p>Bass:</p>  |

Pilgrim Strangers, continued_

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|----------------------------|------------|---|---------------|------------|--|---|
| 8. 10 measures before (27) | W. Whitman | War: an incident resulting in many deaths | None | Difficult | ♩-144, (Fast and nervous and driving) 61 measures; ♩-112, (A bit slower, more free) 18 measures | Alto 1:  Alto 2:  Tenor:  Baritone 1:  Baritone 2:  Bass:  |

Pilgrim Strangers, continued.

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|----------------------------|------------|--|---------------|------------|---|---|
| 9, 11 measures before (31) | W. Whitman | War: the misery and solitude it incurs | None | Difficult | ♩-84, (Much slower and more free) 17 measures; ♩-69, (Spacious and Sad, Smooth and Slow) 57 measures | <p>Alto 1:</p>  <p>Alto 2:</p>  <p>Tenor:</p>  <p>Baritone 1:</p>  <p>Baritone 2:</p>  <p>Bass:</p>  |

Pilgrim Strangers

Excerptability, linking: Songs are musically linked, and the cycle is through-composed; therefore, excerptability would be impossible.

Difficulty: The entire cycle is difficult because of the interdependence of the six voices and because the work is unaccompanied.

Cyclic elements: none apparent.

Composer's comments:

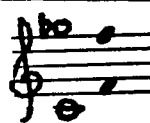
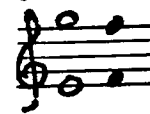


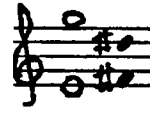

"The story, excised like my 1969 cycle War Scenes from the Civil War diary called Specimen Days [by Walt Whitman], is told in seven scenes, sung without pause and linked by solo recitatives. The subject is the banality of war . . .

"Pieced together are pictures of dismembered corpses, of the soldiers' extreme youth, and of the poet's attention to battle news as he sits with his mother in their Brooklyn kitchen . . .

"The music, which lasts about twenty minutes, was composed in New York and Florida during February of 1984."¹⁷

¹⁷Ned Rorem, Pilgrim Strangers, (New York: Boosey & Hawkes, 1984), composer's notes.

Poèmes pour la paix for Medium Voice and Piano
Boosey & Hawkes

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|-----------------------|--|--|---------------|------------|---|---|
| 1. "Lay" | Jehan Regnier (1392-1470) | Prayer for peace | Piano | Moderate | ♩-62 (Lent et grave, mais sans trainer) |  |
| 2. "Ode" | Pierre de Ronsard (1524-1585) | Greeting for the Goddess of Peace | Piano | Moderate | ♩-108 (Allant) |  |
| 3. "Sonnet I" | Olivier de Magny (1529-1560) | Why can the world not achieve peace? | Piano | Moderate | ♩-168 (Animé et puissant) |  |
| 4. "Sonnet III" | O.de Magny | The fruitless search for peace | Piano | Moderate | ♩-56 (Pas trop lent) |  |
| 5. "Sonnet" | Jean Daurat (1505-1588) | The cry for peace | Piano | Moderate | ♩-126 (Assez vif et triste) |  |
| 6. "Hymn of Peace" | Jean Antoine de Baif (1532-1589) | In praise of peace | Piano | Easy | ♩-63 (Maestoso, Allant) |  |

Poèmes pour la paix

Excerptability, linking: no musical linking, nor does the meaning of one song depend upon the meaning of another. Therefore, any song is easily excerptable, an important fact since some songs are accessible to intermediate or even beginning students.

Difficulty:

- I. "Lay": moderate, accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line.
- II. "Ode": moderate, fast tempo.
- III. "Sonnet I": moderate, accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line.
- IV. "Sonnet II": moderate, accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line.
- V. "Sonnet": moderate; difficult rhythm, accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line.
- VI. "*L'hymne de la paix*": easy.

Cyclic elements: none apparent.

Composer's comments :

"Frustration awaits the American composer impelled to write songs in French, for those songs will seldom be heard ... The rare French recitalist who programs an American song will make an effort to learn one in English. Meanwhile American singers find it more 'legitimate' for their French group to be by Frenchmen.

"It was during residence in Paris that (not illogically) I composed most of my French songs. Among these were the six *Poèmes pour la paix*, written in May 1953 on texts from Paul Eluard's *Anthologie Vivante de la Poésie du Passé*. Having been raised a Quaker and a pacifist, I found this 15th-century verse close to my heart; it is no less close to the heart of our own century, created as it was in a period of constant war, or surfeited anguish, of poetic terror.

"My translations . . . should never be superimposed on the vocal line. They serve only as dull reflections of some bright and painful verse in a language now almost lost."¹⁸

"I have orchestrated Poèmes pour la paix for strings, but I have never heard them done that way."¹⁹


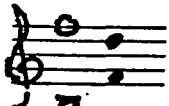
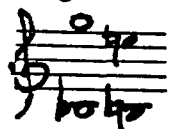

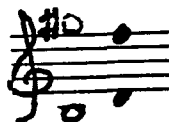

¹⁸Ned Rorem, Poèmes pour la paix (New York: Boosey & Hawkes, 1970), composer's notes.

¹⁹Ned Rorem interview.


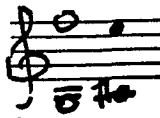

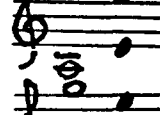
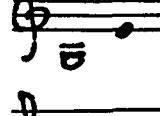
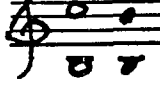
Poems of Love and the Rain, A Song Cycle for Mezzo Soprano and Piano
Boosey & Hawkes, 1965

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|---|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|------------|-----------------------------------|-------|
| 1. "Prologue from 'The Rain' in <u>Emblems of Conduct</u> " | Donald Windham (b.1920) | Creates the landscape and the sea | Piano | Moderate | ♩-40 or less (Unbearably slow) | |

Poems of Love and the Rain, continued

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|---|--------------------------------|---|-----------------------|------------|--|---|
| 6. "Do I Love You" Part I | Jack Larson (dates unknown) | The depth of love | Piano | Moderate | ♩ - 56 (Andantino tranquillo) |  |
| 7. "In the Rain" | e.e.cummings (1894-1962) | Contemplation of a lover | Piano | Difficult | ♩ - 148 (Allegro) |  |
| 8. "Song for Lying In Bed During A Night Rain" | Kenneth Pitchford | Description of a nightmare concerning a lover | Piano | Difficult | ♩ - c. 112 (Marcatissimo) |  |
| 9. "Interlude" | T. Roethke | Sensual description of an approaching storm when rain is very much needed | Piano (postlude only) | Difficult | Slow and very, very free; almost almost unmetered |  |
| 10. "Song for Lying In Bed During A Night Rain" | K. Pitchford | Description of a nightmare concerning a lover | Piano | Easy | ♩ - 66 (Andante) |  |
| 11. "In the Rain" | e.e.cummings | Contemplation of a lover | Piano | Moderate | ♩ - from 50 to 90, being fastest when voice is alone |  |

Poems of Love and the Rain, continued_

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|----------------------------------|--------------|--|---------------|------------|------------------------------------|--|
| 12. "Do I Love You" (Part II) | J. Larson | The depth of love | Piano | Moderate | J.-126 (Joyous) |  |
| 13. "The Apparition" | T. Roethke | Lost love | Piano | Moderate | J.-c.80 (Smoothly) |  |
| 14. "Love's Stricken 'Why'" | E. Dickinson | The pain of love | Piano | Moderate | J.-c.58 (Intense) |  |
| 15. "The Air is the Only" | H. Moss | The instability of love | Piano | Moderate | J.-112 (Calmly) |  |
| 16. "Stop All the Clocks" | W.H.Auden | The despair associated with the death of a lover | Piano | Difficult | J.-144 (Wildly fast and angry) |  |
| 17. "Epilogue from The Rain" | D. Windham | Creates a setting: landscape and rain | Piano | Moderate | As at the beginning or even slower |  |

Poems of Love and the Rain

Excerptability, linking:

1. "Prologue from 'The Rain' in Emblems of Conduct" is musically linked to
2. "Stop All the Clocks"; no other musical linking; therefore, any song may be easily excerpted, an important fact since some songs are accessible to intermediate or even beginning students.

