A Conductor's Guide to Alec Roth's "A Time to Dance"

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A CONDUCTOR’S GUIDE TO ALEC ROTH’S A TIME TO DANCE

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
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
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May 2019
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this monograph is to provide a comprehensive analysis and conductor’s guide for Alec Roth’s masterwork, *A Time to Dance*. This study will explore the origins of this work, provide rehearsal and performance considerations, and bring greater attention to its composer, Alec Roth. Compared to his English contemporaries, Alec Roth’s (b.1948) music is lesser-known within the British tradition. Roth composes for choir, orchestra, and musical theatre and is also well-known for his contributions to both the guitar and gamelan repertory. His music spans a variety of languages, voicings, orchestrations, and levels of difficulty, as he is also noted for his work with children’s choirs. Roth’s music has been performed by the choirs of St. Paul’s Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, The Sixteen, and Ex Cathedra with whom he premiered *A Time to Dance* in 2012.¹

*A Time to Dance* demonstrates a diverse poetic and musical landscape, celebrating the “times and seasons of human existence.”² This study will focus on textual and musical analyses of the work as well as performance consideration for the prospective conductor. It will also provide additional information on the life of the composer and the creation of the work. This paper will, in turn, inform future conductors and build a platform for Alec Roth and his music.

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INTRODUCTION

Need for This Study

Choral conductors and pedagogues are constantly searching for new, interesting repertoire, and I pose that directors are often drawn to modern music because of its innovative approach. *A Time to Dance* maintains a musical quality that many would consider traditional, from form, to voice leading, to tonicizations and the like, while incorporating modern elements: atonalities, vocal affects, unexpected metric shifts, and performance staging among others. This study will show that Roth’s work can be called “modern” while still being approachable for ensembles and audiences of all levels.

*A Time for Dance* is an intermediate-level small masterwork written for SATB soloists, SATB mixed choir, baroque orchestra, and auxiliary percussion. Choral and instrumental conductors alike will find this piece to be a true collaborative effort as it highlights all members of the ensemble equitably. Though the entire work is connected by a few central themes, each movement is defined by its own poetry, texture, and character. This study will discuss the work as a whole, but prospective conductors should also feel encouraged to excerpt a movement (or movements) when appropriate.

Though its inaugural performance with Ex Cathedra took place in 2012, the composer only knows of two other performances to date. An investigation into Roth’s melodic and harmonic characteristics, treatment of text, and integration of contemporary nuance will provide context for his compositional style and will prove its accessibility for high school, collegiate, or

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3 Roth, “Biography.”
4 Roth, interview.
community ensembles. It is hoped that this research inspires others to perform this piece that simultaneously embraces the past and reaches toward the future.

**Delimitations**

While the text for *A Time to Dance* comes from a variety of sources and poets, it is not the intent of this research to analyze, interpret, or elaborate on the general contributions of said authors.

Suggestions and recommendations for rehearsal strategies and performance practice will be reserved for vocal and choral techniques only. There will be no discussion on appropriate methods for baroque orchestra or auxiliary percussion. Any mention of instrumental activity will be limited to general interpretation, articulation, dynamic, and compositional style.

Finally, this research is solely focused on the musical and textual analyses and interpretation of Roth’s masterwork. While his influences for this work will be discussed (Bach’s *Magnificat*, literary symbolism, and dance styles), they will only be mentioned as a reference. In addition, no correlation will be drawn between *A Time to Dance* and the literal act of dance.

**Methodology**

For this study, I have utilized two research methodologies: historical and qualitative. These data are based on published scholarship and other previous findings as well as a direct interview with the composer. These sources have been located primarily through libraries and a variety of electronic journals.

*A Time to Dance* was commissioned to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Summer Music Society of Dorset and was sourced from a variety of literary material. Alec Roth does draw additional influences from earlier composers, dance styles, and the spiritual correlation
between the times and seasons of human existence.\(^5\) After a biographical chapter on Alec Roth, this document will be divided into four additional chapters: Genesis (context and influence), Analysis of Text, Analysis of Music, and Rehearsal Considerations.

Both the Biographical and Genesis chapters are based on a series of previously documented interviews with the composer, his personal (self-administered) website, and a one-on-one interview conducted by the author. Despite Roth’s significant compositional output, there is little existing scholarship. The few interviews available are through English-based media and include authors and publicists from *Seen and Heard International*, *Presto Classical*, and *The Journal*. Additional biographical material comes from Roth’s own, self-managed website and the information included with the *A Time to Dance* discography. Through the interview with Alec Roth, details regarding the commissioners’ intent for the work as well as Roth’s own relationship with the piece have been attained.

Chapter Three focuses on the analysis of the texts chosen for this work. A thorough understanding of text is integral to the performance of a choral work. A critical examination of each text will be made according to its larger work (if applicable), author, poetic and literary devices, and personal interpretations.

The opening processional is the only movement to implore biblical text: “To everything there is a season” (Book of Ecclesiastes). It is also the only movement that mentions all four of this work’s central themes: time, season, love, and dance. Aside from this first movement, there are 28 separate, short movements with texts by William Blake, Emily Brontë, Emily Dickinson, 

\(^5\) John Quinn, “Birmingham Dances to Alec Roth’s tune.”
John Donne, Christina Rosetti and other poets less familiar. Roth purposefully chose texts for which he has found no musical settings.

Chapter Four contains a musical analysis of *A Time to Dance*, which consists of a detailed explanation of form, melodic and harmonic content, sonority, and text association. The analysis of each movement is created upon the Julius Herford method of bar analysis.

Chapter Five includes practical considerations for the conductor/educator intending to prepare and perform *A Time to Dance*. The focus of this chapter is on teaching effectiveness in regard to this work’s most challenging sections. Strategies will also be provided that may encourage more conductors to consider this lesser-known work.

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6 John Quinn, “Birmingham Dances to Alec Roth’s tune.”
CHAPTER 1
BIOGRAPHY OF ALEC ROTH

Alec Roth is an artist and composer who has achieved recognition throughout England and Europe. His music has been commissioned for prestigious events, and has been performed by globally recognized ensembles.

Alec Roth was born near Manchester, England in 1948 to non-musical parents of German and Irish decent. Despite his family’s background, he developed an interest in music and began playing piano at age seven. In an interview with Roth, he stated that he was of the generation where not too many people would pursue education. In turn, he was the first member of his family to attend grammar school and, eventually, university. Since his parents were not convinced that a career in music was possible, he was encouraged to pursue science in the interim.8

Roth graduated from the University of Nottingham with a degree in science but continued to sing in choirs, play in orchestras, and compose. After ten years of music as a hobby, he began his formal musical training in 1976. With his parents’ support, he eventually earned his doctorate from the University of Durham, having studied with Diego Masson and Rafael Kubelik. In addition to conducting, Roth took interest in the Javanese gamelan and studied at the Academy of Indonesian Performing Arts (ASKI) in Surakarta, Central Java. His performance and scholarship were well received, and from 1986 to 1989, Roth was awarded the prestigious Collard Fellowship.9

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His appointments to date include: Founder and Artistic Director of the Royal Festival Hall Gamelan Program and South Bank Gamelan Players (1987-91); Music Director of the Baylis Program at English National Opera (1988-93); Composer in Association at Opera North (1994-96); and Lecturer in Music at the University of Edinburgh (2002-03). He now focuses on composition and infers, “the urge to write new tunes at the piano rather than practice scales and arpeggios is strong.”

Alec Roth’s overall body of work includes over fifty commissioned works for orchestra, choir, solo voice, musical theatre, and gamelan. Among his most adventurous compositions are Shakespeare's *The Tempest* with gamelan (Vancouver 1989); *Gretel and Hansel* (1988), a children’s opera; *The Big Wash Cycle* (1994); *All Summer in a Day* (1996), a musical drama for children; and four commissions for the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields: *Departure of the Queen of Sheba* (1999), *Nocturne* (2000), *Concertino Piccolo* (2006), and Concerto for Guitar and String Orchestra (2010). In 2012, Roth premiered his *Old Earth*, a musical theatre work written for actor, Alan Howard, and The Sixteen (Harry Christophers, conductor). His anthem, *Jubilate*, was commissioned by the Musicians Benevolent fund for the Festival of St. Cecilia in the fall of the same year. Its inaugural performance was at St. Paul’s Cathedral by the combined Choirs of St. Paul’s, Westminster Abbey, and Westminster Cathedral.

Roth may be best known for his collaboration with the Indian poet, Vikram Seth. Together, they have written several works including the *California Songbook, Arion and the Dolphin, Earth and Sky* for children’s chorus (BBC commission for the Proms in 2000),

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10 Roth, “Biography.”
11 Whetstone, “Alec Roth returns to Brickburn Music.”
12 Roth, “Biography.”
numerous songs and song-cycles, and *The Rivered Earth*, a sequence of four major works written between 2006 and 2009.

*The Rivered Earth* was co-commissioned by the Salisbury, Chelsea, and Lichfield Festivals in collaboration with violinist Philippe Honoré. The development of this work spanned three years, which resulted in individual debut performances with different ensembles. The first of the set, *Songs in Time of War*, was written for tenor, Mark Padmore, violin, harp, and guitar. The second, *Shared Ground*, was a pair of works written specifically for Ex Cathedra and solo violin. The third, *The Traveller*, was an oratorio on the theme of the “Ages of Man” for violin, tenor, choir, children’s choir, and orchestra (Britten Sinfonia), and received its first performance in Salisbury Cathedral in May 2008. The last of the four, *Seven Elements*, was for tenor, James Gilchrist, and pianist, Rustem Hayroudinoff. All four works were first performed together over the course of two days at the “Music and Beyond Festival” in Ottawa in 2012.\(^\text{13}\)

*A Time to Dance* was commissioned to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Summer Music Society of Dorset and was first performed on June 9, 2012 by Ex Cathedra, conducted by Jeffrey Skidmore. The intent of this commission was to provide a large-scale, celebratory work, reflecting the passage of time and fifty years of music-making.\(^\text{14}\)

\(^\text{13}\) Roth, “Biography.”

CHAPTER 2
A TIME TO DANCE GENESIS

A Time to Dance is a 60-minute work composed for mixed choir, SATB soloists, baroque orchestra, and auxiliary percussion. Though Roth draws inspiration from a variety of sources (mainly text and poetic material), the specific circumstances surrounding the commission became his heaviest influence.\footnote{Roth, interview.}

A Time to Dance came to fruition, in part, through the auspices of Lady Dione Digby and the Summer Music Society of Dorset (SMSD). The commission began with Digby, the founder of the SMSD, in the summer of 2009, and spanning three years of development, the debut performance took place in 2012 in Sherbourne Abbey. The intent of this commission was to celebrate the 50\textsuperscript{th} anniversary of the SMSD, a festival that presents “a series of six or seven concerts over the summer months in various venues (stately homes, churches, civic halls) throughout the county of Dorset.”\footnote{Ibid.} It was founded by Digby in 1963 and run by her ever since.\footnote{The Summer Music Society of Dorset was removed from the Charity Commission registry in 2013 for “ceasing to exist.”}

Though Roth considers Digby to be a “model commissioner,”\footnote{Roth, interview.} she did have several requirements of his composition, first and foremost to be celebratory in nature and reflect 50 years of accomplishment. Aside from the over-arching character of the piece, there were several other decisions by Digby which played an integral role in the development of Roth’s work.
Compositional Influence

“In 49 years of concert planning, the one work which Lady Digby had always wanted to programme but never succeeded in doing was the *Magnificat* of J. S. Bach.” The appeal of Bach’s work became the impetus of many of Roth’s compositional decisions. His score includes exactly the same forces as the Bach *Magnificat*: 2 flutes, 2 oboes (doubling oboe d’amore), 3 trumpets in D (a “trinity” of trumpets), continuo organ, and strings. One small exception is Roth’s very elaborate use of auxiliary percussion instead of Bach’s original scoring for timpani. He uses a pair of handbells to reflect the passing of time and an array of unpitched instruments to “add a dash of color where appropriate (such as the obbligato parts for desk bell, washboard, and dinner gong in No 16).” Another instrumental consideration was the limited range of the period, baroque trumpets. Roth later admitted that he found composing for valve-less trumpets a “fascinating challenge.” Though the instrumentation may be similar, the work is designed to be performed on either period or modern instruments. Since the premiere was to be performed alongside the *Magnificat*, the instrumentation became a requirement.

Aside from instrumentation, the character of Bach’s music and his compositional style is also prevalent throughout Roth’s work. *Magnificat* is essentially joyful and celebratory in character while still containing many pauses along the way for “musical poetry and moments of reflection.” Roth also states, “I love how Bach’s music dances,” and although Roth does not explicitly make parallels with current dance forms, he was inspired by Bach’s music “founded on

19 Roth, interview.
20 John Quinn, “Birmingham Dances to Alec Roth’s tune.”
21 Ibid.
22 Ibid.
23 Ibid.
24 Ibid.
the spirit, forms, and rhythms of the dances popular in [his] day.” Roth was heavily inspired by the qualities of Bach’s work, however, there is very little specific musical influence represented beyond the orchestration and overall affect.

In constructing this work, Roth was especially drawn to the practices of Shakespeare and the Globe Theatre. In the Shakespeare tradition, each performance concludes with a celebratory jig or after-dance, “a wonderful way of bringing performers and audiences together in a communal letting-down-of-the-hair.” Though Roth’s “AfterDance” is set to the poetry of Shakespeare’s contemporary, John Davies, it serves the same function, allowing both the singers and the audience the opportunity to actually dance.

In the work’s infancy, Lady Digby suggested two texts to be the foundation of the work: (1) a book of poems by the 16th century writer Thomas Wyatt (who is buried in Sherbourne Abbey); and (2) Ecclesiastes 3: 1-3, 5-8, 4 (Digby’s favorite liturgical text). Once a title and theme had been determined, Roth began his process with over 100 poems that eventually became twenty-nine. According to Roth, the choices in text were not necessarily made by their appropriateness alone but by how they “speak to each other…I followed my usual practice of taking the poems for a walk, listening to their melodies and rhythms, and learning how they might dance.”

A Time to Dance became an amalgamation of texts collected from politicians, poets, playwrights, and the Bible.

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25 John Quinn, “Birmingham Dances to Alec Roth’s tune.”
26 Alec Roth, “Notes.”
27 Ibid.
Construction and Performance Expectations

As for the construction of the work, it was decided that *A Time to Dance* should be on a large enough scale to be appropriate for the size and seating capacity of Sherbourne Abbey. That considered, it was the suggestion of Alec Roth to include his long-time colleague, Jeffrey Skidmore, and his ensemble, Ex Cathedra. Because of their “very strong working relationship,” Roth was able to “hear the performers [he] was writing for in the venue [he] was writing for a good two years before the date of the premiere. The experience fed directly into the compositional process, in that it gave me ideas about how to use the performers in this particular space to the best advantage.”

One very striking characteristic of *A Time to Dance* is the personification of each seasonal section by a single, solo voice: Spring (soprano), Summer (Tenor), Autumn (Mezzo-soprano/counter-tenor), and Winter (bass-baritone). The soloists selected for this premiere heavily influenced the trajectory of this work: Grace Davidson (soprano), Samuel Boden (tenor), Matthew Venner (countertenor), and Greg Skidmore (bass). Roth was committed to assigning solo voices that follow a progression from high/light (soprano; tenor) to low/dark (alto/bass) as the year progresses from Spring to Winter. Not only was it important to consider the timbre of the voice and its connection to each season, but it was also crucial to reflect the perceived musical personality of each season. “For example, the tenor Samuel Boden has great vocal agility, the ability to get text across clearly, and a rare gift for comedy.”

Throughout its development, Roth did not lose sight of his original intent and philosophy. He hoped to create a piece that was challenging yet enjoyable. Within that context, it was

28 Roth, interview.
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid.
important to Roth that this work be aimed at good amateur choirs that could find it “useful and practical to program. (I ensured that the orchestral parts could be played on either modern or “period” instruments),” 31 Roth has met his goal of creating a work that is entertaining and thought-provoking for both performers and audiences alike.

31 Roth, interview.
CHAPTER 3
A TIME TO DANCE: ANALYSIS OF TEXT

One of the many unique features of *A Time to Dance* is the kaleidoscope of texts and
source material to which Alec Roth draws his inspiration. The authors and poets in this chapter
include: William Blake, Emily Brontë, Emily Dickinson, and John Donne as well as other
selected poets that are deemed “unfamiliar,” Ovid and Aphra Behn to name a few.32 Alec Roth
chose twenty-nine different texts, mostly poems, “from over 100 options,” claiming that he had
to listen to their rhythms and “learn how they might dance.”33 Many of Roth’s chosen texts are
excerpted from larger works. These omissions of the original works are highlighted in italic font.

**Procesional: Times and Seasons**

The text for the opening Processional is excerpted from the Bible and the Book of
Ecclesiastes 3: 1-3, 5-8, 4 (King James version, 1611). It is the only sacred text employed and
refers directly to the work’s main overarching themes. Roth’s setting of this movement reflects a
minimalist approach as each stanza begins with the repetitive, “A time to…” The last verse
concludes with the words from which *A Time to Dance* takes its title. 34

**Prologue: Sunrise**

I. Out of the wood

The entire opening Prologue is set to the words of Edward Thomas (1878-1917), perhaps
best known for introducing a modern sensibility to the Victorian and Gregorian movements of

32 Alec Roth, “Notes,” *Alec Roth- A Time to Dance*, Hyperion Records, 2016, accessed June 16,
33 Ibid.
34 John Quinn, “Birmingham Dances to Alec Roth’s tune,” *Seen and Heard International*,
http://seenandheard-international.com/2012/10/birmingham-dances-to-alec-roths-tune/
the early twentieth century. The opening bass recitative, “Out of the wood,” is excerpted from Thomas’ larger work, the *Cock-crow*, and is considered a decasyllabic poem in rhyming couplets. Each verse consists of ten syllables that rhyme in consecutive pairs. Thomas’ original poem extends for two additional verses, making eight in total. The two verses omitted from the recitative are notated in italics:

```
Out of the wood of thoughts that grows by night
  To be cut down by the sharp axe of light,—
Out of the night, two cocks together crow,
  Cleaving the darkness with a silver blow:
And bright before my eyes twin trumpeters stand,
  Heralds of splendour, one at either hand,
  *Each facing each as in a coat of arms:*
*The milkers lace their boots up at the farms.*
```

II. Rise up

Using Edward Thomas’ poetry as the basis for the Prologue gives this entire opening a forward trajectory. Taken from Thomas’ *The Trumpet*, this work is used in its entirety and demonstrates a mixture of poetic forms: the Ballad (ABAB, ABCB) and the Petrarchan Sonnet (ABBA).37

Literary scholarship and numerous critics, including Jeremy Hooker and J. P. Ward, have mentioned a few principal themes found throughout Thomas’ poetry, one being the presence of war and its effect on the individual.39 Though this particular poem speaks of the trumpet, the

37 The Petrarchan Sonnet is a sonnet form not developed by Petrarch himself but a variety of Renaissance poets. The original Italian sonnet form divides the poem’s 14 lines into two parts, the first part being an octave and the second being a sestet. The traditional rhyme scheme is ABBA.
38 Ibid.
“dreams of men,” and the “old wars,” the heart of its central theme focuses on optimism and a prosperous future.

