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A Study of the Influence of Text in Morten Lauridsen's "Mid-Winter Songs".

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UMI

A STUDY OF THE INFLUENCE OF TEXT IN
MORTEN LAURIDSEN'S *MID-WINTER SONGS*

A Monograph

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

in

The School of Music

by

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B.M.Ed., Sam Houston State University, 1983

M.M., Sam Houston State University, 1989

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ABSTRACT

A close examination of any composer's work may yield a revealing picture of the importance placed on text by the composer. This paper focuses on the relationship between poetry and music in Morten Lauridsen's *Mid-Winter Songs*, settings of five poems of English poet Robert Graves.

Chapter One's biography of Morten Lauridsen contains the history of *Mid-Winter Songs*, from its commission to its present form. The biography of Graves emphasizes those elements in his life that are referred to in the poems of *Mid-Winter Songs*.

Chapter Two demonstrates how the texts of *Mid-Winter Songs* share a common vocabulary of poetic imagery; in addition, the poems form a temporal and chronological progression from first poem through fifth. Lauridsen seems to use a common harmonic and melodic vocabulary in each movement, derived from the opening choral setting of text, that tie the movements together in much the same way as the vocabulary of poetic imagery unites the separate poems; these musical materials are described in this paper as a set of intervals based on the number of half steps from a given pitch. Thus, Lauridsen reinforces poetic unity by using common musical materials for the various movements, through use of a basic set of intervals and its subsets for construction of both harmonic and melodic structures.

In each movement of *Mid-Winter Songs*, the meter and rhythm of the text have been a starting point for musical meter and rhythm, with exceptions made for important words or poetic concepts. Chapter Three points out the close correlation between poetic and musical rhythm, and the influence of poetic pace and form on the musical settings.

Through interviews with the composer and analysis of the work, this paper documents the features of the text Lauridsen used as the basis for its musical setting. Because of his close attention to details of the poems and the reflection of those details in the music, Lauridsen has created a synthesis of the two arts that is enjoyable to hear and to perform.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The poet Robert Bridges relates the musical setting of a poem to a jeweler's setting of a beautiful gem; the composer, according to Bridges, "is not to take the poem as his raw material and try to make something of it. Rather, he is to take it as a perfect thing . . . and to supply a setting which will emphasize its beauty."¹ Stein and Spillman state that song is based on equality of text and music;² deliberate use of textual elements to influence musical materials has the effect of weaving the two into a unified work of art. A close examination of any composer's work may yield a revealing picture of the importance placed on text by the composer. This paper will focus on the relationship between poetry and music in Morten Lauridsen's *Mid-Winter Songs*,³ settings of five poems of English poet Robert Graves. Chapter One will present biographical information about Lauridsen and Graves, and background information about *Mid-Winter Songs*; Chapter Two will examine the poetry and its musical settings for cyclic elements; and Chapter Three will analyze and compare poetic structure and musical form, and will demonstrate the close relationship between poetic and musical rhythm and meter.

¹Robert Bridges, "On the Musical Setting of Poetry," *Collected Essays, Papers, Etc.*, Vol. 9, ed. Mary Monica Bridges (London: Oxford University Press, 1935), 129.

²Deborah Stein and Robert Spillman, *Poetry into Song: Performance and Analysis of Lieder* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 20.

³Morten Lauridsen, *Mid-Winter Songs*, 2nd ed. SATB/piano (Evanston, IL: Opus, 1992). Musical examples used with permission.

Morten Lauridsen

Morten Johannes Lauridsen, III, is currently the Composer-in-Residence for the Los Angeles Master Chorale, and is professor and chair of the Department of Composition at the School of Music of the University of Southern California (USC). Born in Colfax, Washington in 1943, and raised in Portland, Oregon, he began musical study during his second year at Whitman College; at age twenty, Lauridsen transferred to USC and began serious study of composition. As part of his studies, Lauridsen sang in the USC Concert Choir and took classes in contemporary literature and poetry. He later studied advanced composition at USC with Ingolf Dahl and Halsey Stevens, earning both his Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees in composition from USC. Many major performing ensembles, notably the Elmer Eisler Singers, Dale Warland Singers, the San Francisco Symphony Chorus, and the Los Angeles Master Chorale, have commissioned and performed his choral compositions; Lauridsen's works have also been performed at regional and national conventions of the American Choral Directors Association.