Difficulty:

1. "Prologue from 'The Rain' in Emblems of Conduct": moderate; wide intervallic leaps, two unaccompanied measures.

2. "Stop All the Clocks": moderate; wide range.

3. "The Air Is the Only": moderate; accompaniment offers little help with the vocal line.

4. "Love's Striken 'Why'": easy.

5. "The Apparition": moderate; wide intervallic leaps, three unaccompanied measures.

6. "Do I Love You" (Part I): moderate; accompaniment offers little help to vocal line.

7. "In the Rain": difficult; wide leaps, fast tempo, accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line.

8. "Song for Lying In Bed During A Night Rain": difficult; difficult rhythm, fast tempo, accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line.

9. "Interlude": difficult; difficult rhythm, wide range, unaccompanied vocal line.

10. "Song for Lying In Bed During A Night Rain": easy.


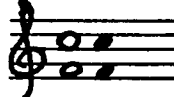

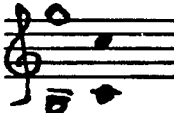
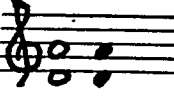
11. "In the Rain": moderate; some unaccompanied vocal line, accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line.

American authors and set each one to music *twice* , in as contrasting a manner as possible (i.e. gentle then passionate, slow and violent, then fast and hysterical, etc.)."²¹

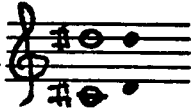
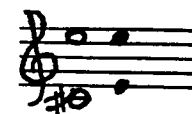

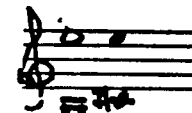
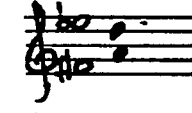
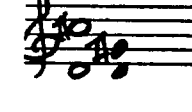
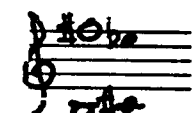
Poems of Love and the Rain is available on a DESTO recording and on a CRI recording.

²¹Ned Rorem, Poems of Love and the Rain (New York: Boosey & Hawkes, 1965) , composer's notes.

The Santa Fe Songs
Boosey & Hawkes, 1980

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|--------------------------------|--|--|--------------------------------|------------|--|---|
| 1. "Santa Fe" | Witter Brynner (1881-1968) from <u>Selected Poems</u> , as are all the poems except "Yes I Hear Them" | The feast of St. Francis in Santa Fe | Piano, violin, viola, cello | Moderate | ♩ -112 (very fast) |  |
| 2. "Opus 101" | W. Brynner | A simile comparing a pianist and a piano with lovers | Piano, violin, viola, cello | Moderate | ♩ -60 |  |
| 3. "Any Other Time" | W. Brynner | Time | Piano, violin, viola, cello | Easy | ♩ -132 (very fast) |  |
| 4. "Sonnet" | W. Brynner | Likens life to a summer | Piano, violin, viola, cello | Moderate | ♩ -116 (Allegretto) |  |
| 5. "Coming Down the Stairs" | W. Brynner | Narrative of a woman descending, then returning back up stairs | Piano, violin, viola, cello | Moderate | ♩ -80 (Languorous without dragging) |  |

The Santa Fe Songs, continued

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|-----------------------|------------|--|-----------------------------|------------|---|---|
| 6. "He Never Knew" | W. Brynner | Self-discovery: pyromania | Piano, violin, viola, cello | Difficult | ♩-66 (cold); then Freely and warm poco agitato (alternating) |  |
| 7. "El Musico" | W. Brynner | Descriptive of a singer who really feels what he sings | Piano, violin, viola | Easy | ♩-58, ♩-174 (Fast and brash) |  |
| 8. "The Wintry Mind" | W. Brynner | Descriptive of winter | Piano | Moderate | ♩-36 (Dangerously slow) |  |
| 9. "Water-Hyacinths" | W. Brynner | The impermanence of love | Piano, violin, viola, cello | Moderate | ♩-54-80 (Broad and free, varying) |  |
| 10. "Moving Leaves" | W. Brynner | It is wrong to long for the past | Piano, violin, viola, cello | Moderate | ♩-66 (Nonchalant and smooth) |  |
| 11. "Yes I hear them" | W. Brynner | The fear of hearing foot-steps without seeing anyone | Violin, viola, cello | Moderate | ♩-144 (Presto scorrevole) |  |
| 12. "The Sowers" | W. Brynner | The joy of springtime: planting time | Piano, violin, viola, cello | Easy | ♩-72 (Smooth) |  |

The Santa Fe Songs

Excerptability, linking: no musical linking; the meaning of one song does not depend on the meaning of another. Any song is easily excerpted, an important fact since some songs are accessible to intermediate or even beginning students; however, 5. "Coming Down the Stairs" and 8. "The Wintry Mind" are very short.

Difficulty:

1. "Santa Fe": moderate; the accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line.
2. "Opus 101": moderate; the accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line; difficult rhythms.
3. "Any other time": easy.
4. "Sonnet": moderate; the accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line; wide range.
5. "Coming down the stairs": moderate; the accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line.
6. "He Never Knew": difficult; difficult to establish tonality, unaccompanied vocal line for four measures, difficult rhythms.
7. "El Musico": easy.
8. "The Wintry Mind": moderate, the accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line.
9. "Water-Hyacinths": moderate; the accompaniment sometimes offers little help to the vocal line, unaccompanied vocal line for seven measures.
10. "Moving Leaves": moderate; the accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line.
11. "Yes I hear them": moderate; the accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line, fast tempo.
12. "The Sowers": easy.

Cyclic elements: none apparent.

Composer's Comments :

"The Santa Fe Songs were written on a commission from the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, and they suggested the poetry of Witter Brynner (who had lived in Santa Fe) with which I was not familiar. I found the poetry very attractive and singable. I don't know quite what they are all about, but I liked them. Poetry is never 'about' anything, anyway, (well, of course, that's not true) but what it is about is less important than how it says it, where the personality comes through the mode of expression.

"This is one of my four or five pieces for solo voice with instruments that I think is one of the best. The New York Times says that this is my masterpiece."²²

²² Ned Rorem interview.