**Part I: Spring Morning**

**III. Awake**

The first “seasonal” section of *A Time to Dance* opens with the poetry of Robert Seymour Bridges (1844-1930). Beginning his career as a “Victorian classicist,” Bridges’ work was later influenced by World War I and the wounding of his son, Edward. Research suggests that many of his compositions were intended for readers living through times of war.40

Movement three, “Awake,” is taken from a larger work, *Awake, my heart*, a poem that consists of twenty verses separated into five equal stanzas. Bridges composed the first stanza in mono-rhyme prose (all four lines rhyme) and subsequent stanzas in two-verse couplets.41 Roth only uses the first and fourth stanzas, omitting the lines that speak specifically of a female lover. The excerpted verses found in “Awake” encourage love and light, despite darkness and depression:

Awake, my heart, to be lov’d, awake, awake!
The darkness silvers away, the morn doth break,
It leaps in the sky: unrisen lustres slake
The o’ertaken moon. Awake, o heart, awake!

She, too, that loveth awaketh and hopes for thee;
Her eyes already have sped the shades that flee,
Already they watch the path thy feet shall take:
Awake, O heart to be lov’d, awake, awake!

And if thou tarry from her, - if this could be, -
She cometh herself, O heart, to be lov’d, to thee;
For thee would unasham’d herself forsake:

41 Robert Lee Brewer, “List of 86 Poetic Forms for Poets.”
Awake to be lov’d, my heart, awake, awake!
Awake! The land is scatter’d with light, and see,
Uncanopied sleep is flying from field and tree;
And blossoming boughs of April in laughter shake:
Awake, O heart, to be lov’d awake, awake!

Lo, all things wake and tarry and look for thee:
She looketh and saith, “O sun, now bring him to me.
Come, more ador’d, O ador’d, for his coming’s sake,
And awake, my heart, to be lov’d, awake, awake!

IV. Infant Joy

The movement to follow is based on the poetry of William Blake (1757-1827). “Infant Joy” is a free-verse poem written as an ode; addressing a particular person of subject. Alec Roth uses Blake’s work in its entirety and assigns the role of “Joy” to the soprano soloist. The poem is structured as a conversation between “Joy” and an unnamed other, differentiating the two by using quotations when “Joy” speaks.

In his Life of William Blake (1863), his biographer Alexander Gilchrist wrote, “[Blake] neither wrote nor drew for the many…rather for children and angels; himself ‘a divine child,’ whose playthings were sun, moon, and stars, the heavens and the earth.” Alec Roth conveys the playfulness of William Blake by employing metric shifts, register changes, and specific articulations to support this energetic, adolescent text.

V. Dancing on the hill-tops

Christina Rossetti (1830-1894) has often been called the greatest Victorian female poet, but her poetry is increasingly being recognized as among the most beautiful and innovative of
the period by either sex. Alec Roth excerpts ten (of her original fourteen) verses, omitting the four central verses (in italics):

Dancing on the hill-tops,
Singing in the valleys,
Laughing with the echoes,
Merry little Alice.

*Playing games with lambkins*
*In the flowering valleys,*
*Gathering pretty posies,*
*Helpful little Alice.*

If her father's cottage
Turned into a palace,
And he owned the hill-tops
And the flowering valleys,
She'd be none the happier,
Happy little Alice.

Each verse consists of six syllables with the exception of the penultimate verse of each four-line stanza, consisting of seven. This soprano aria speaks of a girl, Alice, who, as the title suggests, spends her time “dancing on the hill-tops” and imagining a fairy-tale life.

**VI. Dance there**

The following choral movement is set to the text of William Butler Yeats (1865-1939), or more affectionately known as “W.B.” Like many authors and laureates, Yeats’ body of work follows the progression of his personal life. His latter compositions often focus on reflection and his awareness of old age.

The source material for this poem is taken from two Yeats works: *To a child dancing upon the shore* and *To a child dancing in the wind.* Roth combines the first eight verses of

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Shore with the last six verses of Wind. Both pieces are written as Shakespearean Sonnets, following a rhyme scheme of: ABAB, CDCD.\(^{46}\)

**VII. Nothing is so beautiful**

Alec Roth set much of his music to texts of unknown or unrecognized authors. Though often regarded as one of the “greatest Victorian poets,” Gerard Manley Hopkins’ (1844-1889) work was never published during his lifetime and did not come to be recognized until after World War 1.\(^{47}\)

“Nothing is so beautiful” is excerpted from the larger work, Spring, and is structured as an octave (eight-verse) and sestet (six-verse) poem. Hopkins’ work is pastoral in language and speaks to the beauty of the season. While his original poem includes a mixture of two-verse couplets and alternating, ABAB rhyme schemes, Roth only includes four of the original fourteen verses:

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Nothing is so beautiful as Spring –
When weeds, in wheels, shoot long and lovely and lush;
Thrush’s eggs look little low heavens, and thrush
Through the echoing timber does so rinse and wring
The ear, it strikes like lightnings to hear him sing;
The glassy peartree leaves and blooms, they brush
The descending blue; that blue is all in a rush
With richness; the racing lambs too have fair their fling.

What is all this juice and all this joy?
A strain of the earth’s sweet being in the beginning
In Eden garden. – Have, get, before it cloy,
Before it cloud, Christ, lord, and sour with sinning,
Innocent mind and Mayday in girl and boy,
Most, O maid’s child, thy choice and worthy the winning.\(^{48}\)
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\(^{46}\) Robert Lee Brewer, “List of 86 Poetic Forms for Poets.”


VIII. Let them Love

Roth sets the final movement of Part 1 to anonymous poetry from *Pervigillum Veneris*, or *The Vigil of Venus*, lines 1-6. The original *Pervigillum* is thought to date from the fourth century and is often attributed to Tiberianus, a poet often associated with utilizing metrical stress patterns rather than the usual “quantitative arrangement of long and short syllables.”

“Let them Love” is a free-verse translation of the original Latin by Alec Roth himself. His interpretation of this text correlates the attributes of spring with that of courtship and love.

Part II: Summer Noon

IX. In summer’s heat

English poet, Christopher Marlow (1564-1593), began his career translating the writings of Roman poets, Ovid (43B.C.- 17A.D.) and Lucan (39A.D.- 65A.D.). The early Latin poets composed in an elegiac meter: a hexameter line followed by a pentameter, however, instead of the elegiac couplet, Marlow substituted the rhymed pentameter couplet.

There are forty-eight poems in the collection of *Ovid Elegies*, and the provocative “In summer’s heat” comes from his *Fifth Elegy*. Marlow took this ancient Latin text and created a “decasyllable;” a poem where each verse is comprised of ten syllables. Paired with a “Habanera” dance rhythm, Roth creates a seductive tenor aria where the climax of the text aligns

51 Robert Lee Brewer, “List of 86 Poetic Forms for Poets.”
with climax of the melody: “How smooth a belly under her waist saw I? How large a leg, and what a lusty thigh?”  

X. A something

Following the sultry tenor aria, “A something” takes a less-literal, but equally intimate, approach to the “heat” of summer. Composed by Emily Dickinson (1830-1886), this poem utilizes “elliptical language for expressing what was possible but not yet realized.” Compared to Marlow’s aforementioned translation, Dickinson’s work speaks more to the senses and follows a very specific poetic form: an AAB CCB rhyme scheme known as a rhupunt. Though her poem (below) is made up of eleven tercets (three verses that make up one stanza), Alec Roth only excerpts the first two:

A something in a summer’s day,
As slow her flambeaux burn away,
Which solemnizes me.

A something in a summer’s noon,
An azure depth, a wordless tune,
Transcending ecstasy.

And still within a summer’s night
A something so transporting bright,
I clap my hands to see;

Then veil my too inspecting face,
Lest such a subtle, shimmering grace
Flutter too far for me.

The wizard-fingers never rest,
The purple brook within the breast
Still chafes its narrow bed;

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54 Robert Lee Brewer, “List of 86 Poetic Forms for Poets.”
Still rears the East her amber flag,
Guides still the sun along the crag
  His caravan of red,

Like Flowers that heard the tale of dews,
But never deemed the dripping prize
  Awaited their low brows;

Or bees, that thought the summer’s name
  Some rumor of delirium
No summer could for them;

Or Artic creature, dimly stirred
By tropic hint,- some travelled bird
  Imported to the wood;

Or wind’s bright signal to the ear,
Making that homely and severe,
  Contented, known, before

The heaven unexpected came,
To lives that thought their worshipping
  A too presumptuous psalm.\(^55\)

XI. Thirsty Fly

Movement “XI. Thirsty Fly” functions as another tenor aria and comes entirely from the literary work, *On a fly drinking out of his cup*, by William Oldys (1696-1761). His poem consists of twelve verses, each seven syllables in length, divided into six rhyming couplets. Oldys writes from the perspective of the speaker to the fly; offering his “cup” to the insect and encouraging a curious and fruitful life, however short.

An English poet, Oldys was known for being a bibliographer and antiquarian (a person who studies and collects antiques).\(^56\) His body of work follows his extraordinary history: the son

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of a chancellor, an appointment to literary secretary to Earl Mortimer in 1738, and imprisonment in 1751.

XII. Little Fly

“Little Fly” is Alec Roth’s second setting of poetry by William Blake, as previously seen in “Infant Joy.” This choral movement is the impetus in bringing Part II to a close with texts that speak of closure: “brushed away,” “and the want of thought is death,” and “If I live or if I die.” The perspective is still from the speaker to the fly, however, the full choir now functions as “the speaker,” giving this movement a slightly different connotation.

Though Roth uses Blake’s text in its entirety, he gives the poem a new identity by renaming the movement from the original The Fly. Its structure is simple: Ballad form with an ABCB rhyme scheme divided into five quatrains, a stanza consisting of four verses.

XIII. Come, let us go

Becoming recognized in the twentieth century as one of the “most accomplished nondramatic poets of his age,” Robert Herrick (1591-1674) may be best known for his poetic lyricism and use of “obscenities.”57 Research suggests, however, that Herrick may have also been considered a “minor” poet and, as a consequence, neglected or underestimated by scholars.

“Come let us go” is excerpted from Herrick’s much larger work, Corinna’s going a-Maying, and speaks of young love with the ingénue, Corinna. A correlation must be made between this movement and the earlier “In summer’s heat” as the character who peaks that

musical climax is also “Corinna.” Of the seventy total verses, Alec Roth only sets music to three rhyming couplets, verses 57-62:

Get up, get up for shame, the Blooming Morne
Upon her wings presents the god unshorne.
See how Aurora throwes her faire
Fresh-quilted colours through the aire:
Get up, sweet-Slug-a-bed, and see
The Dew-bespangling Herbe and Tree.
Each Flower has wept, and bow'd toward the East,
Above an houre since; yet you not drest,
Nay! not so much as out of bed?
When all the Birds have Mattens seyd,
And sung their thankful Hymnes: 'tis sin,
Nay, profanation to keep in,
When as a thousand Virgins on this day,
Spring, sooner than the Lark, to fetch in May.

Rise; and put on your Foliage, and be seen
To come forth, like the Spring-time, fresh and greene;
And sweet as Flora. Take no care
For Jewels for your Gowne, or Haire:
Feare not; the leaves will strew
Gemms in abundance upon you:
Besides, the childhood of the Day has kept,
Against you come, some Orient Pearls unwept:
Come, and receive them while the light
Hangs on the Dew-locks of the night:
And Titan on the Eastern hill
Retires himselfe, or else stands still
Till you come forth. Wash, dresse, be briefe in praying:
Few Beads are best, when once we goe a Maying.

Come, my Corinna, come; and comming, marke
How each field turns a street; each street a Parke
Made green, and trimm'd with trees: see how
Devotion gives each House a Bough,
Or Branch: Each Porch, each doore, ere this,
An Arke a Tabernacle is
Made up of white-thorn neatly enterwove;
As if here were those cooler shades of love.
Can such delights be in the street,
And open fields, and we not see't?
Come, we'll abroad; and let's obey
The Proclamation made for May:
And sin no more, as we have done, by staying;
But my Corinna, come, let's goe a Maying.

There's not a budding Boy, or Girle, this day,
But is got up, and gone to bring in May.
A deale of Youth, ere this, is come
Back, and with White-thorn laden home.
Some have dispatcht their Cakes and Creame,
Before that we have left to dreame:
And some have wept, and woo'd, and plighted Troth,
And chose their Priest, ere we can cast off sloth:
Many a green-gown has been given;
Many a kisse, both odde and even:
Many a glance too has been sent
From out the eye, Loves Firmament:
Many a jest told of the Keyes betraying
This night, and Locks pickt, yet w'are not a Maying.

Come, let us goe, while we are in our prime;
And take the harmlesse follie of the time.
We shall grow old apace, and die
Before we know our liberty.
Our life is short; and our dayes run
As fast away as do's the Sunne:
And as a vapour, or a drop of raine
Once lost, can ne'r be found againe:
So when or you or I are made
A fable, song, or fleeting shade;
All love, all liking, all delight
Lies drown'd with us in endlessse night.
Then while time serves, and we are but decaying;
Come, my Corinna, come, let's goe a Maying.58

XIV. Give all the love

This closing movement of Part II is set to the text of Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), a New England preacher, lecturer, poet, and philosopher who is often considered one of the “most influential writers and thinkers of the nineteenth century in the United States.”59 Though

58 Ibid.
Emerson was known for this contribution to sacred mythology and the metaphysical, he was also the first major American author to write seriously about Asian and Middle Eastern works. “He not only gave countless readers their first exposure to non-Western modes of thinking, but he also shaped the way subsequent generations of American writers and thinkers approached the vast cultural resources of Asia and the Middle East.”

Emerson was a pioneer of what is now called “multiculturalism.”

What makes this poem unique is its stray from the traditional poetic form. There are elements and influence of free-verse, couplet, and Ballad forms but with little consistency. Of the forty-nine verses, Roth uses eight: verses 1-2 and verses 7-12. As noted below, Emerson draws on his experience in mythology and the Middle East with texts, “half-gods” and “Free as an Arab of thy beloved:”

Give all to love;
Obey thy heart;

*Friends, kindred, days,*

*Estate, good-fame,*

*Plans, credit and the Muse,—*

*Nothing refuse.*

*T is a brave master;
Let it have scope:

*Follow it utterly,*

*Hope beyond hope:*

*High and more high*

*It dives into noon,*

*With wing unspent,*

*Untold intent:*

*But it is a god,*

*Knows its own path*

*And the outlets of the sky.*

*It was never for the mean;*

*It requireth courage stout.*

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60 Ibid.
Souls above doubt,
Valor unbending,
It will reward,—
They shall return
More than they were,
And ever ascending.

Leave all for love;
Yet, hear me, yet,
One word more thy heart behoved,
One pulse more of firm endeavor,—
Keep thee to-day,
To-morrow, forever,
Free as an Arab
Of thy beloved.

Cling with life to the maid;
But when the surprise,
First vague shadow of surmise
Flits across her bosom young,
Of a joy apart from thee,
Free be she, fancy-free;
Nor thou detain her vesture’s hem,
Nor the palest rose she flung
From her summer diadem.

Though thou loved her as thyself,
As a self of purer clay,
Though her parting dims the day,
Stealing grace from all alive;
Heartily know,
When half-gods go,
The gods arrive.61

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61 “Ralph Waldo Emerson,” Poetry Foundation.
Part III: Autumn Evening

XV. O Autumn

Representing “autumn,” Part III begins with the alto soloist and a brief aria set, again, to the poetry of William Blake. Roth’s “O Autumn” is excerpted from Blake’s larger work, To Autumn, the third poem in a series of four that, by design, follows the seasonal calendar.

To Autumn functions as spring’s antithesis, “the arrival of the killjoy or prophet of doom.” Blake depicts autumn as the polar opposite of summer: dark, brooding, “primal.” From the beginning of the second stanza to the middle of the third, Blake speaks as “autumn” describing the previous summer: a female who has opened her beautiful bud, “love rushing through thrilling veins,” flourished bright cheeks, breaking into song, her head in the clouds, fruit is bore among joy. Compared to summer, the forthcoming autumn is “stain’d with the blood of the grape” and seeks “rest.” As the poem ends, autumn must retreat into the “bleak hills” to survive the forthcoming “brutality of winter.”

Alec Roth only sets the first five verses to music, omitting “Sing now the lusty song of fruits and flowers.” The complete poem is found below:

O Autumn, laden with fruit, and stained
With the blood of the grape, pass not, but sit
Beneath my shady roof; there thou mayst rest,
And tune thy jolly voice to my fresh pipe,
And all the daughters of the year shall dance!
Sing now the lusty song of fruits and flowers.

“The narrow bud opens her beauties to

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63 Ibid.
64 Ibid.
The sun, and love runs in her thrilling veins;  
Blossoms hang round the brows of Morning, and  
Flourish down the bright cheek of modest Eve,  
Till clust’ring Summer breaks forth into singing,  
And feather’d clouds strew flowers round her head.  

“The spirits of the air live on the smells  
Of fruit; and Joy, with pinions light, roves round  
The gardens, or sits singing in the trees.”  
Thus sang the jolly Autumn as he sat;  
Then rose, girded himself, and o’er the bleak  
Hills fled from our sight; but left his golden load.  

XVI. Humdrum

This all-treble choral setting marks the first text composed by dramatist and playwright, Aphra Behn (ca.1640-1689). Perhaps best known for her “scandalous plays,” much of Behn’s personal history is somewhat mysterious. Both her birth name and birth date are unknown, and much of her early work was composed in prison.  

Alec Roth takes “Humdrum” from Behn’s The Emperor of the Moon, one of her well-known works of commedia dell’arte. Act II, Scene 5 opens with Dr. Baliardo’s servant, Scaramouch, singing this text in the Garden. The majority of this poem follows a mono-rhyme pattern where each verse ends in the same rhyme scheme as the previous. The refrains, however, stray from the expecting rhyme and share their own couplets.