Lauridsen acknowledges that his music was first influenced by his enjoyment and appreciation of the classic American song by composers such as Jerome Kern, George and Ira Gershwin, and Cole Porter; he considers himself a "song writer," and incorporates the melodic and harmonic techniques of song writing into his choral works.⁴ Among his compositions for chorus, Lauridsen has written one choral collection, *Four Madrigals on Renaissance Texts* (1972), and three choral cycles,⁵

⁴Interview with the author, March 8, 1997, Los Angeles.

⁵Lauridsen defines "cycle" as individual movements that are united in subject matter and musical material. A "collection," on the other hand, contains works of the same type, with no unifying subject matter or musical material. From Jerry McCoy,

Mid-Winter Songs (1980, rev. with orchestral accompaniment 1983, 2nd ed. with piano 1992), *Madrigali: Six "Fire Songs" on Italian Renaissance Poems* (1987) and *Les Chansons des Roses* (1993); he has also written several pieces with sacred Latin texts.⁶ Thus, Lauridsen writes choral music using English, Latin, Italian, and French texts, and there seems to be evidence that all of his musical settings are influenced by poetic elements, including overall meaning and mood, poetic structure, and the rhythm of text declamation.

Robert Graves

Robert von Ranke Graves (1895-1985) was born in London; after a stand in the British military with the Royal Welsh Fusiliers during World War I, he married Nancy Nicholson. In 1924, the couple's attention was caught by a poem titled "The Quids," by American poet Laura Gottschalk; a correspondence was established, and by 1926, Gottschalk had divorced, resumed her maiden name of "Riding," and joined Graves and Nicholson on a trip to Cairo, as Graves's collaborator and a sympathetic companion for Nicholson and the four Graves children. In 1930, the family and Riding moved to Deya, Majorca, where Graves would live for the rest of his life, except for crisis periods during the Spanish Civil War. Graves and Riding soon began an affair that lasted until its bitter breakup in 1939; after his divorce from Nicholson in 1949, Graves married Beryl Hodge in 1953.

"Choral Poetry: The Extended Choral Works of Morten Lauridsen," *Choral Journal* 35/4 (November, 1994), 25.

⁶These include a "Te Deum," parts of which appear in 1997's *Lux aeterna*; and "O magnum mysterium."

Graves's first volume of poetry was published in 1916,⁷ and he was subsequently able to make his living entirely by writing. He attended Oxford University from 1920-26; upon his graduation with a Bachelor of Letters, Graves obtained a position in English Literature at Cairo University that lasted only from January to June, 1926. Graves held only one other academic appointment, that of Lecturer on Poetry at St. John's College, Oxford, from 1961-1965. Over the course of his remarkable life, Graves published over one hundred and thirty books of poetry, essays, translations, mythologies, and lectures; he was best known in his lifetime as a novelist, the author of historical novels such as *I, Claudius* and *Claudius the God*, although he considered himself a poet for whom the writing of prose, while enjoyable, was more an economic necessity. He died in Majorca in 1985.

⁷Robert Graves, *Over the Brazier* (London: The Poetry Bookshop, 1916).

CHAPTER 2 CYCLIC ELEMENTS OF *MID-WINTER SONGS*

Cyclic Elements in the Poetry

Regarding the poems selected for *Mid-Winter Songs*, Lauridsen states,

In reading Graves, I became very much taken with the richness, elegance, and extraordinary beauty of his poetry and his insights regarding the human experience. Five diverse poems with a common 'winter' motif (a particular favorite of mine, rich in paradoxical symbolism of dying/rejuvenation, light/darkness, sleeping/waking) suggested a cohesive cycle and led to the composition of *Mid-Winter Songs*.⁸

The poems of *Mid-Winter Songs* are "Lament for Pasiphaë," "She Tells Her Love While Half Asleep" (both first published in 1944); "Like Snow" (1935); "Mid-Winter Waking" (1942); and "Intercession in Late October" (1948).⁹ These poems are among those referred to by Graves scholars as "White Goddess poetry,"¹⁰ and do use a common vocabulary of imagery, a "motif," even though these poems were never grouped, published, or arranged together within a publication by the author; Lauridsen arranged these separate texts into a cycle due to his perception of a common motif.