Six Irish Poems for Medium Voice and Piano
Southern Music Publishing Co. Inc., 1971

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|---|------------|-------------------------------|-------|
| 1. "Lay of the Forlorn" | George Darley (1795-1846) | Farewell to life | Winds, oboes, horns, violins (or piano reduction) | Moderate | ♩-58 (Moderate, nostalgic) | |

Six Irish Poems

Excerptability, linking: no musical linking, nor does the meaning of one song depend upon the meaning of another. Therefore, any song is easily excerptable, an important fact, since some songs are accessible to intermediate or even beginning students.

Difficulty:

1. "Lay of the Forlorn": moderate; accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line, some wide leaps.
2. "Robin's Cross": easy.
3. "Chorus of Spirits": moderate; accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line.
4. "The Call of the Morning": moderate; accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line, difficult rhythm.
5. "Runilda's Chant": difficult; accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line, difficult rhythm, dramatic vocal line.
6. "The Sea Ritual": difficult; accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line, sustained vocal line, wide range, some high notes sung *piano*.

Cyclic elements: none apparent.

Composer's comments :

"While correcting proofs of Six Irish Poems last night I was invaded by a nostalgia that transformed my New York apartment into the little Turinese hotel where, nineteen winters ago, these songs were conceived. I was on a first trip to Italy, visiting my friend Nell Tangeman . . . Nostalgia comes now mostly from a memory of Nell's performances, and of Nell herself. She died in the autumn of 1965. Thus I hear this cycle's final 'Sea Ritual' as a premature epitaph, a prayer both said and sung by one whose intelligent but brief career first acquainted me with the

human voice as a practical instrument which still sings in all I write today."²³

"Six Irish Poems is a piece that I don't hear as being done except with orchestra; occasionally I hear one of the songs done with piano, and it always sounds rather weak to me.



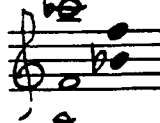
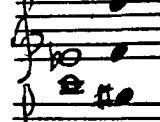
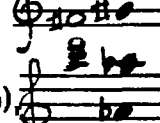

"These are nice songs, but they are in the wrong order. It should begin with the last one and end with the first one, and there should be a seventh one that's rambunctious and sort of rowdy. It's all too introspective."²⁴

²³Ned Rorem, Six Irish Poems (New York: Southern Music Publishing Co., Inc., 1971), composer's notes.

²⁴Ned Rorem interview.

Six Songs for High Voice

C. F. Peters, 1963

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|---|--------------------------------|--|---------------|------------|----------------------------------|---|
| "Pippa's Song" | Robert Browning (1812-1899) | Contentment with the state of the universe | Piano | Moderate | ♩-50 (Rustling and unhurried) |  |
| "Song for a Girl" | John Dryden (1631-1700) | Innocence of a young girl | Piano | Moderate | ♩-144 (Fast, light) |  |
| "Cradle Song" | 16th century anonymous | Lullaby to Jesus | Piano | Moderate | ♩-40 (Andante) |  |
| "Rondelay" | John Dryden | The futility of love | Piano | Moderate | ♩-80 (Simply, sadly) |  |
| "In a Gondola" | Robert Browning | The desire to be loved | Piano | Moderate | ♩-66 (Smooth) |  |
| "Song to a Young Lady, Going Out of Town in the Spring" | John Dryden | The martyrdom of having lost love | Piano | Difficult | ♩-112 (Allegro moderato) |  |

Six Songs for High Voice

Excerptability, linking: No musical linking, nor does the meaning of one depend upon the meaning of another; therefore, any song may be easily extracted. "Rondelay" and "Song to a Fair Young Lady, Going Out of Town in the Spring" work best if excerpted together because of the poetic linking.

Difficulty:

"Pippa's Song": moderate; wide range, difficult tessitura.

"Song for a Girl": moderate; wide range, difficult tessitura.

"Cradle Song": moderate; difficult tessitura.

"Rondelay": moderate; difficult tessitura.

"In a Gondola": moderate; difficult tessitura.

"Song to a Fair Young Lady, Going Out of Town in the Spring": difficult; wide range, unaccompanied coloratura passages, difficult tessitura.

Cyclic elements: "Song to a Fair Young Lady, Going Out of Town in the Spring" continues the story of "Rondelay;" no cyclic melody apparent.

Composer's comments :

"These songs were written to go together for a soprano named Virginia Fleming, an American whom I met in Paris in 1953, who had a very high, well placed voice, but a small voice.

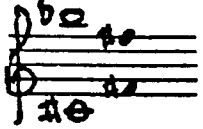
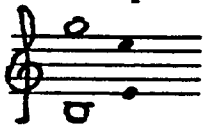
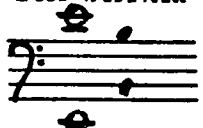
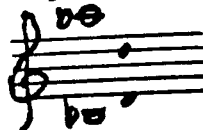
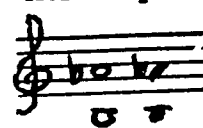
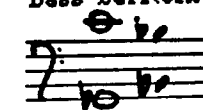
"It is a cycle because I say it is a cycle. First of all, they are for orchestra; second of all, they are for that impossible kind of high voice; and, third of all, they 'go together', but the poetry doesn't 'go together'.

"Most of them, except the last one, sound very good on the piano. They are very good in both male and female voice.

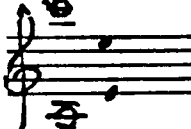

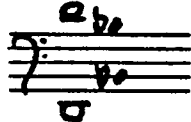
"If I were to write for high voice now, I probably wouldn't write words that high above the staff. I simply wrote songs the way I always would, and simply raised them a perfect fifth."²⁵

²⁵ Ibid.

Some Trees Three poems for three voices (Soprano, Mezzo-soprano, Bass-baritone)
Boosey & Hawkes, 1970

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|--|------------------------|--|---------------|------------|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. "Some Trees" from <i>Some Trees</i> | John Ashbery (b. 1927) | Compares human existence with existence of inanimate trees: each has meaning by merely being | piano | Difficult | $\text{♩} = 84$ (Exuberant) | <p>Soprano</p>  <p>Mezzo-soprano</p>  <p>Bass-baritone</p>  |
| 2. "The Grape-vine" from <i>Some Trees</i> | J. Ashbery | Questions the interactions of lives | piano | Difficult | $\text{♩} = 100$ (Slowish) | <p>Soprano</p>  <p>Mezzo-soprano</p>  <p>Bass-baritone</p>  |

Some Trees Three poems for three voices (Soprano, Mezzo-soprano, Bass-baritone), continued

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|---|------------|---|---------------|------------|---|--|
| 3. "Our Youth" from <i>The Tennis Court Oath</i> | J. Ashbery | The under- standing of life signals it's end; and, thus, life is never understood | piano | Difficult | Shifts 14 times: from ♩-126 to ♩-50 | <p>Soprano</p>  <p>Mezzo-soprano</p>  <p>Bass-baritone</p>  |

Some Trees

Excerptability, linking: not musically linked, nor does meaning of one depend on meaning of another: easily excerptable.

Difficulty: each is difficult; wide ranges, interdependence of vocal lines, difficult tonality.

Cyclic elements: none apparent.