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67 An Italian form of comedic theatre most popular between the 16th and 18th centuries. “Commedia” is known for focusing primarily on ensemble acting, improvisation, and physical theatre.
68 Ibid.
69 Robert Lee Brewer, “List of 86 Poetic Forms for Poets.”
XVII. Autumnal

Taken from his *Elegy IX: The Autumnal*, English-author John Donne (1572-1631) provides the text for this all-tenor/bass choral movement. During his lifetime, no more than seven of his poems were published, perpetuating Roth’s idea of including poets “lesser-known” in their time. When the first printed edition of Donne’s poems was published in 1633, two years after his death, the “haphazard arrangement of the poems gave no clue to the order of their composition.”70 Research suggests that his *Elegies* and *Satires* are likely to have been written in the early 1590s. Donne’s poetry provides insight into social paradigms and erotic experiences, and he “confronts us with the complexity of our own natures.”71

Donne’s writing follows a “heroic couplet” structure where every two verses follow the same rhyme scheme: AABBCC.72 Of the fifty total verses in *Elegy IX*, Roth excerpts fourteen, omitting the verses that speak negatively of love: rape, shame, death, barrenness, a soul’s sack among others:

No spring nor summer beauty hath such grace  
As I have seen in one autumnal face.  
Young beauties force our love, and that's a rape,  
This doth but counsel, yet you cannot scape.  
If 'twere a shame to love, here 'twere no shame;  
Affection here takes reverence's name.  
Were her first years the golden age? That's true,  
But now she's gold oft tried and ever new.  
That was her torrid and inflaming time,  
This is her tolerable tropic clime.  
Fair eyes, who asks more heat than comes from hence,  
He in a fever wishes pestilence.  
Call not these wrinkles, graves; if graves they were,  
They were Love's graves, for else he is no where.  
Yet lies not Love dead here, but here doth sit

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71 Ibid.  
https://www.britannica.com/art/heroic-couplet
Vow'd to this trench, like an anachorit;
And here till hers, which must be his death, come,
He doth not dig a grave, but build a tomb.
Here dwells he; though he sojourn ev'rywhere
In progress, yet his standing house is here:
Here where still evening is, not noon nor night,
Where no voluptuousness, yet all delight.
In all her words, unto all hearers fit,
You may at revels, you at council, sit.
This is Love's timber, youth his underwood;
There he, as wine in June, enrages blood,
Which then comes seasonabliest when our taste
And appetite to other things is past.
Xerxes' strange Lydian love, the platan tree,
Was lov'd for age, none being so large as she,
Or else because, being young, nature did bless
Her youth with age's glory, barrenness.
If we love things long sought, age is a thing
Which we are fifty years in compassing;
If transitory things, which soon decay,
Age must be loveliest at the latest day.
But name not winter faces, whose skin's slack,
Lank as an unthrift's purse, but a soul's sack;
Whose eyes seek light within, for all here's shade;
Whose mouths are holes, rather worn out than made;
Whose every tooth to a several place is gone,
To vex their souls at resurrection:
Name not these living death's-heads unto me,
For these, not ancient, but antique be.
I hate extremes, yet I had rather stay
With tombs than cradles, to wear out a day.
Since such love's natural lation is, may still
My love descend, and journey down the hill,
Not panting after growing beauties. So,
I shall ebb on with them who homeward go.73

73 “John Donne,” Poetry Foundation.
XVIII. Fall, leaves, fall

Best known for her novel, *Wuthering Heights*, Emily Jane Brontë’s (1818-1848) contribution to the poetic cannon totals nearly 200. As the third-oldest of four sisters, Emily began her career publishing under the pen name, Ellis Bell. Her only poems published in her lifetime were included in a volume of her and her sisters’ work titled *Poems by Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell* (1846). It was not until 1941 (almost 100 years later) that Brontë’s entire collection was published by C. W. Hatfield in his edition, *The Complete Poems of Emily Jane Brontë*.

Taken from Brontë’s work of the same title, Roth sets only the first four verses to a very lyric, unaccompanied choral texture. Similar to John Donne’s previous text, *Fall, leaves, fall* follows a “heroic couplet” rhyme scheme of AABBCDD. Brontë’s work encourages the reader to find the optimism in winter despite its “dreariness:”

Fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers, away;
Lengthen night and shorten day;
Every leaf speaks bliss to me
Fluttering from the autumn tree.
*I shall smile when wreaths of snow*
*Blossom where the rose should grow;*
*I shall sing when night’s decay*
*Ushers in a drearier day.*

XIX. The Evening Star

Since Roth began “Part III: Autumn Evening” with the poetry of William Blake, it is only appropriate that he concludes this section the same way. “The Evening Star” is Roth’s fourth and final installation of a William Blake text set to an alto aria. Taken from *To the Evening Star*,

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Roth utilizes the first seven and a half verses of Blake’s free-form poem. His final two verses are fragments of Blake’s original verses 9-10.

Roth uses the beginning of Blake’s work which calls upon the “fair-hair’d angel of the evening” to protect “him” (all of us) against the evils of the night. The star, represented as the “bright torch,” likely refers to the planet Venus, the Goddess of love and beauty.\(^7^5\) The speaker then asks Venus to bless their bed and “smile on [their] love.”

The second part of the poem, which Roth omits, compares our sexual experimentation with the dangers of passion symbolized by savage beasts, the wolf and the lion. Blake’s work is a series of opposites viewed through the eyes of the young speaker: “youth and age, tyrant and slave, day and night, male and female, predator and prey.”\(^7^6\)

Thou fair-hair’d angel of the evening,
Now, whilst the sun rests on the mountains, light
Thy bright torch of love; thy radiant crown
Put on, and smile upon our evening bed!
Smile on our loves, and while thou drawest the
Blue curtains of the sky, scatter thy silver dew
On every flower that shuts its sweet eyes
In timely sleep. Let thy west wind sleep on
The lake: speak silence with thy glimmering eyes,
And wash the dusk with silver. Soon, full soon,
Dost thou withdraw; then the wolf rages wide,
And then the lion glares through the dun forest:
The fleeces of our flocks are cover’d with
Thy sacred dew: protect them with thine influence!\(^7^7\)

\(^7^6\) Ibid.
Part IV: Winter Night

XX. Deep midnight

In similar fashion, Roth begins and ends “Part IV: Winter Night” with the writing of John Donne. Taken from his *A Nocturnal upon St. Lucy’s Day, Being the shortest day*, Donne built this work around St. Lucy, the patron saint of the blind. Not only was she blind herself, but her name ironically means “light,” as in the word “lucid.”

This poem of grief is also said to pay homage to 17th-century science and technology, using terms like: squibs, rays, hydroptic, alchemy, quintessence, limbec, chaoses, elixir. Donne’s work explores the dichotomies of theology and science, nothing and being, and absence and presence. “It's all a way for the poet to sharpen the understanding of what he lacks, and what he loves.”

*A Nocturnal upon St. Lucy’s* Day is forty-five verses in length and is a mixture of poetic forms: the Petrarchan Sonnet (with an ABBA rhyme scheme) followed by a series of rhyming couplets. Roth only excerpts verses 3-7 and 45:

> 'Tis the year's midnight, and it is the day's,  
> Lucy's, who scarce seven hours herself unmasks;  
> The sun is spent, and now his flasks  
> Send forth light squibs, no constant rays;  
> The world's whole sap is sunk;  
> The general balm th' hydroptic earth hath drunk,  
> Whither, as to the bed's feet, life is shrunk,  
> Dead and interr'd; yet all these seem to laugh,  
> Compar'd with me, who am their epitaph.

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http://www.slate.com/articles/arts/classic_poems/2012/12/winter_solstice_john_donne_s_a_nocturnal_upon_st_lucy_s_day_being_the_shortest.html

79 Ibid.

80 Ibid.

https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/text/sonnet-poetic-form
Study me then, you who shall lovers be
At the next world, that is, at the next spring;
   For I am every dead thing,
In whom Love wrought new alchemy.
   For his art did express
A quintessence even from nothingness,
From dull privations, and lean emptiness;
   He ruin’d me, and I am re-begot
Of absence, darkness, death: things which are not.

All others, from all things, draw all that’s good,
Life, soul, form, spirit, whence they being have;
   I, by Love’s limbec, am the grave
Of all that’s nothing. Oft a flood
Have we two wept, and so
Drown’d the whole world, us two; oft did we grow
To be two chaoses, when we did show
Care to aught else; and often absences
Withdrew our souls, and made us carcasses.

But I am by her death (which word wrongs her)
Of the first nothing the elixir grown;
   Were I a man, that I were one
I needs must know; I should prefer,
   If I were any beast,
Some ends, some means; yea plants, yea stones detest,
And love; all, all some properties invest;
   If I an ordinary nothing were,
As shadow, a light and body must be here.

But I am none; nor will my sun renew.
You lovers, for whose sake the lesser sun
   At this time to the Goat is run
To fetch new lust, and give it you,
   Enjoy your summer all;
Since she enjoys her long night’s festival,
Let me prepare towards her, and let me call
This hour her vigil, and her eve, since this
Both the year’s, and the day’s deep midnight is.\textsuperscript{82}

\textsuperscript{82} “John Donne,” Poetry Foundation.
XXI. Snowflakes

Known for his fictional and non-fictional prose, American poet, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882), provides the source material for this choral movement.\(^{83}\) Taken from a poem of the same title (*Snow-flakes*), Roth sets this work in its entirety; a very unique trait of the texts featured thus far. Longfellow’s depiction of winter is morose and depressing: “The woodlands brown and bare,” “Even if as the troubled heart doth make in the white countenance confession,” “the troubled sky reveals the grief it feels.”

The formal structure of Longfellow’s work is up for debate as it references several poetic forms. A traditional Shakespearean Sonnet follows three quatrains and a couplet: ABAB, CDCD, EFEF, GG. Longfellow’s work only includes one quatrain, though still followed by a couplet. A pantoum, similar to a Shakespearean Sonnet, follows an ABAB, CDCD rhyme scheme but has no limit to the number of quatrains.\(^{84}\) “Snowflakes” could be considered a modified Shakespearean Sonnet or a six-verse stanza with one pantoum and one couplet.

XXII. Dregs

English poet Ernest Dowson (1867-1900) provides the text for “No. 22 Dregs.” Dowson began his career as a member of the Rhymers’ Club, a group of writers that also included W.B. Yeats, the author of “No. 6 Dance there.”\(^{85}\) Though his body of work includes poems, plays, and novels, his output was not as great as many of his English contemporaries. His unfortunate history of parental suicide and alcoholism led to an early death at the age of thirty three.

\(^{84}\) Robert Lee Brewer, “List of 86 Poetic Forms for Poets.”
Though his contributions to the literary canon are limited, Dowson is known to have coined the phrases “gone with the wind” and “days of wine and roses.” His poems are often considered to “trace the sorrow of unrequited love,” as demonstrated by key phrases in “Dregs:” “bitter as wormwood,” “salt as pain,” “drear oblivion of lost things,” “pale indifferent eyes.”

As the middle movement of Part IV: Winter Night, this poem is one of very few that makes no mention of the season or nature in general. From a larger work of the same name, Roth omits verses 7 and 8 from this eleven-verse Petrarchan Sonnet (ABBA):

The fire is out, and spent the warmth thereof,
(This is the end of every song man sings!)
The golden wine is drunk, the dregs remain,
Bitter as wormwood and as salt as pain;
And health and hope have gone the way of love
Into the drear oblivion of lost things.
Ghosts go along with us until the end;
This was a mistress, this, perhaps, a friend.
With pale, indifferent eyes, we sit and wait
For the dropped curtain and the closing gate:
This is the end of all the songs man sings.

XXIII. A glee for winter

Alfred Domett (1811-1887) was not only a poet, but a philosopher and politician for New Zealand in the days of its beginning as a British colony. Domett held a variety of leadership roles throughout his career: Civil Secretary of New Zealand, Magistrate and Commissioner of Crown

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87 Ibid.
88 Robert Lee Brewer, “List of 86 Poetic Forms for Poets.”
Lands in Hawke's Bay, Provincial Council, General Assembly, and for a time, Premier of the colony.\textsuperscript{90}

His reputation as an author, however, rests on his poem “Ranolf and Amohia,” based on New Zealand’s primitive Maori people: their life, religion, and tradition. Domett, along with Sir George Grey, were the first to develop this “rich and varied store of legend and wonder-tale and song.”

\textit{A Glee for Winter} is made up of two ten-verse stanzas, each comprising of five couplets where each of the two couplet verses employs the same number of syllables. This work gives the reader a sense of optimism, despite the “rudeness” of winter, and speaks to the ways in which winter can be “harmless fun:” singing, laughing, and a “warm fireside.”

XXIV. Lights out

“No. 24 Lights out” marks the last of three movements set to the poetry of Edward Thomas. Though he lived a short life of thirty-nine years, his literary output was impressive: books, essays, natural history, criticism, biographies, reviews, fiction, introductions, and topographical descriptions.\textsuperscript{91} Thomas began his career forced to obey the demands of publishers, and over time, he viewed his work as being “destroyed under the strain of constant production.”\textsuperscript{92} It was not until later in life that Thomas began composing the work we often associate with his name: poems of war and peace.

\textsuperscript{92} Ibid.
Though he spent his life and career in London, Thomas was born of Welsh parents, and composed *Lights Out* in the Welsh form, Cywydd Llosgrynog.⁹³ This particular style employs a rhyme scheme of AABCCB and requires six verses in each stanza. The poem describes love as a journey, and like all good things, this too must come to an end.

**Epilogue: Sunrise**

**XXV. Elder by a year**

“Epilogue: Sunrise” begins with the penultimate John Donne text, excerpted from his larger work, *The Anniversary*. Donne’s work describes the love between two people in three “stages,” separated by three stanzas. The first, being the anniversary of “seeing his beloved,” mentions that this anniversary marks one year closer to death, the only thing not subject to “decay” (line 7).⁹⁴ The second stanza begins the realization that while their love is timeless, their physical bodies are not. This death will force them to “leave at last in death these eyes and ears,/Oft fed with true oaths, and with sweet salt tears” (lines 15-16).⁹⁵ The final decastitch (a ten-verse stanza)⁹⁶ points out that the lovers will be like “all the rest,” thoroughly blessed in the Afterlife.

Donne’s poem is a series of two-verse couplets, structured as a three-stanza decastitch. Roth only sets the first nine verses:

```
All Kings, and all their favourites,
All glory of honours, beauties, wits,
The sun itself, which makes times, as they pass,
   Is elder by a year now than it was
```

⁹³ Robert Lee Brewer, “List of 86 Poetic Forms for Poets.”
⁹⁵ Ibid.
⁹⁶ Robert Lee Brewer, “List of 86 Poetic Forms for Poets.”
When thou and I first one another saw:
All other things to their destruction draw,
    Only our love hath no decay;
This no tomorrow hath, nor yesterday,
Running it never runs from us away,
But truly keeps his first, last, everlasting day.

Two graves must hide thine and my corse;
    If one might, death were no divorce.
Alas, as well as other Princes, we
(Who Prince enough in one another be)
Must leave at last in death these eyes and ears,
Oft fed with true oaths, and with sweet salt tears;
But souls where nothing dwells but love
(All other thoughts being inmates) then shall prove
This, or a love increasèd there above,
When bodies to their graves, souls from their graves remove.

And then we shall be throughly blessed;
    But we no more than all the rest.
Here upon earth we’re Kings, and none but we
Can be such Kings, nor of such subjects be;
Who is so safe as we? where none can do
    Treason to us, except one of us two.
True and false fears let us refrain,
Let us love nobly, and live, and add again
Years and years unto years, till we attain
To write threescore: this is the second of our reign.97

XXVI. The secret of the sun

English laureate, Robert Bridges, is, again, the source material for the middle movement
of the Epilogue. Though Bridges lived for eighty-six years, the work most often associated with
Bridges was written in a twenty-two year period from 1882-1904. He built his reputation as a
career classicist, though he is no stranger to experimenting with classical forms.98

“No 26. The secret of the sun,” only includes verses 9-16 of Bridges’ original *My delight and thy delight*. The patterning of Bridges’ work alternates between an Englyn Milwr, a traditional Welsh form that includes three seven-syllable lines rhymed on the last syllable, and a traditional two-verse couplet. Bridges’ poem focuses on the love between two characters (“my” and “thy”) and the ways it can often be challenged by life. His words promote overall happiness, despite the “tongue of fire,” and “the everlasting strife:”

*My delight and thy delight*  
Walking, like two angels white,  
*In the gardens of the night:*  

*My desire and thy desire*  
Twining to a tongue of fire,  
Leaping live, and laughing higher:  

*Thro’ the everlasting strife*  
*In the mystery of life.*  

Love, from whom the world begun,  
Hath the secret of the sun.  

Love can tell, and love alone,  
Whence the million stars were strewn,  
Why each atom knows its own,  
How, in spite of woe and death,  
Gay is life, and sweet is breath:  

This he taught us, this we knew,  
*Happy in his science true,*  
*Hand in hand as we stood*  
*’Neath the shadows of the wood,*  
*Heart to heart as we lay*  
*In the dawning of the day.*

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https://www.bartleby.com/101/832.html
XXVII. Love, all alike

Since the “AfterDance” is considered optional, it is fitting that the Epilogue opens and closes with a John Donne text. While Roth only sets two verses, Donne’s original work, *The sun rising*, is thirty verses in length. It is ironic to note that Roth chooses a poem about the rising sun to bring closure to his entire work.

The main character of Donne’s poem contradicts themselves by selfishly criticizing the sun while highlighting all the good it does: giving light, giving warmth, and leading the way. Verses 9-10, the verses in which Roth excerpts, highlight the seasons and the construct of time; the two main themes of his work. The form of this poem is a hybrid between both Petrarchan and Shakespearean sonnets: ABBA, CDCD, EE:

*Busy old fool, unruly sun,*  
*Why dost thou thus,*  
*Through windows, and through curtains call on us?*  
*Must to thy motions lovers' seasons run?*  
*Saucy pedantic wretch, go chide*  
*Late school boys and sour prentices,*  
*Go tell court huntsmen that the king will ride,*  
*Call country ants to harvest offices,*  
*Love, all alike, no season knows nor clime,*  
*Nor hours, days, months, which are the rags of time.*

*Thy beams, so reverend and strong*  
*Why shouldst thou think?*  
*I could eclipse and cloud them with a wink,*  
*But that I would not lose her sight so long;*  
*If her eyes have not blinded thine,*  
*Look, and tomorrow late, tell me,*  
*Whether both th' Indias of spice and mine*  
*Be where thou leftist them, or lie here with me.*  
*Ask for those kings whom thou saw'st yesterday,*  
*And thou shalt hear, All here in one bed lay.*

*She's all states, and all princes, I,*  
*Nothing else is.*  
*Princes do but play us; compared to this,*  
*All honor's mimic, all wealth alchemy.*
Thou, sun, art half as happy as we,
In that the world's contracted thus.
Thine age asks ease, and since thy duties be
To warm the world, that's done in warming us.
Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere;
This bed thy center is, these walls, thy sphere.101

AfterDance: Proper Exercise

This final movement, suggested as a recessional, is set to the work of Sir John Davies (1569-1626). Unlike the other poems chosen for this work, Davies is perhaps best known for writing this particular poem, Orchestra, or, A Poeme of Dauncing (1596). Equally a poet and lawyer, Davies spent the latter part of his career in politics as a speaker in the Irish Parliament (1613) and a member of the English Parliament (1621).