⁸Jerry McCoy, "Choral Poetry: The Extended Choral Works of Morten Lauridsen," 25.

⁹The following publication information for the poems is found in Fred H. Higginson, *A Bibliography of the Writings of Robert Graves*, 2nd ed., rev. William Proctor Williams (Winchester: St. Paul's Bibliographies, 1987). "Lament for Pasiphaë" and "She Tells Her Love While Half Asleep" first published in Robert Graves, *The Golden Fleece* (London: Cassell and Co., 1944). "Like Snow" first published as the fifth section of "A Poem Sequence: To the Sovereign Muse," *Epilogue I* (Autumn 1935), 92. "Mid-Winter Waking" first published in Alan Hodge, Norman Cameron, and Robert Graves, *Work In Hand* (London: Hogarth Press, 1942). "Intercession in Late October" first published in Robert Graves, *Collected Poems 1917-1947* (London: Cassell and Co., 1948).

¹⁰The "White Goddess" will be discussed more fully below; see Graves, *The White Goddess: A Historical Grammar of Poetic Myth* (London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1948. Reprint, New York: Octagon Books, 1972).

Based on events in the poet's life, Graves's poems contain frequent references to the other interests in his life, such as his personal matriarchal ideology, his experiences at war, and his other intellectual pursuits, such as mythology (Greek, Hebrew, and Christian) and literary criticism.¹¹ In "Postscript 1960" of *The White Goddess*, Graves sets forth the poetic ideal which he celebrates in poem after poem:

True poetic practice implies a mind so miraculously attuned and illuminated that it can form words, by a chain of more-than-coincidences, into a living entity--a poem that goes about on its own (for centuries after the author's death, perhaps) affecting readers with its stored magic. Since the source of poetry's creative power is not scientific intelligence, but inspiration--however this may be explained by scientists--one may surely attribute inspiration to the Lunar Muse, the oldest and most convenient European term for this source? By ancient tradition, the White Goddess becomes one with her human representative--a priestess, a prophetess, a queen-mother. No Muse-poet grows conscious of the Muse except by experience of a woman in whom the Goddess is to some degree resident The real, perpetually-obsessed Muse-poet distinguishes between the Goddess as manifest in the supreme power, glory, wisdom and love of woman, and the individual woman whom the Goddess may make her instrument for a month, a year, seven years, or even more. The Goddess abides; and perhaps he will again have knowledge of her through his experience with another woman.¹²

¹¹Graves's works are listed in Higginson, *A Bibliography of the Writings of Robert Graves*. Graves's poetry is discussed in detail in Michael Kirkham, *The Poetry of Robert Graves* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969) and James Meholke, *Robert Graves: Peace-Weaver* (Paris: Mouton, 1975). For discussions of mythology in Graves's poetry, see Lillian Feder, *Ancient Myth in Modern Poetry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971) and Graves, *The White Goddess: A Historical Grammar of Poetic Myth* (London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1948; enlarged edition, New York: Octagon Books, 1972). Several myths mentioned in *Mid-Winter Songs* appear in Graves's *The Greek Myths* (London: Penguin Books, 1955. Rev. ed. New York: Moyer Bell, Ltd., 1988). Graves himself wrote extensively about poetry, including his own; see especially *Difficult Questions, Easy Answers* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Co., 1973), *Food for Centaurs* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Co., 1960), *Mammon and the Black Goddess* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Co., 1965), and *On Poetry: Collected Talks and Essays* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Co., 1969).

¹²Robert Graves, "Postscript 1960," *The White Goddess*, 490.

Graves was not the first poet to claim inspiration from a female Muse;¹³ but, unlike the previous poets, Graves's dedication to the Goddess was not limited to an occasional mention or dedicatory preface, but was explicitly present in all of his writings, including his poetry.¹⁴ He explained his relationship to the Goddess as that of a priest to a deity: "The function of poetry is religious invocation of the Muse; its use is the experience of mixed exaltation and horror that her presence excites."¹⁵ And, since poetry is used as a "religious invocation of the Muse," Graves's choice of poetic subject matter seems clear: "The true poet must always be original, but in a simpler sense; he must address only the Muse . . . and tell her the truth about himself and her in his own passionate and peculiar words."¹⁶ Poems to and about the Goddess and her human representative may be found in every volume of Graves's poetry (his first volume of poems, *Over the Brazier*, was published in 1916, and his last, *Collected Poems*, in 1980); Graves's early poetry included war poems and children's poems, but after 1938, his sole poetic theme was the relationship between man and woman, poet and Goddess.