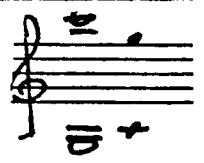

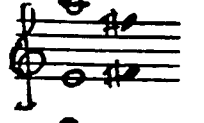
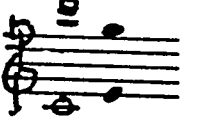

Composer's comments :

"In 1968, I gave a concert in Town Hall of all of my vocal music that consisted of a mezzo-soprano, Beverly Wolff, a soprano, Phyllis Curtin, and a bass, Donald Gramm. As the fourth section, I wrote Some Trees so that all three of them could sing at the same time. So, it is definitely *Gebrauchsmusik*."²⁶

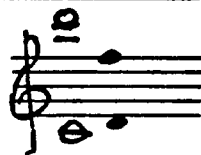
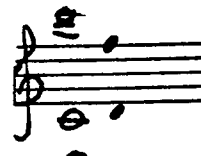
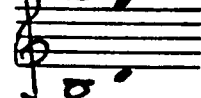
Some Trees is available on a CRI recording.

²⁶ Ibid.

Sun Eight Poems in one movement for Voice and Orchestra
Boosey & Hawkes, 1969

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|---------------------------|--|---|--|------------|---|---|
| 1. "To the Sun" | King Ikhnaton ca. 1360 B.C. (translated from three versions to English by Rorem) | Eternal return of the Sun, and life's dependence on its' return | Orchestra (for listing of orchestra, see p. 102), or piano reduction | Difficult | ♩-ca. 69 (Rather slow) |  |
| 2. "Sun of the Sleepless" | Lord George Byron (1788- 1824) | The Sun at night | same | Difficult | ♩-66 or more (Very fast) |  |
| 3. "To Dawn" | Paul Goodman (1911-1972) | Greeting the Sun at dawn | same | Moderate | ♩-63 (Slow, but not too) |  |
| 4. "Day" | William Blake (1757-1827) | The arriving day signals renewed war and human conflicts | same | Difficult | ♩-69 or more (Very fast) |  |
| 5. "Catafalque" | Robin Morgan (b. 1941) | The destruction of the earth by the Sun | same | Difficult | ♩-48 (Slow, Massive but supple) 30 measures; ♩-63 (Agitato) 11 measures; ♩-44 (Very calm) |  |

Sun Eight Poems in one movement for Voice and Orchestra, continued

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|------------|---|---|
| 6. "Full Many a Glorious Morning" (Sonnet XXXIII) | William Shakespeare (1564-1616) | Worship of the Sun | same | Difficult | ♩-132 (Quite fast) |  |
| 7. "Sundown Lights" from <i>Sepcimin Days</i> | Walt Whitman (1819-1892) | Description of Sundown | orchestra, or piano reduction | Moderate | ♩-69 (Lyric, but conversational) |  |
| 8. from "What Can I Tell My Bones" | Theodore Roethke (1908-1963) | Description of life within a twenty-four hour period | same | Difficult | ♩- 138 or more (Very fast, exuberant) |  |

Sun

Excerptability, linking: songs are linked with interludes which establish the new tonality; individual songs may be excerpted with obviously marked places for beginning and ending (especially important as four songs are only moderately difficult, and therefore accessible to intermediate voice students.)

Difficulty:

1. "To the Sun": difficult; difficult tonality, difficult rhythm, large intervallic leaps, wide range.
2. "Sun of the Sleepless": moderate; some difficulty with tonality, wide range.
3. "To Dawn": moderate; some difficulty with tonality.
4. "Day": moderate; wide range.
5. "Catafalque": difficult; difficult tonality, difficult rhythm, wide range, large intervallic leaps.
6. "Full Many a Glorious Morning": moderate; some difficulty with wide intervallic leaps, wide range.
7. "Sundown Lights": difficult; rhythm, tonality, wide range.
8. from "What Can I Tell My Bones?": difficult; large intervallic leaps, difficult rhythm, long unaccompanied phrases.

Cyclic elements: use of the following cyclic motive and that motive sung in the opposite direction in "Day," "Full Many a Glorious Morning," and "What Can I Tell My Bones?"



Interludes contain some melodies from the surrounding songs.

Composer's comments :

Sun "is cyclic, though not a suite of set numbers; eight poems are instrumentally blended into a continual movement of some twenty-five minutes. Supposedly the whole makes a vague narrative, (dawn to dark, then day again); but mostly I chose words, not as I understood, but as I felt them."²⁷

"I think I go too high in Sun; the Whitman piece goes to a D above high C, and that's just too high. The first movement goes to a G below middle C, as a special effect, and it's unneeded.

"Sun was written definitely as a cycle, and a non-stop cycle, with no rest, at least in the orchestra.

"I like Sun; I think it is one of my best pieces. I have been told by others that it is not typical of me in that it's Straussian with a big orchestra full of big, luscious, thick effects, and I, on the whole write economically."²⁸

Orchestra:

| | |
|----------------|-------------|
| Piccolo | 3 Trumpets |
| 2 Flutes | 2 Trombones |
| 2 Oboes | Tuba |
| English horn | Timpani |
| 2 Clarinets | Percussion* |
| Alto Saxophone | Harp |
| 2 Bassoons | Celesta |
| Contra Bassoon | Piano |
| 4 Horns | Strings |




*Snare drum, bass drum, bongos, chimes, gong (tam-tam), anvil, triangle, metal sheet, cymbals, castanets, wood block, glockenspiel, xylophone, vibraphone

²⁷Ned Rorem, Sun (New York: Boosey & Hawkes, 1967), composer's notes.

²⁸Ned Rorem interview.

Three Incantations from a Marionette Tale

Boosey & Hawkes, 1967

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|------|---|--------|---------------|------------|------------------------|---|
| I. | Charles Boultenhouse (dates not avail- able) | None * | Piano | Easy | ♩ - 72 (Calmly) |  |
| II. | C. Boultenhouse | None* | Piano | Easy | ♩ - 152 (Very Fast) |  |
| III. | C. Boultenhouse | None* | Piano | Easy | ♩ - 54 (Maestoso) |  |

*The words to these songs create a sensuous compression of sounds by using alliteration and the repetition of phrases.

Three Incantations from a Marionette Tale

Excerptability, linking: not musically linked, nor does meaning of one depend on meaning of another: easily excerptable.

Difficulty:

I: easy.

II: easy.

III: easy.

Cyclic elements: none apparent.

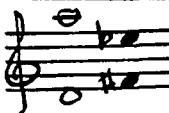


Composer's comments:

"Three Incantations from a Marionette Tale are minute bonbons composed in the forties for a puppet show with words by Charles Boultenhouse."²⁹

²⁹Ned Rorem to Leon A. Henry, Jr., 25 November 1985.

Three Poems of Capetanakis

Boosey & Hawkes, 1968

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|--------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---------------|------------|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. "Abel" | Demetrios Capetanakis (1912-1944) | Abel's jealousy of Cain | Piano | Easy | ♩-66 (Rigidly calm) |  |
| 2. "Guilt" | Demetrios Capetanakis | Guilt after committing murder | Piano | Moderate | ♩-58 (Slow, free, stark) |  |
| 3. "The Land of Fear" | Demetrios Capetanakis | Living in fear | Piano | Easy | ♩-56 (Intense) |  |

Three Poems of Capetanakis

Excerptability, linking: no musical linking, nor does the meaning of one song depend upon the meaning of another; therefore, any song may be easily excerpted. Because of the narrative of the cycle, it is best performed in its entirety.