Of all the works Roth employs, Davies’ poem is the longest, both in original length and excerpted length. Published anonymously, Davies’ composition is comprised of 131 seven-line stanzas “judicially proving the true observation of Time and Measure, in the authentic and laudable use of Dancing.”102103 Davies’ work follows a ABABBCC rhyme scheme, and Roth only uses stanzas 17, 39, 46 and 51.

102 John Davies, Orchestra; or, A poeme of dancinge, RS Bear, 2001.
103 Paraphrased from the original 1596 inscription: “Iudicially prouing the true obseruation of time and measure, in the Authentical and lauḍable vs of Dauncing.”
CHAPTER 4
A TIME TO DANCE: ANALYSIS OF MUSIC

In an effort to accurately portray the seasonal calendar, A Time to Dance consists of a “Prologue” and “Epilogue,” each titled “Sunrise,” and four main sections: Spring Morning, Summer Noon, Autumn Evening, and Winter Night. There are twenty-nine movements in total, including the optional “Processional” and “After Dance.”

The analysis of each movement will be based on Julius Herford’s method of “bar analysis” as demonstrated in Choral Conducting: A Symposium. This graphic representation will first allow an in-depth look at the poetry and text, and then proceed to the structural, bar-line realization within the composition itself. Utilizing the Herford format allows the conductor to have a general overview of each movement (macro and micro forms), while requiring the conductor to access the functionality of each bar. Each analysis “Table” will include overall musical form, measure number, voicing, text placement, orchestration, and tonality with as much detail as practical.

This chapter will also contain details regarding important moments within each movement, including but not limited to: text painting, compositional style, motivic relationships, and the function of choir and orchestra.

105 In Julius Herford’s and Harold A Decker’s Choral Conducting: A Symposium (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1973), Chapter 5 includes the choral conductor’s preparation of the musical score through the use of charts.
**Processional: “Times and Seasons”**

Table 4.1. A Herford Analysis on *A Time to Dance*: Processional

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Intro</th>
<th>7-36;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(4+4+4+4+4+4+2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>Solo bass recit.</td>
<td>Tutti choir, alternating SSA/TBB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>“To everything”</td>
<td>“A time to be born”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>Perfect-fifth Handbells \rightarrow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key area</td>
<td>G-minor</td>
<td>C-minor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The very first movement of Roth’s work begins with a stark, perfect-fifth played by handbells, which continues without variation. This (literal) “Processional” also opens with a brief, solo Bass recitative that establishes G-minor before quickly moving to C-minor at the choral entrance. A textural change occurs in m.7 from the solo recitative to the tutti choir, separated by high and low divisions.

This “Processional” is carried out through constant repetition of a four-measure phrase, creating a dialogue between SSA and TTB. The presence of the handbells remains pervasive and creates a sense of mild bitonality amid the repetition of the choir. The final iteration is homophonic and concludes with “a time to dance;” the only repeated text despite the persistent, repeated melody.

**Prologue: Sunrise**

**I. Out of the wood**

If the “Processional” is performed, it segues uninterrupted into the opening drone of the “Prologue,” played by cello and bass. This single pitch creates an ominous mood only supported by a C-minor recitative set to the text, “out of the wood of thought that grows by night.” The
drone discontinues in m. 8 leaving the soloist unaccompanied. Since this Bass recitative is attacca, the soloist is responsible for setting the upcoming tempo and foreshadowing some of Alec Roth’s recurring motives: descending triplets from D and perfect-interval leaps (fourths and fifths) (See Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1. Alec Roth, A Time to Dance, “Out of the Wood,” mm. 14-15

II. Rise up

Table 4.2. A Herford Analysis on A Time to Dance: Rise Up

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>1-4</th>
<th>5-8</th>
<th>9-14</th>
<th>15-20</th>
<th>21-29</th>
<th>30-32</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>Solo bass + SATB, 2pt hum drone (P4)</td>
<td>SATB, 4pt hum progression</td>
<td>SATB, 2pt [o] drone (P4)</td>
<td>SATB, 4pt [o] prog.</td>
<td>tutti</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>“Rise Up”</td>
<td>“chases the dreams of men”</td>
<td>“land and water”</td>
<td>“While you are listening”</td>
<td>“lovelier than any”</td>
<td>“rise”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>Trumpet 2/3 + vln tremolo</td>
<td>No trumpet until 14</td>
<td>trumpet &amp; vln</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key area</td>
<td>D-minor</td>
<td>D-Major “Sunrise”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As mentioned earlier, the “Prologue” is meant to evoke a musical “sunrise” which exists specifically in “Rise Up.” This movement begins with a declamatory perfect-fourth from the off-stage trumpets that alternate with solo Bass voice. Within the very first phrase, the immediate mention of “the trumpets blowing” brings attention to Roth’s use of word painting (See Figure 4.2).
Layered choral entrances, a suspenseful violin tremolo, and a harmonic ascension create a gradual build until the final “Arise” in m. 29. Roth not only explores a variety of textures (first in duet and then in four-part), but he also assigns different vocal affects that change the function of the choir. The closed consonant [m] in m. 5 is accompaniment for the soloist, however, the choir becomes “the sun” in m. 17 when modifying to an [o] vowel.

**Part I: Spring Morning**

**III. Awake**

Table 4.3. A Herford Analysis on *A Time to Dance*: Awake

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>SATB</td>
<td>SATB</td>
<td>SATB</td>
<td>SATB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>“Awake my heart”</td>
<td>“Awake, awake”</td>
<td>“Awake, awake, the land is scattered”</td>
<td>“Awake, awake”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>Full orchestra</td>
<td>Full orchestra</td>
<td>Full orchestra</td>
<td>Full orchestra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key area</td>
<td>B minor</td>
<td>B-flat Major → B minor, alternating two measures</td>
<td>B minor</td>
<td>B-flat Major → B minor, alternating two measures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This energetic movement begins with and maintains an eighth-note drive in the orchestra, juxtaposed against long, lyric choral phrases. There are several instrumental obbligati with flute, violin, and trumpet, either colla parte or in response. While the key signature would suggest A-minor, the notated accidentals support B-minor. The unison choral singing helps evoke strength and provides a forward trajectory to the movement.

The B section (m. 22) employs dotted quarter-note hemiola figures in the lower strings, creating a syncopated, dance-like rhythm, while maintaining eighth-notes in the upper strings. This section also demonstrates Roth’s compositional style of pervasive, perfect-intervals (see Figure 4.2) on the word “Awake.” The reiteration of this one word, “Awake,” is not only declamatory and triumphant but also empowering. The homophonic texture of the choir remains persistent.

While the repeats of sections A and B are direct, the choral textures expand beyond their aforementioned unison. High voices (ST) are placed a perfect-fifth above low voices (AB), a frequent occurrence in Alec Roth’s writing.
Figure 4.3. Alec Roth, *A Time to Dance*, “Awake,” mm. 21-30
IV. Infant Joy

Table 4.4. A Herford Analysis on *A Time to Dance*: Infant Joy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>1-23</td>
<td>24-41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>Solo Soprano + SATB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>“I have no name”</td>
<td>“Thou dost smile”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>Unaccompanied</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key area</td>
<td>D-minor</td>
<td>F-Major → D-minor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each of the four main “seasons” of *A Time to Dance* is characterized by a specific solo voice, starting with Soprano. This recitative begins in dialogue between the Soprano solo and the choir in D-minor. Roth employs constant metric changes, drawing focus to the text, syllabic stress, and inflection. The Soprano begins this aria as the character, Joy, a girl “but a few days old.” This William Blake text portrays the re-birth of spring as a young child.

The bridge between the A and B sections is a very unique, uncharacteristic E-minor7 to C-Major +2 on the word, “Smile.” Section B is also notated as “poco rit, quarter-note = 120-126.” With more of a metric structure in B, Roth continues to alternate duple meters with triple, creating a dance-like figure. The function of the Soprano then becomes that of a descant.
V. Dancing on the hill-tops

Table 4.5. A Herford Analysis on *A Time to Dance*: Dancing on the hill-tops

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>A’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Measure</strong></td>
<td>1-24; (4+8+4+8)</td>
<td>25-37; (5+5+3)</td>
<td>38-50; (5+8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Voice</strong></td>
<td>Soprano solo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Text</strong></td>
<td>“Dancing on the hill-tops”</td>
<td>“If her father’s cottage”</td>
<td>“Dancing on the hill-tops”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instrument</strong></td>
<td>2 trumpets</td>
<td>Organ, cello, bass</td>
<td>2 trumpets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key area</strong></td>
<td>D-Major</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This sprightly aria for lyric Soprano is only fifty measures in length but has three distinct sections. Sections A and A’ are a conversation between the soloist and two trumpets. In the beginning, the first trumpet imitates the voice exactly, establishing a strong D-Major. The second trumpet enters in m. 13 with similar figures played four eighth-notes later, creating an “echo” effect (See Figure 4.4).

The B Section at m. 24 is more lyric in nature and replaces the trumpet with organ, cello, and bass. Though the tempo stays the same, the change in orchestration and use of chromaticism shift the mood from energetic to relaxed. The relationship between music and text is apparent in this movement with the use of mixed meter, the Vivace notation, and the jovial word painting: “laughing with the echoes” (m. 45) and “merry little Alice” (m. 49-50).
Figure 4.4. Alec Roth, *A Time to Dance*, “Dancing on the hill-tops,” mm. 13-19

VI. Dance there

Table 4.6. A Herford Analysis on *A Time to Dance*: Dance there

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intro</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>A’ (codetta)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>1-10</td>
<td>11-28; (3+3+3+5+4)</td>
<td>29-45; (6+6+3+2)</td>
<td>46-59; (2+3+3+6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>SATB</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>“Dance there”</td>
<td>“O you will take”</td>
<td>“Dance there”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>Bassoon, flute, oboe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key area</td>
<td>D-Major</td>
<td>D-Major (tutti) → Bitonal: D-minor in vv, D-Major in orch</td>
<td>Bitonal: C-minor in vv, D-Major in orch</td>
<td>D-Major (tutti)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Dance there” begins with a continuous, forward moving accompaniment played by bassoon, flute, and oboe. Though not a direct imitation, these winds play a very similar figure that when together, could be mistaken as a canon. Before the choral entrance, the instruments establish D-Major (with a flat-3) and stay within this key throughout the movement, despite the tonal shifts in the choir. In both A and B sections, the choir maintains a homophonic texture that is tonally ambiguous almost every measure.

As mentioned earlier, Roth frequently changes meter to create a natural flow to the text. His metric choices follow the natural inflection of the poetry, and in this particular case, he uses
quarter-note triplets in the choral parts against eighth-note triplets in the orchestra. Even without defined meter changes, Roth creates the same illusion. (See Figure 4.5). The handbells, which symbolize the passing of time, come back at m. 41 on “but I am old,” followed by a truncated A section in a very strong D-Major.
Figure 4.5. Alec Roth, *A Time to Dance*, “Dance there,” mm. 29-36
VII. Nothing is so beautiful

This brief recitative is a feature for Soprano. Of the twenty-two measures of orchestral accompaniment, sixteen are sustained, single pitches that support the soloist. While the orchestra maintains D-flat Major, the solo line is tonally ambiguous. With text by Gerard Manley Hopkins, the stark orchestration is appropriate to support his text, “A strain of the earth’s sweet being in the beginning in Eden’s garden.” The final four measures harken back to one of Roth’s earlier compositional devices, the perfect-interval leap. As in “No. 2 Rise Up,” this motive is first heard as a trumpet fanfare before repeated in the solo voice (See Figure 4.6).

Figure 4.6. Alec Roth, *A Time to Dance*, “Nothing is so beautiful,” mm. 20-22
As an attacca from the previous movement, Roth continues the aforementioned perfect-fifth leaps for the first eight measures of “Let them love.” Not only is this the longest movement in all of Part 1, but this is one of very few movements to have a distinct orchestral introduction. Played by violin, the repeated perfect-fifths become a compositional accumulation; adding one note of a sequence gradually until the desired sequence is complete (See Figure 4.7).
The orchestral interlude brings a declamatory, homophonic entrance of the choir (m.16) and a strong D-Major with the addition of flat-6 (B-flat). At this moment, the orchestra only rearticulates when the choir is static, never pulling focus from the movement of the singers. The first part of the B section, which starts at m. 26, features auxiliary percussion (tambourine) and a dance-like, 6/8 meter, which alternates with other triple and duple meters.

Much of this section is either in unison or in duet textures: Soprano/Tenor and Alto/Bass. The second half of the B section employs three-part divisions in the choir (SSA and TBB) and an
E-minor7 to C-Major moment in m. 65 reminiscent of the previously-mentioned moment in “No. 4 Infant Joy” (on the word “smile”). The first canon begins in m. 66 where Tenor and Bass are displaced two-beats behind Soprano and Alto.

The return of A (m. 73) is almost a direct repetition of the previous A section except for the reiteration of “Let them love again, again, again” at m. 81. The treatment of the second B section is similar to the first, this time sung in canon. Rhythmic variation is minimal with only minor adjustments for text inflection and syllabic stress. The second half of B is identical to the previous with the same SSA and TBB divisions, the E-minor7 to C-Major moment, and the two-beat delayed canon. The final return of A is, again, almost identical to the other A sections, however, to conclude Part I the choir repeats four additional times.

**Part II: Summer Noon**

**IX. In summer’s heat**

Table 4.8. A Herford Analysis on *A Time to Dance*: In Summer’s heat

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intro</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>1-11;</td>
<td>12-32;</td>
<td>33-42;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2+4+5)</td>
<td>(6+6+4+5)</td>
<td>(5+5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Solo Tenor →</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>“In summer’s heat and in mid-time of the day”</td>
<td>“Then came Corinna”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>Strings + oboe d’amore</td>
<td>No d’amore during solo, + d’amore during interlude (m. 24)</td>
<td>More elaborate vln obbligato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key area</td>
<td>G-minor →</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.8. A Herford Analysis on *A Time to Dance*: In Summer’s heat (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>B</th>
<th>A’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>43-57; (4+4+4+3)</td>
<td>58-73; (4+5+7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>Solo Tenor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>“Stark naked”</td>
<td>“Being tired she made me kiss”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>strings</td>
<td>+ d’amore and vln obbligato (m. 58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key area</td>
<td>G-minor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The tenor is the solo voice that colors Part II: Summer Noon. The opening aria is seductive in nature and truly captures the mood of the text. Roth begins this movement by introducing an ostinato in the lower strings similar to that of Bizet’s “Habanera” from *Carmen*. The infamous Bizet aria sets an E-minor arpeggio (switching the 3\textsuperscript{rd} and 5\textsuperscript{th} scale degrees) to a monotonous, continued syncopation (See Figure 4.8). “In Summer’s heat” employs a G-minor arpeggio in the lower strings (again, switching the 3\textsuperscript{rd} and 5\textsuperscript{th} scale degrees) with an elongated 3/2 measure. Proportionally, this results in a very similar, “Alec Roth-style” Habanera (See Figure 4.9).

![Allegretto quasi Andantino](image)

Figure 4.8. Georges Bizet, *Carmen*, “Habanera,” mm. 1-4\textsuperscript{106}

This aria alternates between the oboe d’amore and violin as the feature instrument. It is also one of the more symmetrical movements in *A Time to Dance*; instrumental and vocal phrases are consistent and expected lengths. G-minor is pervasive throughout with an occasional blue-note flat-5 (D-flat). The B section, which starts in m. 42, has remnants of the Habanera rhythm, but the primary function of the orchestra here is to support the “climax” of the soloist. The accompaniment in this section is stark until the triplet figures in m. 53 leading to “and what a lusty thigh.”

With each new body part mentioned, the general tonality shifts: G-minor on “Stark naked,” B-flat-minor on “shoulders” (m. 47), C#-minor on “belly” (m. 51), and E-minor on “leg” (m. 53) (See Figure 4.10). After the high A on “thigh,” there is a moment of pause before the return of the Habanera ostinato. This final A section (m. 58) is severely truncated but features a returning motive on the word, “kiss” with a perfect-fifth leap in both the voice and oboe d’amore.
Figure 4.10. Alec Roth, *A Time to Dance*, “In summer’s heat,” mm. 44-55
X. A something

Roth opens “No 10. A something” with a recurring two-measure chordal figure that is an augmentation of the opening two measures of “In summer’s heat.” While the orchestra remains tonally ambiguous, the choir sings in G-Major. Though the text changes, this twenty-six-measure movement is two and a half iterations of the same harmonic and melodic material. The repetition of choral lines and the static nature of the orchestration portrays “A something” as ethereal and dream-like- an appropriate way to set Emily Dickinson’s text that speaks of “solemnizing” and “ecstasy.”

The last repeats of “A something” in mm. 22-24 help connect Part II to Part I; utilizing the ever-present perfect-interval leap from A to D (See Figures 4.2 and 4.11). The final chromatic phrase, played by flute, foreshadows the thematic material in the upcoming tenor aria (Figure 4.11, mm. 24-26).