¹³Graves writes, "I cannot think of any true poet from Homer onwards who has not independently recorded his experience of her." *The White Goddess*, 24.

¹⁴See Lillian Feder, *Ancient Myth in Modern Poetry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971); Randall Jarrell, "Graves and the White Goddess," in *Robert Graves*, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1987); and John Vickery, *Robert Graves and the White Goddess* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1972).

¹⁵Robert Graves, *The White Goddess*, 14.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 444.

From his own work in translation and mythology, and from study of Sir James Frazer's *The Golden Bough*,¹⁷ Graves was familiar with a variety of Goddess traditions, and it is from these, though primarily from the Greek and Welsh traditions, that his White Goddess draws many of her characteristics. Primary among these is the Goddess's link to seasonal and temporal changes; in *The White Goddess*, Graves traces the development of mythology to agrarian societies, whose religious rites were closely related to the yearly growing season. In Goddess mythologies, the Goddess rules the year, changing her features as the seasons progress; thus, spring, summer/fall, and winter are symbolized by maiden, mature woman, and old woman, respectively, and reference to a season may call to mind the life stage equated with that season. The different visages of the Goddess may also symbolize youth, maturity, and old age (death) of emotional states or other non-physical concepts; thus, the cycle of a year may represent a compressed version of an entire lifetime, or a description of the duration and characteristics of a love affair, for example. The other main temporal cycle, the day, may also be viewed as a compressed version of a year, with morning as spring or youth, afternoon as summer/autumn or maturity, and evening as winter or old age.

Graves uses a consistent vocabulary of imagery to describe the Goddess and characteristics attributed to her; the poems selected by Lauridsen for *Mid-Winter Songs* are among many which use this common vocabulary. In poems such as "Between Moon and Moon" and "Darien," the Goddess is portrayed as a beautiful, powerful woman, carrying--and using--a crescent-shaped axe, a link to her status as Lunar Muse; other imagery derived from her association with the moon includes the color

¹⁷Graves was introduced to this book by a psychologist, Dr. William Rivers, who was treating Graves for shell shock following his World War I experiences.

white; nighttime; sleep; creatures of the night, especially the owl (her herald); rain or snow, and the clouds which bring it; and the moon itself, especially when full.

But there is another source for some of the Goddess's characteristics, a human model upon which Graves seems to have based the personality traits of the Goddess-- Laura Riding, his colleague, lover, and the inspiration for many of the early Goddess poems. Riding, a strong-willed perfectionist, received from Graves the same obedience and deference he showed the Goddess; she is the "human representative" in whom the Goddess abides. Early White Goddess poems refer to Riding explicitly ("Woman Poet and Man Poet") or implicitly, in which the Goddess is shown to possess an attribute of Riding's own personality ("On Portents," "To Whom Else?"). Two of the five poems in *Mid-Winter Songs*, "Lament for Pasiphaë" and "Like Snow," are directly related to Graves's life with Riding, making knowledge of their biographies an essential ingredient in understanding the relationship of ideas and imagery in the poetry, and the way that the poetry forms the textual cycle of *Mid-Winter Songs*. In fact, a study of "Lament for Pasiphaë," published for the first time in 1944, will demonstrate Graves's ability to "merge the world of human feeling with the world of mythic feeling,"¹⁸ as this poem combines biographical occurrence with two separate but related mythological stories.

"Lament for Pasiphaë"

Dying sun, shine warm a little longer!
My eye, dazzled with tears, shall dazzle yours,
Conjuring you to shine and not to move.
You, sun, and I all afternoon have laboured
Beneath a dewless and oppressive cloud--
a fleece now gilded with our common grief

¹⁸James S. Mehoke, *Robert Graves: Peace-Weaver* (Paris: Mouton, 1975), 109.

That this must be a night without a moon.
Dying sun, shine warm a little longer!