Difficulty:

1. "Abel": easy.
2. "Guilt": moderate; six unaccompanied measures for the voice, 6 other measures basically unaccompanied (i.e., the accompaniment occurs after the vocal part is sung); long, sustained vocal lines.
3. "The Land of Fear": easy.

Cyclic elements: none apparent.

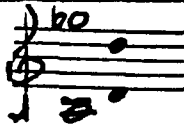
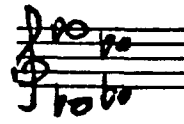
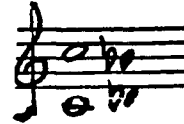


Composer's comments :

"I knew these poems from a French translation belonging to my friend, Marie Laure de Noilles; I wrote the songs because I was very attracted to the poetry. I don't really know if the songs are successful as pieces of music or not, as far as singers are concerned. I don't know if they are vocal; I don't know if they attract singers, but as pieces of music, they do attract me.

"The last movement is a little too close to David Diamond's 'Absolam', by which I was consciously influenced because that year, 1954, I went on tour in Germany with a soprano, and, among other things, we did 'Absolam,' which I loved and used as a model. I don't think the way I set the third poem is appropriate to the poem; I kind of forced the music on the poem. The other two songs are a little bit introspective; they are not exactly what singers are clamoring to do. I'm fond of the songs the way people are fond of their children (that's not quite the right image); I'm fond of them because nobody else is quite fond of them."³⁰

³⁰ Ibid.

War Scenes for medium low voice and piano
Boosey & Hawkes, 1971

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|---|--|--|---------------|------------|---|---|
| 1. "Nightbattle" | Walt Whitman (1819-1892) from <u>Specimen Days</u> | War: descrip- tion | piano | Difficult | ♩-76 (Frantic) |  |
| 2. "Specimen Case" | same | War: death | piano | Moderate | ♩-56 (Simply, sad) |  |
| 3. "An Incident" | same | War: death | piano | Moderate | ♩-66 (Poignant but vicious, sad) |  |
| 4. "Inauguration Ball" | same | War: juxtaposition of the political and human side | piano | Difficult | ♩-152 (Crude and fast) |  |
| 5. "The Real War Will Never Get in the Books" | same | War: it's inhumanity | piano | Difficult | ♩-52-80 (Flexible, declamatory, slower than speech, but rich and full, supple and grand) |  |

War Scenes

Excerptability, linking: songs not musically linked; individual songs easily excerpted (important since "Specimin Case" and "An Incident" are accessible to the intermediate student).

Difficulty:

1. "Nightbattle": difficult; wide range, large intervallic leaps, difficult tonality.
2. "Specimin Case": moderate; difficulty with wide range, some vocal parts sung against tone clusters.
3. "An Incident": moderate; difficulty with a tonal vocal line sung against an atonal accompaniment containing tone clusters.
4. "Inauguration": difficult; wide range, difficult to establish tonality.
5. "The Real War Will Never Get in the Books": difficult; wide range, wide intervallic leaps, contains an atonal, unaccompanied vocal line.

Cyclic elements: tonality; piano introduction for the first and the last song.

Composer's comments:

War Scenes contains the following dedicatory inscription: "To those who died in Vietnam, both sides, during the composition: 20-30 June 1969."³¹

"**War Scenes** is available on Desto Record 7101 with Donald Gramm, bass-baritone, and Eugene Estomin, piano."³²

"I don't believe there is such a thing as 'political music,' and certainly I don't think that music can change our convictions; it can intensify our convictions, but it can't change them. Because I wrote **War Scenes** at the height of the Viet Nam War, and because Gérard Souzay's voice was more dramatic than beautiful, I wanted to write something dramatic, because I felt intensely about the war. I chose Walt Whitman's words as much for

³¹Ned Rorem, **War Scenes** (New York: Boosey & Hawkes, 1971), dedication.

³²Ibid., table of contents.

political reasons as for artistic reasons. Although Whitman's words concern the Civil War, they could apply to the Trojan War or the Viet Nam War: all war is senseless, and I think if that cycle has any power at all, it is owed to Walt Whitman's power.

"People often tell me that this is the strongest thing I've ever written. Every time it's performed, it brings down the house; but, I've got to give Whitman the credit.


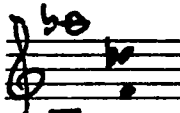
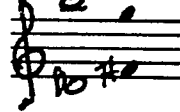
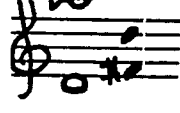
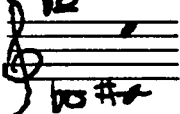
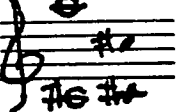
"What I did with Whitman's prose I would never do with a poem: I cut it; I re-arranged it. I chose and theatricalized Whitman's prose."³³

War Scenes is available on DESTO Records.

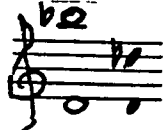

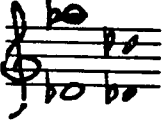
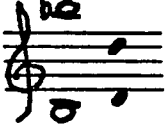
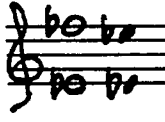
³³Ned Rorem interview.

Women's Voices

Boosey & Hawkes,

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|---------------------------------|--|---|---------------|------------|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. "Now Let No Charitable Hope" | Elinor Wylie (1885-1928) | The solitude of the journey through life | Piano | Moderate | ♩-72 |  |
| 2. "A Birthday" | Christina Rossetti (1830-1894) | The beginning of life because of the discovery love | Piano | Difficult | ♩-160 (Allegro grazioso, Brisk) |  |
| 3. "To My Dear Husband" | Anne Bradstreet (1612-1672) | The joy of marriage | Piano | Difficult | ♩-144 (Exuberant) |  |
| 4. "To the Ladies" | Mary Lee, Lady Chudleigh (1556-1710) | Warning to avoid the servitude of marriage | Piano | Moderate | ♩-120 (Allegretto) |  |
| 5. "If Ever a Hapless Woman" | Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke (1561-1621) | The grief of having lost a brother | Piano | Difficult | ♩-144 (Angry) |  |
| 6. "We Never Said Farewell" | Mary Elizabeth Coleridge (1861-1907) | The end of a love affair | Piano | Moderate | ♩-54 (Smooth) |  |

Women's Voices continued

| Song | Poet | Theme | Accompaniment | Difficulty | Meter | Range |
|-------------------------|---|------------------------------------|---------------|------------|--|---|
| 7. "The Stranger" | Adrienne Rich from <i>Driving into the Wreck</i> (b. 1929) | The solitude of being unknown | Piano | Difficult | ♩-58 (Stark), 41 measures: ♩-72, 15 measures; ♩-56, 8 measures |  |
| 8. "What Inn Is This" | Emily Dickinson (1830-1866) | Greeting to a death chamber | Piano | Moderate | ♩-88 (Allegretto) |  |
| 9. "Defiled Is My Name" | Queen Anne Boleyn, from her prison (1507-1536) | The pain of being unjustly accused | None | Difficult | ♩-c.152 (Supple and sad but firm and not slow) |  |
| 10. "Electrocution" | Lola Ridge from <i>Red Flag</i> (1883-1941) | Description of an execution | Piano | Difficult | ♩-138 (Brittle and nasty) |  |
| 11. "Smile Death" | Charlotte Mew (1870-1928) | Greeting death | Piano | Difficult | ♩-88 |  |

Women's Voices

Excerptability, linking: with the exception of 9. "Defiled Is My Name" which is linked by an *attacca* to the following 10. "Electrocution," the songs are not musically linked, nor does the meaning of one depend upon the meaning of another; therefore, any song may be easily excerpted, a fact which may be important since some of the songs are accessible to intermediate students.