Figure 4.11. Alec Roth, A Time to Dance, “A Something,” mm. 21-26
XI. Thirsty Fly

Table 4.9. A Herford Analysis on *A Time to Dance*: Thirsty Fly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intro</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Measure</strong></td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>7-15; (4+5)</td>
<td>16-25; (4+6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Voice</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Solo Tenor →</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Text</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>“Busy curious”</td>
<td>“Freely welcome to my cup”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instrument</strong></td>
<td>Strings and flute →</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key area</strong></td>
<td>E-minor →</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>A’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Measure</strong></td>
<td>26-31; (6)</td>
<td>32-40; (4+5)</td>
<td>41-49; (7+2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Voice</strong></td>
<td>Solo Tenor →</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Text</strong></td>
<td>“Both alike”</td>
<td>“Thine’s a summer”</td>
<td>“Busy curious”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instrument</strong></td>
<td>Strings and flute →</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key area</strong></td>
<td>E-minor →</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The tenor aria, “Thirsty fly,” is a musical representation of the insect. From the “quick and flighty” tempo marking to the “flutter-tongue” of the flute, this movement represents the fly, both figuratively and literally. “No. 10 A Something” ends with a chromatic, two-measure motive played by flute. While this phrase does come back in its entirety (m. 7), the very opening of “Thirsty Fly” fragments this motive first before playing to completion. (See Figure 4.12)
Figure 4.12. Alec Roth, *A Time to Dance*, “Thirsty Fly,” mm. 1-11

Characteristic of a fly, the flute motive is acrobatic, tonally ambiguous, and explores the full range of the tenor. To bring focus to this phrase, the underlying string accompaniment is simple, repetitive, and constant, played by pizzicato strings in parallel perfect-fifths. Section B is considerably more diatonic and definitively in E-minor, unlike the “fly motive” of section A which is neither. Section B is also the only part of this aria with mid-phrase metric shifts. The second and third iterations of Section A are played in two-beat canon between flute and Tenor, and the third concludes with a “fly-swat” and a “gasp” from the tenor.
XII. Little fly

Table 4.10. A Herford Analysis on *A Time to Dance*: Little Fly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>1-8;</td>
<td>9-15;</td>
<td>16-29;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(4+4)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>(5+4+5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30-38;</td>
<td></td>
<td>(4+4+1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>SATB</td>
<td>SSATB</td>
<td>SATB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>“Little fly”</td>
<td>“For I dance”</td>
<td>“If thought is life”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>Strings, Ob1, Ob d’amore</td>
<td>- ob &amp; d’amore + flute + handbells</td>
<td>strings and handbells, d’amore (m. 25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key area</td>
<td>G-minor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Little Fly” is a homophonic choral response to the previous aria and is accompanied by strings, oboe 1, oboe d’amore, flute, and handbells. Everyone plays in G-minor throughout, though there are moments that stray in other directions. Each A(a) section is symmetrical (4+4), and each phrase cadences to G-minor. However, the penultimate chord before each cadence is a very unique G-minor 7 +2, which happens a total of three times, the last in second inversion. While G-minor is the established key, the two choral phrases of Section B cadence to the parallel G-Major.

Roth includes slight metric shifts and frequent syncopation, but the quarter-note never changes value. The choir brings this movement to a close with an elongated “sh” of “brushed” in m. 35, supporting the tone of the poem and the context of the complete phrase, “Little fly, thy summer’s play, my thoughtless hand has brushed away.”
XIII. Come, let us go

A unique feature of this recitative is that it does not precede an aria, but rather connects two choral movements. The opening “Come, let us go” is set to a perfect-fifth leap seen in so many of Roth’s previous pieces. It is interesting to note that there are many similarities between this recitative and the “No. 11 Thirsty Fly” aria. Not only does the repetitive, minimal pizzicato figure come back in the strings, but the acrobatic, chromatic “fly motive” returns on the word “old” (m. 9) and as a cadenza on “run” (m. 18). It is plausible that this recitative is a response to the aforementioned aria, though they are not consecutive.

XIV. Give all to love

Table 4.11. A Herford Analysis on *A Time to Dance*: Give all the love

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Intro A (a)</th>
<th>A (b)</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>8-19;</td>
<td>20-43;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(6+2+4)</td>
<td>(2+6+6+2+2+6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>SATB →</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>“Give all to love”</td>
<td>“Tis a brave master”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>Strings, trumpet, flute</td>
<td>Only strings</td>
<td>+ flute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key area</td>
<td>A-minor, with F-sharp-minor</td>
<td>A-minor</td>
<td>A-Major</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>A’ (a)</th>
<th>(b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>65-89;</td>
<td>90-102;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2+5+7+7+4)</td>
<td>(8+5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>SATB →</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>“Tis a brave master”</td>
<td>“Give all to love”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>Strings, trumpet, flute</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key area</td>
<td>A-minor</td>
<td>A-minor, with F-sharp-minor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Drawing influence from earlier material, this choral movement begins the same way as “No. 8 Let them love” except in straight eighth notes. The perfect-fifth leaps from the end of “Come, let us go” continue into the opening of this movement played by trumpet, flute, and sung in all voice parts. Similar to “No. 3 Awake” (Figure 4.3), Roth uses this interval obviously and liberally. At the first choral entrance, the perfect-interval is but a fragment sung in two-beat canon, followed by syncopated reiterations of the word “give” in 12/8, 3/4, and 4/4. While the choral lines are direct repetitions of this canon, the underlying string accompaniment alternates from A-minor to F-sharp-minor. The second-half of the A section brings the entire melodic phrase to the voices in m. 22, sung in one-measure canon, TB and SA.

The B section to follow is in a strong A-Major and introduces brand new melodic material almost entirely in unison. After a repeat of this melody, the choir, again, sings syncopated reiterations of the word “give.” On the repeat of A, Roth switches the principle motives. A(b) starts this closing section with the earlier melodic phrase sung in unison. This time, the canon is portrayed by a soaring trumpet descant of the same material delayed one measure. The “Give all to love” one-measure fragments return in m. 91 until the movement concludes with two measures of syncopated “give.” A driving eighth-note crescendo in the strings comes to a sudden stop, bringing Part II: Summer Noon to a close.
Part III: Autumn Evening

XV. O Autumn

Table 4.12. A Herford Analysis on *A Time to Dance*: O Autumn

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>A (Recit)</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-10;</td>
<td>(4+1+5)</td>
<td>11-23;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>Solo Mezzo- Soprano →</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>“O Autumn”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>Oboe</td>
<td>+ strings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key area</td>
<td>E-flat-minor →</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A single oboe opens Part III with an obbligato figure that will soon be repeated by the mezzo- soprano soloist. In true recitative style, there is a certain amount of flexibility in the solo voice despite the specific rhythmic notation and metric changes. Both the oboe and voice explore the ambiguity of E-flat minor, sometimes with the raised 3rd, and sometimes not. The oboe only plays that main figure throughout this twenty-three-measure aria.

While every cadence is tonicized to E-flat-minor, the melodies often include flat-2 (F-flat), raised-4 (A-natural), and flat-5 (B-double-flat), very reminiscent of middle eastern music. Similar to “No. 7 Nothing is so beautiful,” the last three measures of this aria are sung in recitative and end with a perfect-fifth on “shall dance.”
The next two movements are the only movements that feature high and low voices separately. “Humdrum,” written for SA choir, starts with a hemiola triplet figure in the introduction played by strings. The triplet becomes less syncopated nine measures in when the meter alternates between 6/8 and 2/4. Though the lightheartedness of the triplet does not waver, the meters change when the unison voices enter, alternating between 4/4, 3/8, and 2/4. The upper strings play mostly colla parte with the voices while the lower strings punctuate the downbeats of each new meter.

Generally, the phrases of Section A are very repetitive, both in triplet function and in pitch class. However, when the text addresses “Silvia” directly, the repetition breaks and there is
an uncharacteristic harmonic ascension sung in duet, not in unison. This brief moment resolves before Section B: the two-measure repeats of “humdrum” in C-minor accompanied by the addition of auxiliary percussion.

The entire second half is almost identical to the first: the interlude is parallel to the introduction, and the melody, triplet figures, and metric changes are all the same. The one unique difference is, again, when the text speaks directly to “Silvia.” It does repeat the aforementioned harmonic ascension but continues into a fifteen-measure interjection, growing into a 3-part texture with sparse accompaniment. There is also a two-measure motive to symbolize an “owl cry:” a three-time perfect-fifth leap (see Figure 4.13). This section concludes quickly before the return of B and closes with the strike of a gong.

Figure 4.13. Alec Roth, *A Time to Dance*, “Humdrum,” mm. 100-102
XVII. Autumnal

Table 4.14. A Herford Analysis on *A Time to Dance: Autumnal*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intro</th>
<th>A (a)</th>
<th>(b)</th>
<th>(a)</th>
<th>(b’)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>6-11</td>
<td>12-22</td>
<td>23-29</td>
<td>30-38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>TB unison →</td>
<td>TTB</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>“No spring nor summer”</td>
<td>“Were her first years”</td>
<td>“No spring nor summer”</td>
<td>“Here where still evening”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>All winds</td>
<td>strings</td>
<td>Strings &amp; winds →</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key area</td>
<td>D-Major →</td>
<td>D-minor</td>
<td>D-Major</td>
<td>D-Minor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Interlude</th>
<th>A (b)</th>
<th>(a)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>39-44</td>
<td>45-55</td>
<td>56-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>TB unison →</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>“If we love things”</td>
<td>“No spring nor summer”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>Winds</td>
<td>Strings &amp; winds →</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key area</td>
<td>D-Major</td>
<td>D-minor</td>
<td>D-Major</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the exception of percussion, all instruments of the orchestra are present in this tenor-bass movement. The main theme is first introduced in the winds before being taken over by unison voices. It is easy to decipher where and when the principal motive arrives as it always begins with the text, “No spring nor summer beauty hath such grace.” The string accompaniment consists of a brief two-beat canon underneath the D-Major motive. A(b) follows the same melodic contour as the previous, however it is sung in D-minor and employs perfect-fifth leaps, metric shifts, and alternates every two measures between winds and strings. The return of A(a) (m. 23) is a direct repeat of the opening (a).

The three-part division of the tenor and bass in m. 30 is harmonically and melodically equivalent to the previous A(b) section. However, the tempo slows drastically (lento), the texture
is more elaborate, and the principal instrument is a solo oboe d’amore. These attributes, which change the mood of the piece, suggest that this is a stand-alone movement.

The interlude which connects both large-A sections harkens back to the opening introduction. Measures 45-66 contain the same harmonic and melodic material as the previous large-A section. The only difference is that the ‘a tempo’ comes back half-way through and the order in which the two sub-phrases are presented are (b) before (a).

XVIII. Fall, leaves, fall

Equaling only one minute of performance, this SATB movement is seventeen measures in length. “No. 18 Fall, leaves, fall” includes a very stark, open-fifth played by handbells that strike every seven beats. For the first twelve measures, the soprano and bass maintain a unison descending line, painting the text, “fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers, away.” The harmonic motion of this B-minor movement is solely in the inner-voices (alto and tenor). While they are not in unison with one other, their movement and articulation are homophonic.

Each new phrase of text starts on the downbeat in soprano and tenor. The same poetry is sung throughout the choir, however, the inner-voices start each new phrase on beat two, one beat after outer-voices. The ending of this movement (m. 13) brings a homophonic, four-part texture, maintaining the tonic B-minor despite the accidentals in the upper voices.
XIX. The Evening Star

Table 4.15. A Herford Analysis on *A Time to Dance*: The Evening Star

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intro</th>
<th>Recit</th>
<th>A (a)</th>
<th>(interlude)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>1-12</td>
<td>13-19;</td>
<td>20-30;</td>
<td>31-38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3+4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(8+3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Alto solo</td>
<td>(Orchestra)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>“Thou fair-haired”</td>
<td>“thy radiant crown”</td>
<td>(interlude)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>3 off-stage trumpets, strings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key area</td>
<td>B-minor → B-flat-Major</td>
<td>B-minor</td>
<td>B-minor (D-Major)</td>
<td>B-minor → B-flat-Major</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A (continued)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(b)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>39-51;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5+4+4)</td>
<td>(3+3+3+2+7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>Alto solo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>“smile on our loves”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>3 off-stage trumpets, strings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key area</td>
<td>B-minor → B-flat-Major</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The final movement of Part III opens with a single A played by off-stage trumpets over a two-measure alternation between B-minor and B-flat-Major played by strings. The opening oboe obbligato of “No. 15 O Autumn” (the first movement of Part III) makes a return in this movement, this time down a half-step. This motive becomes the focal point of the aria, first played as a solo and then in canon.

The alto solo begins with a William Blake text sung in a recitative style, eventually overlapping with the return of the prolonged A of the trumpet. Roth elaborates on the aforementioned oboe obbligato by using different versions of the same ascending or descending step-wise triplets, either in quarter, eighth, or sixteenth notes (See Figure 4.14)
The A(b) section to follow is a trade-off between the solo alto and trumpet fanfare. As mentioned in earlier movements, Alec Roth is no stranger to the trumpet fanfare effect, the perfect-fourth leap, and tonal ambiguity from measure-to-measure. While the opening Introduction and A(a) sections alternate between B-minor and B-flat-Major, this section briefly introduces D-Major as a tonal option.
When the unison choir enters on a “hum,” the soloist sings iterations of the ascending triplet figure mentioned in Figure 4.14. The choir only sings twelve measures, and it undulates between the same five pitches. “The Evening Star” brings Part III to a close with the single-pitched A played by off-stage trumpet.

**Part IV: Winter Night**

**XX. Deep Midnight**

Roth begins his last section with an overwhelming sense of mystery and suspense. Before the bass soloists begins his recitative, the strings play an ascending G-minor figure as a tremolo which abruptly ends with the start of the John Donne text. A repeated open-fifth is played by handbells and is struck every two beats underneath the soloists.

Roth’s treatment of the text, while no longer in recitative, still sounds conversational. He assigns certain syllables to specific rhythms and syncopations, and in doing so, still gives the illusion of a recitative. This twenty three-measure movement ends with two-measures of unaccompanied singing on the text, “since this both the year’s and the day’s deep midnight is.”

**XXI. Snowflakes**

Table 4.16. A Herford Analysis on *A Time to Dance*: Snowflakes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Measure</strong></td>
<td><strong>Voice</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-10;</td>
<td>SSA/TBB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1+2+3+2+3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-18;</td>
<td>SSATBB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-37;</td>
<td>SSATTB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7+5+7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.16. A Herford Analysis on *A Time to Dance*: Snowflakes (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Voice</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Instrument</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>38-45; (2+2+2)</td>
<td>SSA/TBB</td>
<td>“This is the poem of the air”</td>
<td>Flute, bass drum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-51; (6)</td>
<td>SSATBB</td>
<td>“now whispered and revealed”</td>
<td>Unaccompanied → flute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key area</strong></td>
<td>C-minor →</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The twenty-first movement of this work demonstrates the effect of “mood-painting.”

Roth uses two staccato flutes to evoke a sense of falling snow. In the opening, he writes a pattern of 1-2-1 alternating between two pitches: for example: D-G-D, G-D-D-G, etc. (See Figure 4.15). At first listen, this pattern is tonally ambiguous until the C-minor entrance of the three-part treble voices.

![Figure 4.15. Alec Roth, A Time to Dance, “Snowflakes,” mm. 1-4](image)

With the first stanza of poetry, the texture is homophonic within the upper and lower voices, but composed as a call and response. The antecedent of each phrase is sung by SSA voices and the consequent phrase is sung by TBB. All parts come together on the unaccompanied “silent, and soft, and slow descends the snow” (m. 21) before being taken over by a flute canon.
of a similar, “snowflake” pattern. Each voice part actually descends on the aforementioned text, reiterating Roth’s compositional style of word-painting.

While the B section includes several accidentals that could assume G-flat-Major, the voice leading and cadence points would prove otherwise. Each new phrase imitates the previous, and only a few accidentals are consistent, suggesting that this section is in E-flat Major with the addition of blue notes. Section B also has very little metric regularity, as every measure has a different time signature to assist with natural speech inflection.

The return of A is almost identical to the previous with the addition of a falling eighth-note triplet figure interspersed within the 1-2-1 “snowflake” pattern. When played in canon, the flutes actively portray falling snow.

XXII. Dregs

This bass arioso is thirty-five measures in length that equals roughly 1:38 minutes of performance. The first fourteen measures are sung in a recitative style accompanied by single cello. Roth couples an E-flat-minor tonality with a closing text that includes: “end,” “dregs,” “bitter,” and “pain” among others. It is interesting to note that although this opening text is to be sung a la recitative, it is set to syncopated rhythms and meter shifts. Roth allows the singer a certain amount of liberty within reason. It is not until the formal, structured rhythm of the organ, cello, and bass (m. 15) that the aria begins.

Once the aria begins, the cello becomes equal to the soloist and functions as a reiteration or “echo.” The tessitura is quite high and the range quite large. The persistent, forward-moving eighth-notes of the organ are juxtaposed by the relaxed, legato of the voice and cello. “Dregs” is the final solo movement of Part IV and in turn, the final solo movement of the work. The end of
this Ernest Dowson poem, “this is the end of all the songs man sings,” is fitting for the last aria of *A Time to Dance*.

**XXIII. A glee for winter**

Table 4.17. A Herford Analysis on *A Time to Dance*: A glee for winter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Intro</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>Interlude</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-18;</td>
<td>19-42;</td>
<td>43-52;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>(1+4+4+4+5)</td>
<td>(4+4+4+4+8)</td>
<td>(4+6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>SATB (layered entrances)</td>
<td>SATB homophonic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>“Hence rude”</td>
<td>“Groups of kinsmen”</td>
<td>“Dance, dance”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>Cello, Bass</td>
<td>+ strings &amp; aux percussion</td>
<td>Tutti orchestra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key area</td>
<td>D-minor</td>
<td>F-Major</td>
<td>D-Major</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>Interlude</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-96;</td>
<td>97-106;</td>
<td>107-120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4+4+4+5+4+4+8)</td>
<td>(4+6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>SATB (layered entrances)</td>
<td>SATB homophonic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>“What will kill this dull old fellow?”</td>
<td>“dance, dance”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>All strings + aux percussion</td>
<td>Tutti orchestra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key area</td>
<td>F-Major</td>
<td>D-Major</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“A glee for winter” is the penultimate movement of this fourth and final “season” and begins with a very strong, declamatory opening. Sopranos begin with the first, layered iteration of the primary motive, and alto, tenor, bass follow suit. This motive alternates duple with triple figures (2/4 and 3/8) on a descending melodic trajectory, all while maintaining the strength of tempo, dynamic, and articulation. The support of the cello and bass is sustained and ominous until the first formal A section.
The orchestration is livelier in pitch and articulation, perpetuated by duple and triple figures. It also helps transition the ominous D-minor into a more jubilant F-Major. The choral entrances in this section are the exact opposite of the introduction. The primary motive ascends in melody, and the order of entrances is as follows: bass, tenor, alto, and soprano. This first section of A acts as a gradual build toward the celebratory (b). It is appropriate that this Refrain (b) is set in an asymmetric, dance-like meter (7/8) and the only sung text is “Dance!” The choir also expands its range by opening up the texture to SSATBB. To maintain the energy in this section, a single trumpet plays an obbligato figure that intertwines through the colla parte strings.

The overall structure of this movement is very symmetrical. After a brief seven-measure interlude, the A section returns with the same layered entrances as before on different text (“What will kill the dull old fellow?”). After another joyful refrain, the choir brings this movement to a close with a very subdued series of “ahs” and “mms.”