Faithless she was not: she was very woman,
Smiling with dire impartiality.
Sov'reign, with heart unmatched, adored of men,
Until Spring's cuckoo with bedraggled plumes
Tempted her pity and her truth betrayed.
Then she who shone for all resigned her being,
And this must be a night without a moon.
Dying sun, shine warm a little longer!¹⁹

At first reading, the poem seems to equate "Pasiphaë" with the "dying sun," since a lament might properly be expected to mourn someone or something that is dying. However, a study of the mythological references, Graves's biography, and his other poetry, suggests another answer.

"Pasiphaë" is a Greek name meaning "she who shone for all;"²⁰ in *The White Goddess*, Graves consistently refers to Pasiphaë as a "Cretan moon goddess."²¹ The character of Pasiphaë appears in several stories in Graves's edition of *The Greek Myths*,²² most prominently in the tale of the creation of the Minotaur. In this story, Pasiphaë, happily married to Minos, was put under a spell of desire for a white bull as

¹⁹Unless otherwise stated, the poetry of Robert Graves is quoted with permission from *Robert Graves: Selected Poems*, edited and introduced by Paul O'Prey (London: Penguin Books, 1986; reprint of *Robert Graves: Collected Poems 1975*, [London: Cassell, 1975]).

²⁰Adrian Room, *NTC's Classical Dictionary: The Origins of the Names in Classical Mythology* (Lincolnwood, IL: National Textbook Co., 1990), 230.

²¹Robert Graves, *The White Goddess*, 99, 106, 240, and 329.

²²Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths* (London: Penguin Books, 1955. Rev. ed. New York: Moyer Bell, Ltd., 1988).

Poseidon's revenge on Minos for not sacrificing the bull; the union of Pasiphaë and the bull produced the Minotaur, half man and half bull.

Another mythological reference, found in lines 12 and 13 of the poem, tells the story of Zeus's rape of Hera; when Hera would not receive his attentions, Zeus changed himself into a small cuckoo, and allowed himself to be blown by a strong storm into Hera's lap. When she took pity on the poor bird, Zeus changed back into his original form and raped her. Embarrassed and humiliated, Hera agreed to marry Zeus.

These myths contain several obvious similarities, such as the themes of sexual desire and ultimate betrayal; both myths also describe women in positions of high status, important women, who are innocent bystanders, humbled through their association with deceptive men. The women's humiliation, in both cases, was accomplished through the imposition of sex through violence or inappropriate sexual desire. In either case, it is through the means of sexual intercourse that retribution (against Hera, and against Minos through Pasiphaë) was accomplished.

These two myths form close parallels to events in Graves's life. Graves and Laura Riding lived together from 1928, and travelled to America in May, 1939, to visit the poet Schuyler Jackson, who had favorably reviewed Riding's *Collected Poems*. Riding and Jackson began an affair after the mental breakdown of Jackson's wife, Katherine. Riding subsequently announced her intention of giving up poetry, and left Graves.

These biographical events are at the center of "Lament for Pasiphaë." The mythological stories, with their focus on a strong female character and her voluntary (albeit while deceived) embrace of that which would ultimately lead to her downfall, mirror the situation of 1939, in which Graves believed Riding to have chosen a much lesser intellect and a less exalted path (she gave up poetry) while under the sway of an

inevitable force, that of desire. Graves's poem "The Moon Ends in Nightmare," written in June, 1939, describes his realization of Riding's decision: "In horror I cried aloud: for the same Moon/ Whom I had held a living power, though changeless,/ Split open in my sight, a bright egg shell,/ And a double-headed Nothing grinned/ All-wisely from the gap."²³

What, then, of the sun, to whom the poem is addressed? The poet, speaking in first person, enlists the aid of the sun, which is presented as sympathetic to, and in the same situation as, the poet--both will share a "common grief" in a moonless night. By requesting the sun "not to move," the poet is also hoping to stop time and thereby forestall the inevitable darkness.²⁴ The appeal to the sun also reinforces the mythological references, because it was thought, during the time of the Greek myths, that the movement of the sun changed the time of day.

The personification of the poetic character of the moon was accomplished by relating the moon to female figures in mythology and Graves's life; the same may apply to the character of the sun. In the poem, the sun functions both as participant in the story ("You, sun, and I all afternoon have laboured") and sympathetic audience to the poet's tale. The poet's voice is that of Graves himself, but the poem could also be spoken by the character of Minos, who was extremely remorseful about the role his greed had played in Pasiphaë's downfall. Sun, Minos, and poet form the composite male

²³Robert Graves, "The Moon Ends in Nightmare," quoted in Miranda Seymour, *Robert Graves: Life on the Edge* (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 274.