Difficulty:

1. "Now Let No Charitable Hope": moderate; accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line.
2. "A Birthday": difficult; accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line, fast tempo, wide range.
3. "To My Dear and Loving Husband": difficult; accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line, fast tempo, wide intervallic leaps.
4. "To the Ladies": moderate; accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line.
5. "If Ever a Hapless Woman Had a Cause": difficult; difficult rhythm, intense vocal line, accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line, wide range.
6. "We Never Said Farewell": moderate; accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line, and, in fact, because of the difficult rhythm of the accompaniment, hinders the singer's ability to correctly sing the vocal line.
7. "The Stranger": difficult; accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line, some unaccompanied measures, difficult rhythm.
8. "What Inn is This": moderate; accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line, difficult rhythm.
9. "Defiled Is My Name": difficult; unaccompanied vocal line, difficult rhythm.

10. "Electrocution": difficult; accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line, wide range, vocally intense

11. "Smile Death": difficult; some unaccompanied vocal line, accompaniment offers little help to the vocal line, difficult rhythm.

Cyclic elements: none apparent.

Composer's comments :

"This cycle was commissioned by Joyce Mathis, and composed in Nantucket and New York during the autumn of 1975."³⁴

"The fact that Joyce Mathis is black and I'm not is important because other composers have used black female poets when composing for black female singers. I'm not saying that they are right or wrong, but I didn't want that said of me. Black poetry by women is not good for me because it is very subjective: it is about the personal circumstance of being black, and since I'm not black, I cannot empathize with the black condition. Black people have been through what we have never been through, and we can't begin to imagine it. It is impossible to put ourselves into the black circumstance and history, let alone write a song about it. I do know clearly what it is to be a woman; after all, half of my ancestors are women.

"I think the poems are all quite effective, the last one perhaps the most.

"I wrote this as a cycle, and I think it works as a cycle. People often extract the second, 'A Birthday,' and sing it by itself."³⁵

Women's Voices is available on a CRI recording.

³⁴Ned Rorem, Women's Voices (New York: Boosey & Hawkes, 1979), composer's notes.

³⁵Ned Rorem interview.

CHAPTER III

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The examination of the song cycles by Ned Rorem is summarized in the following manner: 1) text sources, 2) topic, 3) accompaniment, 4) excerptability, and 5) cyclic melody or motives. These groups have been further categorized into the following lists:

I. Text sources

- A. Cycles which have a single poet or author for the text source
- B. Cycles which have a variety of poets or authors for the text source

II. Topic

- A. Cycles which have a consistent theme
- B. Cycles which create a narrative,
- C. Cycles containing songs with non-related poetic themes

III. Accompaniment

- A. Cycles for which the accompaniment is piano alone
- B. Cycles for which the accompaniment is a small group of instruments
- C. Cycles for which the accompaniment is an orchestra

IV. Excerptability.

A. Cycles which are non-excerptable

B. Cycles which are excerptable

1) Easy individual songs

2) Moderate individual songs

3) Difficult individual songs

V. Cyclic melodies or motives

A. Cycles which do contain cyclic melodies or motives

B. Cycles which do not contain cyclic melodies or motives

I. Text Sources

A. Cycles which have a single poet or author as the source for the text

Ariel (Sylvia Plath)

Cycle of Holy Songs (Psalms-David)

Flight for Heaven (Robert Herrick)

Four Dialogues (Frank O'Hara)

Four Poems of Tennyson

Five Poems of Walt Whitman

Gloria

Hearing (Kenneth Koch)

King Midas (Howard Moss)

Last Poems of Wallace Stevens

Pilgrim Strangers (Walt Whitman)

The Santa Fe Songs (Witter Brynner)

Six Irish Poems (George Darley)

Some Trees (John Ashbery)

Three Poems of Capetanakis

Three Incantations from a Marionette Tale

(Charles Boultenhouse)

War Scenes (Walt Whitman)

B. Cycles which have a variety of poets or authors as the sources of the text

After Long Silence

From An Unknown Past

The Nantucket Songs

Poems of Love and the Rain

Poèmes pour la paix

Six Songs for High Voice

Sun

Women's Voices

II. Topic

A. Cycles which have a consistent theme

After Long Silence (love)

Cycle of Holy Songs (Psalms of praise)

Flight for Heaven (love)

Four Poems of Tennyson (lament for a lost love)

Gloria (Glory to God)

Pilgrim Strangers (war)

Poems of Love and the Rain

Poèmes pour la paix (peace)

Sun (the earth's star)

War Scenes (war)

Women's Voices (a woman's journey through
life)

B. Cycles which create a narrative

Four Dialogues (The meeting of a man and a woman who become infatuated with each other; they soon tire of each other and are eventually separated)

King Midas (The lament of King Midas for having obtained the Midas touch, his relationships with those close to him, and their reaction to the Midas touch)

Three Poems of Capetanakis (Cain's guilt for having killed Abel and his subsequent fear)

C. Cycles containing songs with non-related poetic themes

Ariel

Five Poems of Walt Whitman

From An Unknown Past

Hearing

Last Poems of Wallace Stevens

The Nantucket Songs

Six Irish Poems

Six Songs for High Voice

The Santa Fe Songs

Some Trees

Three Incantations from a Marionette Tale

III. Accompaniment

A. Cycles accompanied by orchestra

After Long Silence

Six Irish Poems (or piano reduction)

Sun (or piano reduction)

B. Cycles accompanied by a small group of instruments

Ariel (clarinet, piano)

Four Dialogues (two pianos)

Last Poems of Wallace Stevens (cello, piano)

The Santa Fe Songs (piano, violin, viola, cello)

C. Cycles accompanied by piano alone

Cycle of Holy Songs

Five Poems of Walt Whitman

Flight for Heaven

Four Poems of Tennyson

From An Unknown Past

Gloria (requires two singers)

Hearing

King Midas

The Nantucket Songs

Poems of Love and the Rain

Poèmes pour la paix

Some Trees (requires three singers)

Three Incantations from a Marionette Tale

Three Poems of Capetanakis

War Scenes

Women's Voices

IV. Excerptability,

A. Cycles which are non-excerptable

Four Dialogues

Gloria

Pilgrim Strangers

Some Trees

B. Cycles which are excerptable

1) Easy individual songs

After Long Silence: 2. "Bitter-Sweet," 4. "A Red, Red Rose," 8. "The Sick Rose," 9. "Vitae Summa Brevis"

Cycle of Holy Songs: "Psalm 130"

Five Poems of Walt Whitman: "Sometimes with One I Love," "Look Down Fair Moon," "Gliding O'er All"