**XXIV. Lights out**

Table 4.18. A Herford Analysis on *A Time to Dance*: Lights out

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Intro</th>
<th>A (a)</th>
<th>(b)</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>7-19; (6+5+2)</td>
<td>20-36; (2+4+6+5)</td>
<td>37-48; (4+5+3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>SATB (unison) →</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>“I have come”</td>
<td>“Many a road and track”</td>
<td>“Here love ends”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>Strings</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Strings →</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key area</td>
<td>C-minor</td>
<td>C-phrygian →</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.18. A Herford Analysis on *A Time to Dance*: Lights out (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>49-83; (2+4+4+7+6+7+5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>SATB (unison)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>“There is not any book”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>Strings (+ organ in m. 60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key area</td>
<td>C-phrygian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This final movement of Part IV brings the entire work full-circle as it opens with the same harmonic progression as the Processional, this time played in the strings (See Figures 4.16 and 4.17 for comparison). Though Roth continues to write with no formal key signature, the sonority of “Lights out” is C-phrygian, despite the occasional accidental.

Figure 4.16. Alec Roth, *A Time to Dance*, “Lights out,” mm. 1-6

Figure 4.17. Alec Roth, *A Time to Dance*, “Processional,” mm. 7-10
One of the very striking features of this movement is the sung unison of the tutti choir throughout. The orchestral texture changes from phrase to phrase, but the choir never wavers from their syncopated unison. The melody explores a wide range for the ensemble, spanning a fourteenth.

With the change in the orchestra comes a very unique trait not yet seen from Roth. A champion of metric shifts, Roth only alternates between 2/2 and 3/4 during the opening, unaccompanied section (quasi recit). However, when the orchestra re-enters with the hemiola open-fifth, the choir maintains the 2/2 for the remainder of the movement (with the exception of one measure of 3/4 before the return of A).

Roth reserves the higher tessitura for dramatic, textual moments. The E-flat on top is only sung on the words or phrases: “suddenly,” “Here love ends,” and “ambition ends,” among others. Also, there are three measures in the A(b) section where there is a mysterious organ obbligato (m. 30-32). This brief organ figure foreshadows the more extensive organ feature from m. 60-83.

The B section starts in a higher register and at a stronger dynamic, bringing back the opening harmonic progression in the strings. The open-fifth orchestral hemiola returns in m. 49 before the choral return of A. Overall, Roth’s setting of this text shows consistent use of specific rhythmic motives except for the end. He augments the final few words, “lose my way and myself,” which is then repeated in the organ, bringing this movement to its end.

Epilogue: Sunrise

XXV. Elder by a year

The following two movements are meant to act as “book ends” with the opening two movements: the bass recitative, “No. 1 Out of the wood,” and the chorale, “No. 2 Rise up.”
Recreating the full cycle of the seasonal calendar, the movement begins in the same way with a C-minor drone played by cello and bass. The melody in the solo Bass is ominous due to the chromaticism of the harmonic-minor and the very specific rhythmic notation, encouraging a more speech-like performance.

Similar to opening movements (Nos. 1-2), Nos. 25-26 are connected by the same perfect-fourth leap. This fourteen-measure bass solo is attacca, and should set the upcoming tempo and be performed uninterrupted.

XXVI. The secret of the sun

Table 4.19. A Herford Analysis on *A Time to Dance*: The secret of the sun

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>1-3</th>
<th>4-7</th>
<th>8-13</th>
<th>14-19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>Solo soprano</td>
<td>+ SATB, 2pt hum drone (P4)</td>
<td>Solo tenor + SATB, 4pt hum progression</td>
<td>Solo alto + SATB, 2pt [o] drone (P4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>“Love”</td>
<td>“hath the secret of the sun”</td>
<td>“Love can tell”</td>
<td>“how in spite of woe and death”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>Trumpet 2/3</td>
<td>+ vln tremolo</td>
<td>No trumpet until 13</td>
<td>trumpet &amp; vln</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key area</td>
<td>D-minor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>20-28…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>Solo bass + SATB, 4pt [o] prog; All other solo lines join at m. 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>“this he taught us”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>Trumpet 2/3 &amp; vln tremolo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key area</td>
<td>D-minor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Like “No. 2 Rise Up,” this movement begins with a declamatory perfect-fourth played by the off-stage trumpets, but this time alternates with solo soprano voice. This movement replaces
all of the aforementioned bass solo lines with features for all of the other “seasonal” soloists: first soprano, followed by tenor, and alto.

Layered choral entrances and a harmonic ascension create a gradual build until the next movement, “No. 27.” Roth also explores a variety of textures (first in duet and then in four-part).

Similar to the earlier movement, the closed consonant [m] in m. 4 is accompaniment for the soloist, however, the choir becomes “the sun” in m. 16. Unlike “No. 2” however, the soloists join the choir in m. 24 on the text, “this we know,” which is the beginning of the end.

XXVII. Love, all alike

Numbers 25, 26, and 27 might all be considered one larger movement because together, they include 61 measures of re-purposed material. Considering “No. 28” is optional, it is necessary that “No. 27 Love, all alike” stand alone as a strong conclusion to this entire work. The opening two measures portray the same D-Major “sunrise” from the end of “No. 2.” The power of that very striking harmonic moment continues as the homophonic choir enters in two-part texture: Soprano with Tenor and Alto with Bass.

The melody of the choir employs familiar rhythmic motives, metric shifts, sustained fortes, and occasional accidentals. Through all of that, there is a calming nature to this movement enhanced by the notated tempo and sustained strings. The one point of motion comes from the single trumpet obbligato that is interspersed throughout the strings. Though the choral texture and text are different, the aforementioned trumpet obbligato is a direct repetition of the trumpet found in “No. 2 Rise Up.” Since it is the only point of motion, the use of trumpet here foreshadows the idea that the “cycle of life’s seasons” is continuous and ever-present.
**After Dance, “Proper Exercise”**

Table 4.20. A Herford Analysis on *A Time to Dance*: After Dance, Proper Exercise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Vs. 1 (a)</th>
<th>(b)</th>
<th>Vs. 2 (a’)</th>
<th>(b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-38; (5+5+4+4+4+4+4+4)</td>
<td>39-66; (4+5+4+4+4+4+7)</td>
<td>67-108; (4+4+4+7+4+4+6+4)</td>
<td>109-136; (4+5+4+4+4+7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>Solo Sop</td>
<td>SATB</td>
<td>Solo Tenor</td>
<td>SATB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>“Dancing bring lady, then began to be”</td>
<td>“This wondrous miracle did love”</td>
<td>“For that brave sun”</td>
<td>“This wondrous miracle did love”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>Organ &amp; Cello</td>
<td>Tutti Orch.</td>
<td>Organ &amp; Cello</td>
<td>Tutti Orch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key</td>
<td>D-minor →</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Vs. 3 (a’’)</th>
<th>(b)</th>
<th>Vs. 4 (a’’)</th>
<th>(b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>137-177; (4+2+4+4+4+4+4+4+7+4+4)</td>
<td>178-205; (4+5+4+4+4+7)</td>
<td>206-241; (4+4+4+4+4+8+4+4)</td>
<td>242-269; (4+5+4+4+4+7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>Solo Alto</td>
<td>SATB</td>
<td>Solo Bass</td>
<td>SATB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>“And thou sweet music”</td>
<td>“This wondrous miracle did love”</td>
<td>“Only the earth doth stand”</td>
<td>“This wondrous miracle did love”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>Organ &amp; Cello</td>
<td>Tutti Orch.</td>
<td>Organ &amp; Cello</td>
<td>Tutti Orch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key</td>
<td>D-minor →</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This optional movement is relatively strophic as each of the four verses begin with a soloist and conclude with a choral refrain. The first iteration is sung by Soprano soloist and establishes the D-minor tonality. This melodic line is accompanied by repetitive eighth notes in cello and organ, which gives the melody forward motion despite the soloist’s legato. Towards the end of this melody, there is a motive introduced that will recur throughout all of the solo lines on the text, “This wondrous miracle did love devise, for dancing is love’s proper exercise.”

The choral refrain begins by repeating the end of the previous phrase in unison verbatim, “This wondrous…” After this reiteration, the tutti choir and orchestra play eighteen measures of
syncopated and running eighth-note passages on the word, “dance.” Alec Roth evokes an energetic, dance-like mood by only using the first half of the word (“da”). This refrain employs homophony and polyphony throughout, but they all sing in congress (at one point or another) on “dance.” The choir claps in unison separating each new phrase.

Verse two features the solo Tenor with a variation on the aforementioned Soprano melody. Though his line has more syncopation and ornamentation, the general contour of the line is similar. The range is still within one octave, and the accompaniment is still scarce. The choral refrain is a direct repetition of the previous: “da” and “dance,” syncopated eighth-notes, and claps.

Verse three begins with solo Alto in a recitative style (only four measures). What makes this solo verse different than the others is the variety within the passage. The previous Soprano and Tenor solo lines are straight-forward, while the Alto line explores tempo and style: recitative, a tempo, allargando, largo. The choral refrain and “third dance” to follow is identical to the previous.

While the Alto solo brings more expressivity, the final verse, sung by solo Bass, is the most acrobatic with ascending and descending leaps and arpeggios. The tempo remains the same. The accompaniment in the cello and bass is more similar to the opening Soprano line with repetitive and syncopated eighth notes, giving more forward motion. To follow suit, the concluding choral refrain is to be expected with the addition of a final, spoken “Dance” and simultaneous clap.
CHAPTER 5
REHEARSAL AND PERFORMANCE CONSIDERATIONS

This chapter provides a starting point for the study, preparation, and performance of *A Time to Dance*. While rehearsal strategies and performance considerations are subjective, it is the author’s intent to provide informed advice toward producing an effective performance. These interpretive ideas are based on a thorough understanding of the work but should be taken as suggestions moving forward. It is not the intention to provide a “set of rules.”

*A Time to Dance as a whole*

*A Time to Dance* employs a variety of musical and dramatic concepts that are pervasive throughout the work. Before discussing the individual movements, this chapter will begin with general performance considerations and an overview of some recurring themes.

Choral directors are often faced with the challenge of finding repertoire that is interesting and challenging, yet accessible. More specifically with civic and community choirs (the intended level of this commission), “accessibility” may include (but is not limited to) predominantly tonal music with few atonalities, repetitions, da capo forms, symmetric phrase lengths and cadence points, and judicious use of unisons or canons. When considering contemporary music, conductors are often drawn to the concepts that make this music unique: new texts, metric shifts, bi- or poly-tonalities, use of minimalism among others. *A Time to Dance* demonstrates Alec Roth’s ability to compose contemporary “art” music while being sensitive to his target demographic- amateur choirs. According to Roth, “I hoped to create a work which would be useful, aimed at good amateur choirs, challenging but fun to rehearse and perform, practical to program…and be both entertaining and thought-provoking.”  

107 With that said, choral directors

107 Roth, interview.
should feel encouraged to program his work for high school, community, collegiate, or professional choirs. Many of his individual movements are also appropriate as stand-alone excerpts if interested.

As mentioned earlier, the instrumental forces required for Alec Roth’s work are those of a baroque orchestra: 2 flutes, 2 oboes (doubling oboe d’amore), 3 trumpets in D, continuo organ (or electronic keyboard), strings, and an additional, very elaborate set of auxiliary percussion. While this chapter will limit the discussion to vocal rehearsal and performance techniques, the contribution of the orchestra cannot be ignored. The composer’s intent was to orchestrate this piece similar to the Bach Magnificat, with the option to perform on either period or modern instruments. The flexibility in this desired orchestration is meant to reflect the ability of the orchestra. Both intermediate-level (collegiate or community) and professional ensembles could find this score approachable and enjoyable.

The orchestral forces are very specific and directly affect the size of the choir. A Time to Dance requires flexibility and coloratura, a variety of vocal timbres, and a balance within the ensemble. Depending on the performance venue, proficiencies of the choir, and the many musical requirements thereof, an average of thirty to forty singers would be appropriate. The overall balance of the ensemble can potentially be compromised by the individual placement of the orchestra, choir, trumpets, and soloists. A ten-singer “buffer,” especially with an amateur choir, can prevent an imbalance in favor of the orchestra. At least three upper-string players per instrument (violin 1, violin 2, viola), three cello, and one double-bass will create consistency and continuity among the orchestra without overwhelming the choir. These forces will support

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certain movements written for a three-part Violin 1 divisi (i.e. “No. 20 Deep Midnight”) or three-part Cello divisi.

*A Time to Dance* illicit a collage of emotion perpetuated by different musical “characters,” from triumphant fanfares to reflective, intimate moments. A performance space that can accommodate both is ideal. Too large of a venue will compromise the nuance of the music and the sensitivity of the piece. A reasonably sized recital hall (400-500 seats) or church sanctuary will offer an appropriately live acoustic and still allow flexibility for staging and choreography. This kind of venue will also support the integrity of the music and create an atmosphere conducive to Roth’s intent.

When selecting soloists, a decision must first be made as to whether or not they come from the choir or if they are featured as separate, additional singers. While the constant and consistent singing could be taxing on the soloists, including them as members of the choir would support the idea of ensemble and inclusion. The function and role of the soloists would be interpreted differently based on this decision.

The solo arias not only require expansive ranges, but a certain amount of facility, flexibility, and “musical personality.” Roth specifically assigns solo voices that follow a progression from high/light (soprano; tenor) to low/dark (alto/bass) as the year progresses from Spring to Winter. Acknowledging the composer’s ideal and the requirements of the arias, a spinto soprano, dramatic mezzo-soprano (to be further discussed later in this chapter), leggiero tenor, and a cavalier baritone would be most appropriate. While the arias were composed with specific people in mind, they are also meant to be accessible for good, amateur singers. Most of the solo movements are intermediate-level and do not necessarily require professionals. Of the

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109 Roth, interview.
four seasonal characters, however, the “summer” arias (for tenor) are more involved and may require a higher proficiency.

Alec Roth writes in a very conversational style, with detailed poetic ideas and frequent metric shifts. Based on the textual and musical analysis of this work, Roth prioritizes language and story-telling above all else. Therefore, tempo indications should be understood as suggestions. In an effort to not compromise the integrity of the text, the performance venue and acoustic may influence the desired tempi as well.

As discussed in earlier chapters, the “Processional” and “AfterDance” are considered optional movements. While performing those movements would bring Roth’s piece “full-circle,” he does make mention that it is not a requirement of performance. The treatment of these book-end movements are at the discretion of the conductor. If performed, consideration should be made to the placement of the ensemble within the performance space, making sure it is conducive to individual movement, processing, and recessing.

Many of Roth’s movements call for “off-stage” trumpets; an affect that evokes distance, reiteration, and reflection. The placement of these trumpets should support Roth’s dramatic ideas, and if there is not a formal “stage” available, attention should be given to other potential ideas. Suggestions include: aisles, balconies, behind the choir, outside of the hall, or off to a distant side. Since so many of his movements rely on off-stage trumpets, an effective solution would be to have additional trumpets strategically placed for the remainder of the work. Trumpets as a permanent fixture would solve the foreseen issue of re-positioning and placement from movement to movement.

In addition to the “off-stage” trumpets, Roth notates several other “special effects.” Examples include: instrumental slides, flutter-tonguing, body percussion, and a variety of vocal
affects (onomatopoetic singing, manipulating vowels, singing on consonants, weaving speech throughout song) among others. A very unique feature of *A Time to Dance* is its ability to combine modern performance practice with music people would deem as traditional. These dramatic and theatrical elements are intentional and should be highlighted.

There is not one key signature notated throughout this score (Edition Peters). That being said, there are specific and obvious tonicizations and tonal ideas notated (some ambiguous). Roth also employs bi- or polytonality. Analyzing these important harmonizations and tonal shifts will inform and support a conductor’s gesture and perspective.

**Processional, Prologue, and Part I: Spring Morning**

“Processional” begins with handbells and Baritone soloist, and their placement in space sets the tone for the entire work. Depending on the venue, putting handbells off to the side would allow more flexibility in movement for the forthcoming choir. To portray a sense of drama, the entrance of the choir needs to be deliberate and specific: the timing, their travelling pattern, the tempo of their walk, and the arrival to their on-stage positions. If the soloist doubles as a member of the ensemble, there could be an opportunity for creating strong imagery, having the choir envelop the soloist.

A decision must be made regarding the number of handbells played. If used as an instrument of reflection or distance, one per part is most appropriate. If interpreted as equal to the soloist, at least two or three handbells per part is ideal (perhaps placed throughout the hall). This section is also notated as “Full Choir or “Semi-Chorus,” giving the conductor certain liberties. One texture is more appropriate than the other depending on the function of the choir. Venue space may dictate a conductor’s decision, but a “Semi-Chorus” could be logistically appropriate, especially as a processional, and give the audience an ethereal experience.
Once the ensemble is set, the “Prologue” begins with “No. 1 Out of the wood,” the baritone recitative. Conductors should be sensitive toward maintaining the recitative-like solo with the re-articulation of the lower strings. The off-stage trumpets that help segue into “No. 2 Rise Up” need immediate attention. While the tremolos in the strings and the sustained choral textures create a sense of suspense, the trumpets have the only active figures. This movement should be a feature for solo baritone and trumpet.

In order to musically depict a “sunrise,” Roth writes a contour that builds over twenty-nine measures. This is a unique moment for this work as it is then repeated in one of the final movements. Roth also writes “attacca” at the end, wanting conductors to continue uninterrupted. It is the author’s opinion that for such a pivotal moment, it would be appropriate to pause between this movement and the next; highlighting No. 2 as a stand-alone moment.

Roth suggests “Vivacissimo” (quarter=168) for “No. 3 Awake.” As mentioned earlier, conductors should be cautious about quick tempi at the expense of the text. Roth also juxtaposes a connected, sustained choral texture against forward-moving and detached eighth-notes in the orchestra. Conductors should not compromise the integrity of the orchestral articulation, and therefore, must decide what to conduct: the lyricism of the choir or the drive of the orchestra.

“No. 4 Infant Joy” is a soprano recitative, aria, and choral movement with soprano descant. The function of the soloist shifts over the course of forty-one measures. Deciding how much of this movement is a recitative versus a structured aria or chorale is important. That will inform the appropriateness of conducting gesture. At mm. 11, the tempo indicates “Piú moso” (quarter = 120-126). To support Roth’s conversational style, conducting the 4/4 phrases in two (ala breve) may give this section more flow (See Figure 5.1). As for the shifts from 2/4 to 3/4, an
overall hypermeter, maintaining the ictus on “Joy,” will highlight the appropriate syllabic stresses and create a dance-like “lilt.”