²⁴This is in marked contrast to poems such as "Turn of the Moon," in which the poet longs for night, because it is the time of the moon; the difference is the presence/absence of the Goddess/woman/moon.

character of the poem, just as Moon, Pasiphaë, and muse (Laura Riding) form the composite female.

Other lines of the first stanza of the poem suggest that the poem is autobiographical in nature. Lines 4 and 5 speak of laboring "all afternoon" beneath a "dewless and oppressive cloud;" the last six of the thirteen years Graves spent with Riding were spent in celibacy, which Graves found extremely difficult.²⁵ The reward of such "labour," the "fleece," is gilded with grief in the poem, instead of the expected "gold" of a physically fulfilled relationship with Riding. The "gilded fleece" reference also ties this poem clearly to the story in which it first appeared, that of Jason and the Argonauts in *The Golden Fleece* of 1944.

But it is in stanza 2 of the poem that the closest parallels may be drawn between the poem, the myths, and Graves's biography. Certain words and phrases of the poem particularly suggest a close relationship to persons and events in Graves's life. For instance, the phrase "dire impartiality" is puzzling until Graves's desire to have Riding's favor and approval is considered; the word "impartial" also appears in a list of Graves's requirements for a female poet: "impartial, loving, severe, wise."²⁶ Lines 11 through 13 describe the sympathetic response of the heroine to the cuckoo, a bird frequently associated with cuckolded lovers; Jackson, a relatively unknown critic who favorably reviewed Riding's poetry against the popular view, could have easily been viewed by Graves as the cuckoo in the Zeus/Hera myth, as a small creature

²⁵Riding had stopped the physical aspect of her relationship with Graves in 1933; although she had, in 1926 at the beginning of their affair, encouraged physical intimacy, in 1933 she abruptly changed her mind, citing sex as "a threat to the intellect and to industry." Miranda Seymour, *Robert Graves: Life on the Edge*, 213.

²⁶Robert Graves, *The White Goddess*, 447.

overwhelmed by a large storm, thereby eliciting the heroine's sympathy. Line 14, however, contains the central idea of the poem and the point of keenest importance for Graves; "Then she who shone for all resigned her being"--the heroine abandoned who she was, her very self, through the influence of a force she could not control, but which caused her downfall. To Graves, Riding had done no less when she allied herself with Schuyler Jackson and gave up poetry.

"Like Snow"

She, then, like snow in a dark night
Fell secretly. And the world waked
With dazzling of the drowsy eye,
So that some muttered 'Too much light,'
And drew the curtains close.
Like snow, warmer than fingers feared,
And to soil friendly;
Holding the histories of the night
In yet unmelted tracks.

In the autumn of 1935, Graves and Riding published *Epilogue I*, a joint venture in which Graves's "A Poem Sequence: To the Sovereign Muse" appeared. The "poem sequence" was composed of three poems, each of which would later appear in Graves's *Collected Poems* as a separate work: "The Challenge," "To the Sovereign Muse," and "Like Snow." Each of these poems is a portrait of the superior intellect and extraordinary qualities of Laura Riding. Although one may see from lines 4 and 5 that Graves was not unaware of others' criticisms of Riding,²⁷ he was always the champion of her work, considering it far above that of others whose work was publicly acclaimed; although Riding never achieved the kind of popular or critical success she

²⁷For example, T. S. Eliot, in his capacity as editor of the *Criterion*, turned down several poems and critical essays by Riding; and Heinemann only agreed to publish a joint work by Graves and Riding if Graves would allow publication of his *Collected Poems*.

hoped for, she was for him “warmer than fingers feared/ And to soil friendly,” a possible reference to her work as his collaborator and editor, under whose influence his writing improved.

Comparison of the two poems reveals some of the common imagery of Graves’s White Goddess poetry: snow and the moon are both white; both snow and moon appear in the night (at least in these poems); and in both poems, the presence of the woman/Goddess leads to light, or brightening of a dark night, or “dazzling of the drowsy eye.” The sun’s presence emphasizes the point of the poem, reflecting the brilliance of the snow or hiding the absence of the moon; if poet may be equated with sun in “Lament for Pasiphaë,” he may also be equated with sun in “Like Snow,” in that his brilliance was increased due to his reflection off the snow.