Flight for Heaven: II. "Cherry-Ripe," III. "Upon Julia's Clothes," V. "Epitaph Upon a Child that Died," VI. "Another Epitaph," VII. "To the Willow Tree"

Four Poems of Tennyson: "Far-Far-Away," "The Sleeping Palace"

From An Unknown Past: 1. "The Lover in Winter Plaineth for the Spring," 2. "Hey Nonny Nol," 3. "My Blood So Red . . . (The Call)," 4. "Suspira," 5. "The Miracle," 6. "Tears"

King Midas: VI. "Address by Dionysus"

Last Poems of Wallace Stevens: "A Child Asleep in Its Own Life"

The Nantucket Songs: 3. "Nantucket," 4. "Song," 6. "Mother, I Cannot Mind My Wheel"

Poems of Love and the Rain: 4. "Love's Stricken 'Why'," 10. "Song for Lying In Bed During a Night Rain"

Poèmes pour la paix: 6. "Hymn of Peace"

The Santa Fe Songs: 3. "Any Other Time," 7. "El Musico," 12. "The Sowers"

Six Irish Poems: 2. "Robin's Cross"

Three Incantations from a Marionette Tale: I, II, III

Three Poems of Capetanakis: 1. "Abel," 3. "The Land of Fear"

2) Moderate individual songs

After Long Silence : 1. "After Long Silence," 3. "Mediocrity in Love Rejected," 5. "On Monsieur's Departure," 7. "The Darkling Thrush," 10. "After Great Pain"

Ariel: "Poppies in July," "Poppies in October"

Cycle of Holy Songs: "Psalm 142," "Psalm 148," "Psalm 150"

Five Poems of Walt Whitman: "Reconciliation," "Gods"

Flight for Heaven: I. "To Music to Becalm his Fever," IV. "To Daisies not to Shut so Soon," VIII. "Comfort to a Youth that has lost his Love," X. "To Anthea, who may command Him Anything"

Four Poems of Tennyson: "Ask Me No More," "Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal"

Hearing: I. "In Love With You," II. "Down at the Docks," III. "Poem," IV. "Spring," V. "Invitation"

King Midas: II. "The Queen's Song," III. "The Princess' Speech," VII. "The Princess' Song," VIII. "The King's Song," IX. "Dionysus' Song," X. "The King to the Princess at the River Bank"

Last Poems of Wallace Stevens: 4. "The Planet on the Table"

The Nantucket Songs: "Song"

Poems of Love and the Rain: 1. "Prologue from 'The Rain'," 2. "Stop All the Clocks," 3. "The Air Is the Only," 5. "The Apparition," 6. "Do I Love You"-Part I, 11. "In the Rain," 12. "Do I Love You"-Part II, 13. "The Apparition," 14. "Love's Stricken 'Why'," 15. "The Air is the Only," 17. "Epilogue from 'The Rain'"

Poèmes pour la paix: 1. "Lay," 2. "Ode," 3. "Sonnet I," 4. "Sonnet III," 5. "Sonnet"

The Santa Fe Songs: 1. "Santa Fe," 2. "Opus 101," 4. "Sonnet," 5. "Coming Down the Stairs," 8. "The Wintry Mind," 9. "Water-Hyacinths," 10. "Moving Leaves," 11. "Yes I Hear Them"

Six Irish Poems: 1. "Lay of the Forlorn," 3. "Chorus of Spirits," 4. "The Call of the Morning"

Sun: 3. "To Dawn," 7. "Sundown Lights" from *Specimin Days*

Three Poems of Capetanakis: 2. "Guilt"

War Scenes: 2. "Specimin Case" 3. "An Incident"

Women's Voices: 1. "Now Let No Charitable Hope," 4. "To the Ladies," 6. "We Never Said Said Farewell," 8. "What Inn Is This"

3) Difficult individual songs

Ariel: "Words," "The Hanging Man," "Lady Lazarus"

Hearing: I. "In Love With You" (sections 1 and 3), VI. "Hearing"

King Midas: I. "The King's Speech"

Last Poems of Wallace Stevens: 1. "Not Ideas but the Thing Itself," 2. "The River of Rivers in Connecticut," 5. "The Dove in Spring," 6. "Of Mere Being," 7. "A Clear Day and No Memories"

The Nantucket Songs: 2. "The Dance," 5. "Up-Hill," 6. "Of Mere Being," 7. "Fear of Death," 8. "Thoughts of a Young Girl," 9. "Ferry Me Across the Water," 10. "The Dancer"

Poems of Love and the Rain: 7. "In the Rain," 8. "Song for Lying In Bed During a Night Rain," 9. "Interlude," 16. "Stop All the Clocks"

The Santa Fe Songs: "He Never Knew"

Six Irish Poems: 5. "Rudnilda's Chant," 6. "The Sea Ritual"

Sun: 1. "To the Sun," 2. "Sun of the Sleepless," 4. "Day," 5. "Catafalque," 6. "Full Many a Glorious Morning (Sonnet XXXIII)," 8. "from What Can I Tell My Bones"

War Scenes: 1. "Nightbattle," 4. "Inauguration Ball," 5. "The Real War Will Never Get in the Books"

Women's Voices: 2. "A Birthday," 3. "To My Dear Husband," 5. "If Ever a Hapless Woman," 7. "The Stranger," 9. "Defiled Is My Name," 10. "Electrocution," 11. "Smile Death"

V. Cyclic melodies or motives

A. Cycles which contain cyclic melodies or motives

Cycle of Holy Songs

Poems of Love and the Rain

Hearing

Sun

B. Cycles which contain no cyclic melodies or motives

After Long Silence

Ariel

Five Poems of Walt Whitman

Flight for Heaven

Four Dialogues

Four Poems of Tennyson

From An Unknown Past

Gloria

King Midas

Last Poems of Wallace Stevens

The Nantucket Songs

Pilgrim Strangers

Poèmes pour la paix

Six Songs for High Voice

Some Trees

The Santa Fe Songs

Six Irish Poems

Three Incantations from a Marionette Tale

Three Poems of Capetanakis

War Scenes

Women's Voices

Conclusions

The following conclusions have been drawn from the summary of the examination of the song cycles:

1) The majority of the song cycles (seventeen) use a single poet for the source of the text while the texts for eight song cycles have been drawn from a variety of poets.

2) Eleven of the song cycles have a consistent poetic theme, three song cycles create a narrative, and eleven contain songs for which the poetic theme is not related.

3) The majority of the song cycles (sixteen) are accompanied by piano alone (with three of these requiring more than one singer); four cycles are accompanied by a small group of instruments (four or less instruments); and four are accompanied by orchestra; and one is unaccompanied.

4) The majority of the song cycles (twenty-one) contain individual songs which are excerptable, with four cycles being unexcerptable.

5) All of the cycles which are excerptable contain individual songs which vary in difficulty.

6) There are forty-eight individual songs in excerptable cycles which are easy enough to be used with beginning vocal students.

7) There are sixty-seven individual songs in excerptable cycles which are moderate in difficulty and could be used by intermediate vocal students.

8) There are forty-two individual songs in excerptable cycles which are difficult and should be used by advanced vocal students or professional singers.

9) The majority of the cycles (twenty-one) contain no apparent cyclic melody or melodic motive, with four containing a cyclic melody or melodic motive.