One of the distinct features of this movement is the harmonization of “smile” in mm. 23, moving from E-minor7 to C-Major +2. Jeffrey Skidmore and Ex Cathedra interpret this chord change as a slide figure, giving the physicality of “smiling” to the shift in tonality (See Figure 5.1). This moment is somewhat unexpected and re-energizes the ear.
Figure 5.1. Alec Roth, *A Time to Dance*, “Infant Joy,” mm. 9-24
“No. 5 Dancing on the hilltops” is another movement that features off-stage trumpets. Once one off-stage moment has been set, it is important to maintain the audience’s expectation. If additional trumpets are unavailable, finding the appropriate time for players to re-position is critical. The arch of the overall drama cannot be interrupted. Unlike the earlier “sunrise,” this notated attacca should be treated as such. The purpose of No. 5 is to introduce No. 6.

The very first thing audiences hear in “No. 6 Dance there” is the very obvious and constant eighth-note canon in the winds (bassoon, flute, and oboe). Since the choral texture is homophonic and the meter unwavering, gestural attention should be given to the orchestra. At this moment, the ensemble needs gestural clarity and specificity. The B section (mm. 29) employs quarter-note triplets in the choir against eighth-note triplets in orchestra. While the orchestral triplet suggests a compound meter, conducting in a simple meter will be more efficient for all parties. There is a sudden shift in mood at mm. 40 on the text, “But I am old and you are young.” This moment should be slower to highlight this reflective poetry.

The movement that follows, “No. 7 Nothing is so beautiful, is a soprano accompagnato recitative. Conductors should feel comfortable with only showing the re-articulation in the orchestra. The soloist has several cadenza moments and needs the support of the orchestra (See Figure 5.2). After the nineteen measures of recitative, mm. 20 should set the upcoming tempi for No. 8. The end of this recitative should not sound like a conclusion to No. 7 but rather an introduction to the proceeding movement (See Figure 5.2).
Figure 5.2. Alec Roth, *A Time to Dance*, “Nothing is so beautiful,” mm. 13-22

As mentioned in the opening of this chapter, Alec Roth gives very specific direction, both musically and logistically. Once decisions early in the score have been made, they should be applied throughout the work. “No. 8 Let them love” demonstrates this with the parallel treatment in mm. 65 on the text, “love now.” This moment is in homage to the “smile” from “No. 4 Infant Joy” and should be performed similarly, with the notated slide.
Part II: Summer Noon

The opening of Roth’s second section begins with the very expressive and sultry tenor aria, “No. 9 In Summer’s heat.” Chapter four articulates the correlation between this movement and Bizet’s “Habanera” from Carmen. While Carmen compares love to a rebellious bird and gypsy child, the tenor character describes an intimate moment with a woman “in summer’s heat.”

Since the Habanera motive is so recognizable, there should be an equal balance between tenor and lower strings, almost as a character in itself. While the oboe obligato helps convey passion and drama, it is the violin slides in the B section that need attention. Up until now, the audience has not heard “special effects” in the orchestra, and Roth uses it here to portray the tenor’s love-interest, Corinna.

“No 11 Thirsty fly” is written as a tenor aria but the tone of the piece would suggest a duet between solo tenor and flutter-tonguing flute. This movement is certainly a character piece and should be performed as an equal feature between both parties.

When referring to Ex Cathedra’s recording, one might assume that Roth’s work is more difficult than it actually is. “No. 14 Give all to love” is a prime example of this “challenging” music intended for an accessible crowd (performers and audience alike). At first listen, the tempo and articulation appear demanding, but when given a closer look, the repetitive nature of the orchestra and the unisons of the choir make this movement more approachable than others. Finding similarities between voice parts and acknowledging unisons will make for a more efficient rehearsal.

Part II: Summer Noon consists of six movements: three tenor recitatives or arias, two brief chorales that provide commentary, and one real choir feature. Once into the interior of the
work, it appears that the composition requires less decision-making as Roth’s interpretive ideas are notated explicitly. His compositional style is distinct and his ideas specific.

**Part III: Autumn Evening**

Similar to Part II, the majority of Part III: Autumn Evening highlights the alto soloist. Jeffrey Skidmore and Ex Cathedra chose a countertenor (Matthew Venner) to portray the role of “autumn.” The first consideration should be comparing a countertenor to an alto/mezzo-soprano. A male soloist gives a different connotation and dramatic effect than a female, and the decision should not be made lightly.

The obvious challenges of having a counter-tenor include general vocal timbre and tessitura. For example, “No. 15 O Autumn” employs a full octave range, and while the lower melody maintains Roth’s idea of ease and connection, the higher melody can sound jarring and unexpected. It is the opinion of the author to recommend a mezzo soprano for the arias in Part III.

Adversely, “No. 16 Humdrum” demonstrates the opposite. The soprano and alto are at a consistently lower tessitura and a “fortissimo” dynamic. Roth acknowledges this challenge by placing the melody entirely in unison, creating an opportunity for mutual support. The pedagogical question is one of vocal placement. Female singers have a tendency to use a “chest voice” for production in a lower register. Conductors should encourage singers to appreciate the unison and to deter from “over-singing” (See Figure 5.3). Since the text is non-gendered (does not speak specifically of “female” or “feminine” ideas), assigning a few tenors to sing with the altos will (potentially) avoid negative intonation and long-term vocal damage among females.
Part IV: Winter Night, Epilogue, and AfterDance: Proper Exercise

Unlike the previous sections, Part IV: Winter Night is largely choral. The full-ensemble movements are the most challenging in this last section as they are harmonically intricate, tonally ambiguous, and metrically unstable at quick tempi. These movements require more facility and coloratura. Conductors may consider approaching these movements earlier in a rehearsal calendar and with more frequency. As mentioned before, performance directions are clearly indicated in the score by the composer and should be met with accuracy and detail.

“No. 21 Snowflakes” begins with a consistent three-part division in both upper and lower voices: SSA and TBB. Instead of only dividing soprano and bass, directors may wish to consider dividing all upper and lower voices equally: Top/Middle/Bottom versus Soprano 1, Soprano 2, Alto. This moment in Part IV should sound like two, balanced trios.
The bass solo in “No. 22 Dregs” is ambiguous in function. While there is a cello/bass accompaniment notated in the opening, the style and flexibility of the soloist would lead one to assume a secco recitative. The entrance of organ in mm. 15 creates a more consistent, structured aria. Identifying the role of the bass soloist will inform the performance of this movement and the overall closure of Roth’s work.

The movement to follow, “No. 23 A glee for winter,” is riddled with asymmetric and mixed meters. In the 7/8 refrains (B), Roth notates the appropriate sub-divisions above the score: 2+2+3 or 3+2+2. However, in the A sections, there are no interpretive suggestions. The consecutive 3/8 measures should be felt in a hypermeter (one large four-pattern), but the constant, one-measure shifts from 2/4 to 3/8 may be more easily understood if dictated every measure.

As discussed in chapter four, “No. 24 Lights out” harkens back to earlier harmonic material, making this movement one of reflection. The stark, unaccompanied unison of the choir gives the opening a mysterious and stoic effect. Similar to “No. 16 Humdrum,” the general tessitura is placed very low, specifically for higher voice (soprano and tenor). Refer to aforementioned details for solutions. Considering the unison texture, the choir must be sensitive to the balance with the orchestra.

It is the opinion of the author that the “Epilogue” (Nos. 25-27) is the most appropriate conclusion to A Time to Dance. This series of movements features each one of the “seasonal” soloists and brings back several earlier harmonic and melodic ideas. The combination of the homophonic choir and trumpet obbligati makes this moment a real feature for the entire ensemble and gives the audience a triumphant, yet reflective, closure. “AfterDance” introduces
brand new information with little to no context. Though this movement does also feature each of
the soloists, the choral moments are unimpressive and are treated like accompaniment.

If the decision is to include “AfterDance,” either as a formal movement or recessional,
consideration should be made to the clapping during each of the refrains. Successful body
percussion relies on the comfort and memorization of the choir. “Dance” is to then be shouted in
the very last measure, so treating this movement as a recessional may be inappropriate since the
choir is needed in the very last measure.
CONCLUSION

Alec Roth’s 2012 composition, *A Time to Dance*, is a work that sets itself aside from its English contemporaries. It is a piece that caters to the entire choral community; a modern/contemporary masterwork accessible for ensembles of all abilities and proficiencies. Roth’s work exemplifies ‘variety,’ from its source material of authors and playwrights, to the musical variety of tempi, timbre, texture, and orchestration. Though there are movements that rely heavily on the support from the orchestra, Roth does include excerpts with either minimal instrumentation or none at all. The diversity of orchestration, paired with the aforementioned variety of compositional style, makes this a work conducive to choirs of all levels or directors who may feel empowered to excerpt single movements.

The research presents a detailed analysis of Roth’s musical intent and a background into his chosen source material. While there is little scholarship that supports the development of this work, the author’s suggested rehearsal strategies and performance considerations will offer information not yet presented.

*A Time to Dance* is a piece heavily rooted in the correlation between literature and Roth’s main themes of this work: time, season, love, and dance. It is the author’s belief that this monograph will inspire further investigation into the choral music of Alec Roth, especially in the United States. His compositional voice is accessible, creative, and worthy of further study and performance.
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APPENDIX A
INTERVIEW WITH ALEC ROTH

This interview took place over email between October 4 and October 29, 2018. The interviewer (Eric Rubinstein) and the interviewee (Alec Roth) corresponded from their respective homes in Melville, NY, USA and London, UK.

My name is Eric Rubinstein. I can be reached by email at Rubinstein.eric@gmail.com and by phone at +1 (631) 806-5797. The purpose of my research is to develop a musical and textual analysis of your 2012 composition *A Time to Dance* and subsequently develop a guide for its performance. There will be no sensitive information collected in this study. Information will be collected through an interview with you on your commissioning and compositional processes. We will discuss your inspirations and goals for the work, your relationships with the texts chosen for each movement, and the musical traits of this work that make it uniquely yours. The information included in my document will only be what we discuss, so any risk involved in this study will only be in regard to the printing of our discussion today. You have the right to refuse to participate in this interview. At any time you may choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of any benefit to which you might otherwise be entitled. Only information we discuss as well as that previously published in the Peters edition of *A Time to Dance* will be included in this study; all other aspects of your personal privacy will be withheld and protected. Alec, do you have any questions?

Alec Roth: No.

ER: Do you agree to participate in this interview?

AR: I do.

ER: This study has been approved by the LSU Internal Review Board. The LSU Internal Review Board looked at this project and determined it did not need a formal review. For questions concerning participant rights, please contact the IRB Chair, Dr. Dennis Landin, +1 (225) 578-8692, or irb@lsu.edu.

1. What influenced this composition? What were the circumstances of the commission?

The commission was unique in my experience in being so well planned and so far in advance prepared by the commissioner, Lady Dione Digby. For me, this support, and in particular the long time-scale was one of the main reasons for the success of the project. Fulfilling a commission well (and on time) is a skill all freelance composers have to develop. But offering a commission is also a skilful business, and in this instance Lady Digby offered a shining example of how it can be done, and it is worthwhile that I should say something more about it here. The circumstances of the commission were (as is usually the case in my work) major influences in its composition. The brief was to create a new work to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Summer Music Society of Dorset (SMSD), founded by Lady Digby in 1963 and run by her ever since. This annual festival presented a series of 6 or 7 concerts over the summer months in
various venues (stately homes, churches, civic halls etc) throughout the county of Dorset. The programmes were usually of chamber music, but covered a wide range of ensembles and repertoire. The performers throughout the 50-year history were of the highest international calibre, and the concerts built up a dedicated audience of music-lovers from near and far. My new work was thus required to be celebratory in character, and somehow reflect 50 years of distinguished music-making. But apart from the general injunction to be celebratory, there were several other decisions by Lady Digby which had an influence of the work itself: As befits a celebration, it was decided that the work should be on a large scale and that it should be performed in the magnificent surroundings of Sherbourne Abbey, which has the largest seating capacity of the available venues: [http://sherborneabbey.com/visit/about-sherborne-abbey/sherborne-abbey-gallery/]

In 49 years of concert planning, the one work which Lady Digby had always wanted to programme but never succeeded in doing was the Magnificat of J. S. Bach. So it was determined that the commissioned work would be programmed alongside the Bach. This had major implications for the new work, in terms of duration and of the vocal and instrumental forces which would be available.

In terms of performers, Lady Digby asked my opinion of who should be engaged. Since I had developed a very strong working relationship with Ex Cathedra and their director, Jeffrey Skidmore, I suggested that I should work with them. Lady Digby was nothing if not thorough. She attended an Ex Cathedra concert in their home city of Birmingham in addition to listening to their various CDs, and then booked them to perform a programme of baroque music in Sherborne Abbey at the 2010 SMSD concerts. She explained that she wanted to introduce her audience to the musicians who would be performing the 50th anniversary commission. This was wonderful for me, as I was able to hear the performers I was writing for in the venue I was writing for a good two years before the date of the premiere, and the experience fed directly into the compositional process, in that it gave me ideas about how to use the performers in this particular space to best advantage.

After I had accepted the commission, Lady Digby sent me two suggestions for possible texts to use: (1) a book of poems by the 16th century writer Thomas Wyatt (who is buried in Sherbourne Abbey); and (2) one of her favourite biblical texts - the passage in Ecclesiastes about times and seasons: A time to be born and a time to die . . . &c. I was very taken with the Wyatt poems, especially the love lyrics (clearly intended to be sung). But I felt them too intimate and too passionate for use in a work intended as a public celebration. Instead I composed a song cycle (My Lute and I) for tenor (Mark Padmore) and guitar (Morgan Szymanski), using a selection of Wyatt’s verses. Lady Digby then presented the premiere of this work at one of her 2011 SMSD concerts in the Chapel at Lulworth Castle. Having introduced her audience to Ex Cathedra the previous year, she now wanted them to hear some music by the composer of the following year’s commission.

The second suggestion - the passage from Ecclesiastes - gave me the theme of the new work: Times and Seasons; the title: A Time To Dance; and the text for the opening processional. So the whole process happened over three years: the commission itself was offered and accepted in summer 2009, and the audience was carefully prepared by being introduced the the performers
in 2010, and the sound of the composer’s music in 2011, before the premiere of the work itself in 2012. Such careful long-term planning of a commission was for me both unprecedented and inspirational, and played a considerable part in the success of the project for all concerned. These supportive interventions aside, Lady Digby proved a model commissioner in that she left me completely to my own devices during the actual composition process. Once I had determined the title and theme, I spent about a year gathering a huge number of possible texts; and then a further six months whittling them down to about 30 and arranging them in a satisfying order within a large-scale cyclical structure. The composition of the music was spread over another twelve months.

There were many other influences on the piece - particularly from the performers: Jeffrey Skidmore; the vocal soloists; Ex Cathedra Choir; and especially, the players of the Ex Cathedra Baroque Ensemble, since this was the first time I had written for “period” instruments, and there was a great deal to learn. But I have written about these factors before, and I can’t really add anything to my notes in the CD booklet (follow the link to the PDF above).

2. How did you choose these poems/poets?

I don’t think I can really add anything useful to the answer I gave to the first question in the Presto interview (follow the link to the Presto website above).

3. Did the commissioning ensemble have any specifics to which they asked you to accommodate? If so, what were they?

The SMSD commissioned the work, not the ensemble, but my working relationship with the performers was certainly influential, as it always is. But the specifics to which I had to accommodate came almost entirely from Bach’s orchestration of his Magnificat.

4. What was your vision beyond the premiere? What did you hope people would take away?

I hoped to create a work which would be useful, aimed at good amateur choirs, challenging but fun to rehearse and perform, practical to programme (I ensured that the orchestral parts could be played on either modern or “period” instruments), and be both entertaining and thought-provoking (each season/time has its dark side too) for audiences. Whether I have succeeded in any of these aims is not for me to say, but I did find the Gramophone review of the CD recording very pleasing: https://www.gramophone.co.uk/review/roth-a-time-to-dance - even if the supposed influences on my music are all very wide of the mark. There are a couple of American composers who have influenced me a little, but none of those mentioned in the review. Actually, I find this whole business of supposed influences rather uninteresting - please see my answer to the third question in the Presto interview (I don’t think you have cryptic crosswords in the US, otherwise you might recognise that my answer to David contains a word-play riddle - which as far as I know, no-one has yet spotted).
5. What elements of dance are pervasive throughout? What is the correlation between the Seasons and Dance? Any specific dance forms? (for example, a variation on the Habanera is apparent in “In summer’s heat”)

My comments about dance in the Presto interview (link above) are relevant here.

6. What was influenced by the Bach Magnificat besides orchestration, influence of dance, and trinity of trumpets?

In the Magnificat, Bach’s treatment of text is quite different from the Cantatas and the Passions (apart from the obvious one that the words are Latin rather than German). So there are no big, formal da capo arias, for example; all the movements are quite short and make their musical points with great precision and concision, encompassing a huge variety of styles and moods, and yet forming a fluent coherence and satisfying overall structure. This was a very useful model for me, because I had chosen to set a large number of different texts.

7. What would you say is your compositional style? I notice frequency in metric shifts, stand-alone perfect-interval leaps, etc.

Again, I don’t think I can really add anything useful to the answer I gave to the question about musical style in the Presto interview (link above).

8. What is the significance of your recurring motives? For example, Mm1-2 In Summer’s heat is augmented in the opening of the next movement. The chromatic motive at the end of A something is the same as Thirsty Fly.

That’s an interesting question. The technique of overlapping - using a musical idea or motif from the end of one movement in the beginning of the next movement can be a very useful way of enhancing continuity. It’s certainly something that I’ve observed Bach using to great effect,


“My “compositional style” is something I never think about. It’s like asking why do you walk the way you do, or speak the way you do? I’m just intent on where I’m going, or what I want to say. We are what we eat; and since it’s a question of taste, that applies in music too. Someone whose musical memory-banks are nourished by copious helpings of say Rachmaninov; Eisler; Dangdut; Haydn; Eccles; Rheinberger; Reggae; Isaac; Nono or Gagaku, might initially hear their echoes in a piece of music new to them (whether they are actually there or not), because listening is a creative process of making musical sense of what we hear. The process will vary from listener to listener according to their accumulated experience and tastes. And nowadays when every conceivable kind of music is instantly accessible at the click of a mouse, the possibilities are legion.”
although it’s often done very subtly, without drawing attention to itself, and so works on the audience at a more subconscious level.

I do occasionally use this technique quite consciously. As you point out in your second example, the appearance of the fly is well prepared musically in the previous number. One of the reasons I brought these two poems together was my thought that perhaps Emily Dickinson’s “Something” could be the sound of a fly. It’s just the sort of off-the-wall thing she might think of. It put me in mind of her extraordinary poem “I heard a fly buzz when I died” [which I just happen to be setting to music for my next cantata at the moment!].