Comparison of these two poems also shows Graves’s change of attitude about Riding from 1935 to 1944. In 1935’s “Like Snow,” the image of the woman/Goddess is fiercely bright, crystalline and icy; the heroine of the poem holds the “histories of the night in yet unmelted tracks”--in other words, there are no secrets, and the past is known to all; in 1944’s “Lament for Pasiphaë,” the heroine is flawed, and chooses to hold that which would, in the poet’s estimation, harm her.

“She Tells Her Love While Half Asleep”

She tells her love while half asleep,
In the dark hours,
With half-words whispered low:

As Earth stirs in her winter sleep
And puts out grass and flowers
Despite the snow,
Despite the falling snow.

First published in 1944’s *The Golden Fleece*, along with “Lament for Pasiphaë,” “She Tells Her Love While Half Asleep” contains no explicit mythological

references; instead, the poet places us squarely into an intimate nighttime scene. "Sleep" is the focus of several of Graves's poems from 1944-45. After the turbulence of his relationship with Laura Riding, Graves had found a more peaceful companion in Beryl Hodge, former wife of his collaborator, Alan Hodge.²⁸ It is to, and about, Beryl that such poems as "To Sleep," "Through Nightmare," and "Theseus and Ariadne" were written; all portray sleep, or dreaming-- a peacefulness that is distinctly different from poetry written to, or about, Laura Riding. It is through such peaceful sleep that the poet will awaken refreshed, rejuvenated, as portrayed in "Mid-Winter Waking."

"She Tells Her Love While Half Asleep" has a parallel structure that will be discussed more fully in chapter three; but the word "as" that begins the second stanza leads to two possible interpretations--does "as" mean "at the same time as," or "in the same way that"? If the former, the two stanzas of the poem are related temporally, setting the action of the first stanza into the second stanza's winter season; if the latter, the poem becomes a simile, lending equality to the two ideas presented--the spiritual reassurance the poet receives from his lover is equated to, and is as important as, the physical survival that the coming of spring represents.

The concept of seasonal change plays an important role in Graves's poetry of this time; as discussed above, seasonal change from winter to spring indicates a rebirth, or an arrival back into life from a dormant state. In "Love Story," he likens the early part of his relationship with Riding as "a new Spring;" as the affair progresses, "back came winter on me at a bound,/ The pallid sky heaved with a moon-

²⁸Beryl's positive and calming influence on Graves was one he frequently acknowledged; "Arrow on the Vane" reads, "I more than love,/ As when you drew me bodily from the dead."

quake/ . . . In tears I re-composed the former scene,/ Let the snow lie, watched the moon rise, suffered the owls,/ Paid homage to them of unevent." In this poem, winter is associated with a lull in creativity, an artistic hibernation; it is a time of waiting and passivity. Graves did experience periods of creative dormancy; he drew new inspiration from each new incarnation of the Goddess that he encountered. Underlying poems such as "A Time of Waiting" and "Arrow on the Vane" is Graves's certain knowledge that spring inevitably follows winter--"the Goddess yet abides."²⁹

"Mid-Winter Waking"

Stirring suddenly from long hibernation
I knew myself once more a poet
Guarded by timeless principalities
Against the worm of death, this hillside haunting,
And presently dared open both my eyes.

O gracious, lofty, shone against from under,
Back-of-the-mind-far clouds like towers;
And you, sudden warm airs that blow
Before the expected season of new blossom,
While sheep still gnaw at roots and lambless go-

Be witness that on waking, this mid-winter,
I found her hand in mine laid closely
Who shall watch out the Spring with me.
We stared in silence all around us
But found no winter anywhere to see.