10) All of Ned Rorem's song cycles meet the criteria of the definition for song cycle given in The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians: "a composite form of vocal music consisting of a group of individually complete songs for solo or ensemble voices, with or without instrumental accompaniment. It may relate a series of events, or a series of impressions, or it may simply be a group of songs unified by mood."¹

11) All of Ned Rorem's song cycles meet the criteria of the definition for song cycle given by Wendell Dean Buckley in his dissertation, "The Solo Song Cycle: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Published Editions, with an Historical Survey": "... a composite of songs with texts of related thought and character, and designed by the composer to form a single artistic musical unit."²

12) Four of Ned Rorem's song cycles: Cycle of Holy Songs, Poems of Love and the Rain, Hearing, and Sun meet the criteria of the definition for song cycle given by Luise Eitel Peake "... the song cycle should, by recurrence or transformation of recognizable tonal patterns, be 'designed to form a musical entity.' "³

¹The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 6th ed., s.v. "Song Cycle," by Luise Eitel Peake.

²Wendell Dean Buckley, "The Solo Song Cycle: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Published Editions, With an Historical Survey," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Iowa, 1965), p.2.

³The Harvard Dictionary of Music and Musicians cited by Louise Eitel Peake, "The Song Cycle: A Preliminary Inquiry into the Beginnings of the Romantic Song Cycle and the Nature of an Art Form," (dissertation, Columbia University, 1968) pp. 3-4.

13) All of Ned Rorem's song cycles meet the criteria of the definition for song cycle given by Rorem. Rorem's definition states that a song cycle is a theatrical work in which the order of songs is significant.⁴

14) Based on the findings of this report, the most typical of Ned Rorem's song cycles has the following characteristics: a) it has a single poet or author as the source for the text; b) it has a consistent poetic theme or it creates a narrative (the meaning of the poetry of the individual songs is connected); c) it is accompanied by piano alone; d) it contains individual songs which are excerptable; e) it consists of individual songs which differ in degree of difficulty with some of the individual songs being moderate in difficulty; f) it will not contain any apparent cyclic interval, motive, or melody; g) it meets the requirements of the definition of song cycle given by The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, Wendell Dean Buckley's dissertation, "The Solo Song Cycle: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Published Editions, with an Historical Survey," and the composer's own definition of the *genre*.

15) Based on the criteria established above for the most typical of Ned Rorem's song cycles, the most typical of his song cycles are:

Flight for Heaven

Four Poems of Tennyson

King Midas

Three Poems of Capetanakis

War Scenes

It should be noted that one song cycle included in this group of typical Rorem song cycles Four Poems of Tennyson, as well as the cycle

⁴Ned Rorem interview.

Five Poems of Walt Whitman is not considered by the composer to be a song cycle because the songs were not written at the same time, and were, therefore, not conceived to "go together."⁵ It should also be noted that with only five of Ned Rorem's twenty-four published song cycles meeting the criteria of a typical Rorem song cycle, Rorem's contributions to the *genre* give credence to Buckley's statement that "the *genre* is anything but a rigid, stereotyped one."⁶

Recommendations

As with any study of music by a living composer, this study is incomplete. Ned Rorem continues to be an active composer whose works are not only among the best of American composers, but whose works are among the best of any living composer. As of this writing, according to the main office of Boosey and Hawkes, Rorem has a new song cycle, Three Calamus Poems, which is soon to be published. It is recommended, therefore, that any singer be aware of not only the song cycles discussed in this monograph, but of any new contributions to the *genre* by Ned Rorem.

This study has dealt with aspects of Rorem's song cycles which would be useful to a concert-artist or a teacher of voice. No effort has been made to examine the song cycles for unifying elements from a theoretical standpoint, except for those unifying elements of which an understanding is necessary in order for a vocalist to make an informed presentation of a song cycle. It is recommended, therefore, that a further

⁵Ibid.

⁶Buckley, p. 110.

investigation of the unifying musical devices in Ned Rorem's song cycles be made.

Rorem has said that "my idea of heaven is to write for voices, singularly and together in a piece called The Art of Song (like the Art of the Fugue) in forty-eight movements for four or five voices and piano, that would have solos, duets, trios, quartets, and quintets and for various combinations: two men, two women, one man with one woman, and so on. I haven't worked it out, yet; maybe twenty-four songs, maybe forty-eight to be done ideally on one program with every combination of voices possible out of those five: three women and two men . . . For texts, perhaps a history of American poetry from 1880 to 1980."⁷ Based on the quality of Rorem's significant creative output and his ability to accomplish the goals he sets for himself, it is recommended by this writer that anyone interested in vocal music eagerly anticipate this work.

⁷Ibid.

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VITA

Leon Austin Henry, Jr. was born on March 16, 1953, the son of Leon Austin Henry, Sr. and Modena Ray Henry, in Vicksburg, Mississippi, where he grew up on the family farm. After graduating from Warren Central High School, Vicksburg, Mississippi, he entered Belhaven College, Jackson, Mississippi. He received the Bachelor of Music from Belhaven College in August, 1975. He then entered Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and received the Master of Music degree in 1977. The following year he performed with Musicana Enterprises at Grand Canyon Lodge, North Rim, Arizona, and at Indian Harbour Beach, Florida. In 1979, he taught high school chorus at Clinton High School, Clinton, Mississippi. The following year, he returned to Louisiana State University to begin work on the Doctor of Musical Arts degree. From 1981-1984, he was employed as Instructor of Music at Gordon Junior College, Barnesville, Georgia. Since 1984, he has worked as a Teaching Assistant for the School of Music, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

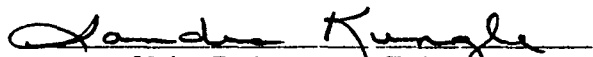
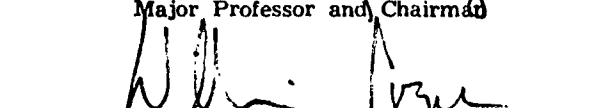
DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: Leon A. Henry, Jr.

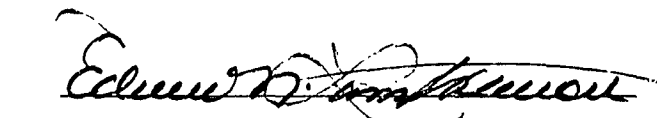
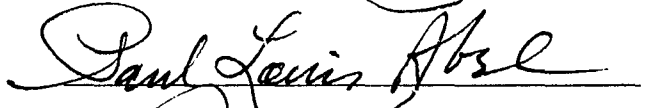
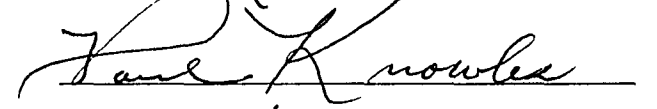
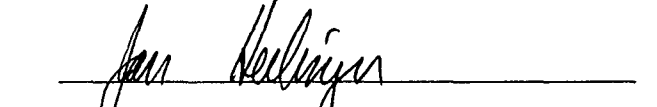

Major Field: Vocal Performance

Title of Dissertation: "The Song Cycles of Ned Rorem: A Technical Survey."

Approved:


Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

Date of Examination:

April 17, 1986