However, your first example (In Summer’s Heat), I was completely unaware of until you pointed it out, so I must have made the connection subconsciously. That often happens. At the initial composing stage, I work largely intuitively, and often only understand what I’ve done afterwards - and sometimes a long time afterwards - and (as in this case, evidently) sometimes not at all!

9. What is the significance of specific voice part soloists to portray certain seasons?

I suppose there is a progression from high/light voices (soprano; tenor) to low/dark voices (alto/bass) as the year progresses from Spring to Winter, but there were other important considerations, such as the musical personalities I was writing for. For example, the tenor Samuel Boden has great vocal agility, the ability to get text across clearly, and a rare gift for comedy. I actually chose the Summer texts with him in mind.

10. Any unforeseen rehearsal or performance issues?

No. One particular technical challenge of ATTD is the placing of the three trumpet players, who take up various positions, onstage and offstage, during the course of the work. But observing Ex Cathedra’s performance in Sherborne Abbey in 2010 had given me lots of ideas about this, and the problem of coordination was easily solved.

11. Are you currently working on anything now?

I’m currently very busy working on a new cantata commission for Ex Cathedra, which will be premiered next February: http://excathedra.co.uk/season-1819-beginnings-endings/

The title (also taken from the Ecclesiastes passage) is A Time to be Born and a Time to Die, and the new work will be performed alongside two cantatas by J. S. Bach on a similar theme.

12. How many known performances of this piece are there? Do you get feedback or inquiries?

Now that the work is published, it’s not possible for me to keep track of performances, but occasionally enquiries about this and other works do come through my website, and are then
passed on to my publisher. The first two US performances came about in this way, so I do have a little information about them:

(Incidentally, for the above article, the interview was conducted by telephone, and the title of the poetry anthology I mentioned somehow got garbled and came out as Bartleby’s; it should be Bartlett’s Poems for Occasions. The Reading Eagle’s sub-editor also managed to spell my name wrong, but I’m quite used to that - even my mother used to get it wrong sometimes!)

US premiere review:

USA West Coast premiere, 25 February 2018:
http://choralconsortiumofsandiego.org/event/escondido-choral-arts-a-time-to-dance/

That’s all I have time for I’m afraid. I hope it is of some use.
All best wishes Alec Roth
29 October 2018
APPENDIX B
TEXTS AND SOURCES
(Edition Peters, 2017)

PROCESSIONAL: Times and Seasons choir
To every thing there is a season,
and a time to every purpose under the heavens:
A time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;
A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down,
and a time to build up;
A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep,
and a time to cast away;
A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence,
and a time to speak;
A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war,
and a time of peace;
A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn and a time to dance.

ECCLESIASTES 3: 1–3, 5–8, 4 (King James Version, 1611)

PROLOGUE: Sunrise
1. Out of the wood side by side
Out of the wood of thoughts that grows by night
To be cut down by the sharp axe of light –
Out of the night, two crows together crow,
Clearing the darkness with a silver blow.
And bright before my eyes twin trumpeters stand,
Heralds of splendour, one at either hand . . .

EDWARD THOMAS (1878–1917), from Cookcrow

2. Rise up side by side, choir
Rise up, rise up,
And, as the trumpet blowing
Chases the dreams of men,
As the dawn glowing
The stars that left us
The land and water,
Rise up and scatter
The dew that covers
The print of last night’s lovers –
Scatter it, scatter it!

While you are listening
To the clear horn,
Forget, men, everything
On this earth unbourn,
Except that it is lovelier
Than any mysteries.
Open your eyes to the air
That has washed the eyes of the stars
Through all the dewy night:
Up with the light,
To the old wars;
Arise, arise!

EDWARD THOMAS (1878–1917), The Trumpet

PART I: SPRING MORNING

3. Awake choir
Awake, my heart, to be loved, awake, awake!
The darkness silvers away, the moon doth break,
It leaps in the sky: unrisen lustres stake
The o’ertaken moon. Awake, O heart, awake!

Awake, the land is scattered with light, and sea,
Unanointed sleep is flying from field and tree;
And blossoming brought of April in laughter shake;
Awake, O heart, to be loved, awake, awake!

ROBERT BRIDGES (1844–1930), from Awake, my heart

4. Infant Joy solo soprano & choir
"I have no name:
I am but two days old."
What shall I call thee?
"Thou happy am,
Joy is my name."
Sweet joy befall thee!

Pretty Joy!
Sweet Joy, but two days old.
Sweet Joy I call thee:
Thoudest smile,
Sing the while,
Sweet joy befall thee!

WILLIAM BLAKE (1757–1827), Infant Joy

5. Dancing on the hill-tops side by side
Dancing on the hill-tops,
Laughing with the echoes,
Merry little Alice.

If her father’s cottage
Turned into a palace,
And he owned the hill-tops
And the flowering valleys,
She’d be more the happier,
Happy little Alice.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI (1830–94), from Dancing on the hill-tops

6. Dance there choir
Dance there upon the shore;
What need have you to care
For wind or water’s race?
And tumble out your hair
That the salt drops have wet;
Being young you have not known
The fool’s triumph, nor yet
Love lost as soon as won.

O you will take whatever’s offered
And dream that all the world’s a friend,
Suffer as your mother suffered,
Be as broken in the end.
But I am old and you are young,
And I speak a barbarous tongue.

W B YEATS (1865–1939), from To a child dancing in the wind

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7. Nothing is so beautiful solo sopranino
Nothing is so beautiful as Spring.
What is all this juice and all this joy?
A strain of the earth’s sweet being in the beginning
In Eden garden. Have, get, before it dloy!
GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS (1844–89), from Spring

8. Let them love choir
Let them love now—those who have never loved;
And those who have loved—let them love again!

Spring is young, spring is melodious, now is the world re-born.
Love is truly harmonious; now all the birds sing a marriage song;
and the trees let down their boughs
after the rain’s wedding-night caresses.

Love now binds all together, down in the shady woodland grove.
Love entwines, weaving together her green myrtle boughs;
and now the lovely Diane from on high lays down the law:
Let them love now—those who have never loved;
And those who have loved—let them love again!
ANON (2nd/3rd century), from Persiusian Verses (lines 1–6)
translated from Latin by ALEC ROTH

PART II: SUMMER NOON

9. In summer’s heat solo tenor
In summer’s heat and mid-time of the day
To rest my limbs upon a bed I lay,
One window shut, the other open stood,
Which gave such light as twinkles in a wood.

Then came Corinna in a long loose gown,
Her white neck hid with trees hanging down:
Resembling fair Semiramis going to bed
Or Laod of a thousand women spied.

Stark naked as she stood before mine eye,
Not one wrap in her body could I spy.
What arms and shoulders did I touch and see,
How apt her breasts were to be pressed by me?
How smooth a belly under her waist saw I?
How large a leg, and what a lusty thigh?

Judge you the rest: being tired she made me kiss,
Love seed me more such afternoons as this.

OVID (45BC–AD17), from The Fifth Eclog, translated from Latin by CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE (1564–93)

10. A something choir
A something in a summer’s Day
As she her fairbeaux burn away
Which solemnizes me.

A something in a summer’s noon—
A depth—an Azur—a perfume—
Transcending estony.

EMILY DICKINSON (1830–86), from A something

11. Thirsty fly solo tenor
Busy, curious, thirsty fly!
Drink with me and drink as I:
Freely welcome to my cup,
Couldst thou sip and sip it up:
Make the most of life you may,
Life is short and wears away.

Both alike are mine and thine
 Hastening quick to their decline:
This is a summer, mine no more,
Though repeated in threescore.
Threescore summers, when they’re gone,
Will appear as short as one!
WILLIAM OILDYS (1596–1761), On a fly drinking out of his cup

12. Little fly choir
Little fly,
Thy summer’s play
My thoughtless hand
Has brush’d away.

Am not I
A fly like thee?
Or art not thou
A man like me?

For I dance,
And drink, and sing,
Till some blind hand
Stall break my wing.

If thought is life
And strength and breath,
And the want
Of thought is death;

Then am I
A happy fly,
If I live
Or if I die.

WILLIAM BLAKE (1757–1827), The Fly

13. Come, let us go solo tenor
Come, let us go, while we are in our prime,
And take the harmless folly of the time!
We shall grow old space, and die
Before we know our liberty.
Our life is short, and our days run
As fast away as does the sun.

ROBERT HERRICK (1591–1674), from Corina’s going a-Maying

14. Give all to love choir
Give all to love;
Obey thy heart.
’Tis a brave master;
Let it have scope:
Follow it utterly,
Hope beyond hope;
High and more high
It dives into noon.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–82), from Give all to love
PART III: AUTUMN EVENING

15. O Autumn sola rubo
O Autumn, laden with fruit, and stained
With the blood of the grape, pass not, but sit
Beneath my shady roof; there thou mayst rest,
And tune thy jolly voice to my fresh pipe,
And all the daughters of the year shall dance!

WILLIAM BLAKE (1757–1827), from To Autumn

16. Humdrum hora (ladies)
When maidens are young, and in their spring,
Of pleasure, of pleasure, let them take their full swing,
Full swing, full swing,
And love, and dance, and play, and sing.
For Silvia, believe it, when youth is done,
There's sought but hum-drums, hum-drums, hum-drums.
There's sought but hum-drums, hum-drums, hum-drums.

Then Silvia be wise, be wise, be wise,
The painting and dressing for a while are supplies,
And may surprise—
But when the fire's going out in your eyes,
It twinkles, it twinkles, and does, and dies,
And then to hear love, to hear love from you,
I'd as lief hear an owl cry, Wit to won! Wit to won! Wit to won!

APHRA BEHN (1640–89), from The Empress of the Moon (Act II Scene 3)

17. Autumunal hora (gentlemen)
No spring nor summer beauty hath such grace
As I have seen in one autumnal face.

Were her first years the golden age? That's true,
But now she's gold'd off tried and ever new.
That was her torrid and inflaming time,
This is her tolerable tropic clime.

Here where still evening is, not noon nor night,
Where no voluptuousness, yet all delight.
In all her words, unto all hearers fit,
You may at revels, you at council, sit.

If we love things long sought, age is a thing
Which we are fifty years in compassing;
If transient things, which soon decay,
Age must be lovliest at the latest day.

JOHN DONNE (1572–1631), from The Autumnal

18. Fall, leaves, fall hora
Fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers, away;
Lengthen night and shorten day;
Every leaf speaks bliss to me,
Fluttering from the autumn tree.

EMILY BRONTË (1818–48), from Fall, leaves, fall

19. The Evening Star sola rubo & choir
Thou fair-haired angel of the evening,
Now, while the sun rests on the mountains, light
Thy bright torch of love; thy radiant crown
Put on, and smile upon our evening bed!

Smile on our love; and, while thou drawest the
Blue curtains of the sky, scatter thy silver dew
On every flower that shuts its sweet eyes
In timely sleep.
Speak silence with thy glimmering eyes,
And wash the dusk with silver.

WILLIAM BLAKE (1757–1827), from The Evening Star

PART IV: WINTER NIGHT

20. Deep midnight sola habis
The sun is spent, and now his flasks
Send forth light squibs, no constant rays;
The world's whole sap is sunk;
The general balm the hydropoic earth hath drunk,
Whither, as to the bed's feet, life is shrunk... since this
Both the year's and the day's deep midnight is.

JOHN DONNE (1572–1631)
from A Nuptuall upon St Lucy's Day, being the shortest day

21. Snowflakes hora
Out of the bosom of the Air,
Out of the cloud-fields of her garments shaken,
Over the woodlands brown and bare,
Over the harvest-fields forsaken,
Silent, and soft, and slow
Descends the snow

Even as our cloudy fancies take
Suddenly shape in some divine expression,
Even as the troubled heart doth make
In the white countenance confession.
The troubled sky reveals
The grief it feels.

This is the poem of the air,
Slowly in silent syllables recorded;
This is the secret of despair,
Long in its cloudy bosom hoarded,
Now whispered and revealed
To wood and field.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW (1807–82), Snow-Flakes

22. Dregs sola habis
The fire is out, and spent the warmth thereof,
(This is the end of every song man sings!)
The golden wine is drunk, the dregs remain,
Bitter as wormwood and as salt as pain;
And health and hope have gone the way of love
Into the drear oblivion of lost things.
With pale, indifferent eyes, we sit and wait
For the dropt curtain and the closing gate:
This is the end of all the songs man sings.

ERNST DOWSON (1867–1900), from Dreg

23. A glee for winter hora
Hence, rude Winter! cabbed old fellow,
Never merry, never mellow!
Well-a-day in rain and snow
What will keep one's heart aglow?
Groups of kinmen, old and young.
Oldest they old friends among.
Groups of friends, so old and true
That they seem our kinmen too;
These all merry all together
Charm away chill winter weather.

What will kill this dull old fellow?
Ale that's bright, and wine that's mellow?
Dear old songs for ever new,
Some true love and laughter too;
Pleasant wit, and harmless fun,
And a dance when day is done.
Music, friends so true and tried,
Whispered love by warm fireside,
Mirth at all times all together,
Make sweet May of winter weather.

ALFRED DOMETT (1811–87), A Glee for Winter

24. Lights out door
I have come to the borders of sleep,
The unfastidious deep
Forest where all must lose
Their way, however straight,
Or winding, soon or late,
They cannot choose.

Many a read and track
That, since the dawn's first crack,
Up to the forest brink,
Devoured the travellers,
Suddenly now blurs,
And in they sink.

Here love ends,
Despair, ambition ends;
All pleasure and all trouble,
Although most sweet or bitter,
Here ends in sleep that is sweeter
Than rakes more noble.

There is not any book
Or face of dearest look
That I would not turn from now
To go into the unknown
I must enter, and leave, alone,
I know not how.

The tall forest towers;
Its cloudy foliage lowers
Ahead, shelf above shelf;
Its silence I hear and obey
That I may lose my way
And myself.

EDWARD THOMAS (1878–1917), Light Out

EPILOGUE: Sunrise

25. Elder by a year solo bass
All kings, and all their favourites,
All glory of honours, beautes, wet,
The sun itself, which makes times, as they pass,
Is elder by a year now than it was
When thou and I first one another saw;
All other things to their destruction draw,
Only our love hath no decay;

This no tomorrow hath, nor yesterday,
Ranne it never runs from us away.

JOHN DONNE (1572–1611), from The Anniversary

26. The secret of the sun soloists & choir
Love, from whom the world began,
Hath the secret of the sun.
Love can tell, and love alone,
Whence the million stars were strewn,
Why each atom knows its own,
How in spite of woe and death,
Gay is life, and sweet is breath:
This he taught us, this we know . .

ROBERT BRIDGES (1844–1930), from My delight and thy delight

27. Love, all alike soloists & choir
Love, all alike, no season knows, nor clime,
Nor hour, days, months, which are the tags of time.

JOHN DONNE (1572–1633), from The Sun Rising

AFTERDANCE: Proper Exercise soloists & choir
Dancing, bright lady, then began to be,
When the first seeds whereof the world did spring,
The air, earth, and water, did agree
By Love's persuasion, nature's mighty king,
To leave their discorded combining,
And in a dance such measure to observe,
As all the world their motion should preserve.

This wondrous miracle did Love devise,
For dancing is love's proper exercise.

For that brave sun, the father of the day,
Dost love this earth, the mother of the night;
And, like a reveller in rich array,
Dost dance his galliard in his teense's sight,
Both back and forth and sideways passing light.
His gallant grace doth so the gods amaze,
That all stand still and at his beauty gaze.

This wondrous miracle . . &c

And thou, sweet music, dancing's only life,
The ear's sole happiness, the air's best speech,
Lodestone of fellowship, charming rod of strife,
The soft minde's paradise, the sick mind's leech,
With thine own tongue thou trees and stones cannot teach,
That when the air doth dance her lucas measure,
Then art thou born, the gods' and men's sweet pleasure.

This wondrous miracle . . &c

Only the earth doth stand forever still;
Her rocks remove not, nor her mountains meet,
Although some wits enriched with learning's skill
Say heaven stands firm and that the earth doth flit,
And swiftly turneth underneath their feet;
Yet, though the earth is ever steadfast seen,
On her broad breast hath dancing ever been.

This wondrous miracle . . &c

JOHN DAVIES (1560–1626), from Ode to dancing, or a poem of dancing
APPENDIX C
IRB APPROVAL

ACTION ON EXEMPTION APPROVAL REQUEST

TO: Eric Rubinstein
Music

FROM: Dennis Landin
Chair, Institutional Review Board

DATE: September 10, 2018

RE: IRB# E11155

TITLE: A Conductor’s Guide to Alec Roth's "A Time to Dance"


Review Date: 9/10/2018

Approved X Disapproved

Approval Date: 9/10/2018 Approval Expiration Date: 9/9/2021

Exemption Category/Paragraph: 2b

Signed Consent Waived?: No

Re-review frequency: (three years unless otherwise stated)

LSU Proposal Number (if applicable):

By: Dennis Landin, Chairman

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING – Continuing approval is CONDITIONAL on:

1. Adherence to the approved protocol, familiarity with, and adherence to the ethical standards of the Belmont Report, and LSU’s Assurance of Compliance with DHHS regulations for the protection of human subjects*

2. Prior approval of a change in protocol, including revision of the consent documents or an increase in the number of subjects over that approved.

3. Obtaining renewed approval (or submittal of a termination report), prior to the approval expiration date, upon request by the IRB office (irrespective of when the project actually begins); notification of project termination.

4. Retention of documentation of informed consent and study records for at least 3 years after the study ends.

5. Continuing attention to the physical and psychological well-being and informed consent of the individual participants, including notification of new information that might affect consent.

6. A prompt report to the IRB of any adverse event affecting a participant potentially arising from the study.


8. SPECIAL NOTE: When emailing more than one recipient, make sure you use bcc. Approvals will automatically be closed by the IRB on the expiration date unless the PI requests a continuation.

* All investigators and support staff have access to copies of the Belmont Report, LSU’s Assurance with DHHS, DHHS (45 CFR 46) and FDA regulations governing use of human subjects, and other relevant documents in print in this office or on our World Wide Web site at http://www.lsu.edu/irb

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VITA

Eric Rubinstein is currently Lecturer of Choral Music Education at the Aaron Copland School of Music, Queens College (CUNY) and is also a candidate for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree (D.M.A) in Choral Conducting with a minor in Music Education from Louisiana State University.

A native of New York, Mr. Rubinstein’s previous appointments include Monticello High School, Westhampton Beach High School, and Brooklyn College, and he is currently on the artistic faculty at the New York State Summer School of the Arts. He also remains active as a guest conductor and clinician for various choral festivals and conferences. Mr. Rubinstein holds a M.M. in Choral Conducting from Michigan State University and a B.M. in Music Education with a Dance minor from the State University of New York at Fredonia.