In "Mid-Winter Waking," Graves celebrates the reawakening of his creative energies through the use of metaphor and symbolism. As in "She Tells Her Love While Half Asleep," the change from sleep to wakefulness and the seasonal change from winter to spring serve to illustrate the poet's sense of renewal. Winter changing to spring and sleepers awakening may also be viewed as symbols for death, or the dead, and a return to life; the death may be of a physical or creative nature. The same

²⁹Robert Graves, "In Her Praise," *Selected Poems*, 201.

concept of sleep as death is presented in several other Graves poems, including "The Survivor" and "A Jealous Man": ". . . who has no steel at his side,/ No drink hot in his mouth,/ But a mind dream-enlarged, . . . / Crow, cocks, crow loud,/ Reprieve the doomed devil--/ Has he not died enough?" In the same way, Graves equates sleep with the absence of the Goddess, a creative death, in "The Home-Coming": "At the tangled heart of a wood I fell asleep,/ Bewildered by her silence and her absence--/ As though such potent lulls were noi/ Ordained by the demands of pure music."

The reawakening, or artistic renaissance, is granted by the Goddess through the inspiration provided by her human representative.³⁰ "Mid-Winter Waking," first published in 1945, belongs to a group of poems which include "She Tells Her Love While Half Asleep," "To Juan at the Winter Solstice," "The Door," and "The Oath"--poems that Graves wrote about the early days with Beryl Hodge. Lauridsen's placement of "Like Snow," "She Tells Her Love While Half Asleep," and "Mid-Winter Waking" in this order forms a chronologically and temporally accurate cycle, in which the snow falls, spring begins, and the snow completely thaws; creativity lulls, hope is renewed, and creativity returns.

In stanza 1 of the poem, the poet speaks of his return to consciousness, with a new awareness of life and the craft of poetry; he attributes his safe passage through a "long hibernation" to being "guarded by timeless principalities," or guardian angels, who kept the "worm of death" at bay--though he slept, literally or figuratively, he did not die. Life, wakefulness, and creativity returned. The position of the phrase "this hillside haunting" causes some ambiguity in meaning--it is unclear who or what

³⁰In fact, Graves's poetry so clearly reflects his experiences with individual women that several Graves scholars divide his works (and their own books about Graves and his works) into sections named for the particular woman whom Graves considered the incarnation of the Goddess at that time.

is "haunting" the hillside: the principalities, the worm, or the poet (or his shade) himself.

In "Turn of the Moon," Graves writes of poetic inspiration, using the symbols of moon and rain: "Never count upon rain, never foretell it,/ For no power can bring rain--the first rain of our lives, it seems,/ Neither foretold, cajoled, nor counted on- / Is woman giving as she loves." We may view the clouds, "gracious, lofty, shone against from under, back-of-the-mind-far," as harbingers of rain in "Mid-Winter Waking." This is a very different type of cloud from the "dewless and oppressive" one of "Lament for Pasiphaë." The clouds of "Mid-Winter Waking" are the first distant signals of the end of a creative and personal drought, and indicate the return of inspiration and a woman's love. The next three lines reinforce the impression of an early spring--sheep still "gnaw at roots" (the grass has yet to appear); the warm breeze is welcome, if unexpected.

The next stanza of the poem gives the reason for this early "season of new blossom": the poet has been joined by the woman who will "watch out the Spring" with him.³¹ Graves's artistic rebirth was always equated with a new relationship with a woman. In the poem, the couple stands in mutual silence; other poems written around this time contain frequent references to a silent understanding between poet and his love, one that cannot, and should not, be spoken, as in "The Word": "The word is unspoken/ Between honest lovers:/ They substitute a silence/ Or wave at a wild flower,/ Sighing inaudibly."³²

³¹Recall that Graves also referred to the beginning of his relationship with Riding as "a new Spring" in "A Love Story."

³²Other poems referring to silence include "The Black Goddess" and "The Yet Unsayable."

Intercession in Late October

How hard the year dies: no frost yet.
On drifts of yellow sand Midas reclines,
Fearless of moaning reed or sullen wave.
Firm and fragrant still the brambleberries.
On ivy-bloom butterflies wag.

Spare him a little longer, Crone,
For his clean hands and love-submissive heart.

“Intercession in Late October” is the latest of the poems set in *Mid-Winter Songs*, published for the first time in 1945’s *Collected Poems*. Like “Lament for Pasiphaë,” this poem contains interwoven Greek and Goddess mythological stories which suggest an autobiographical statement. The character of King Midas of Macedonian Bromium appears in two Greek myths, closely related, that are mentioned in this poem. Midas had been given donkey’s ears by Apollo in punishment for Midas’s not selecting Apollo as the winner in a music contest. Because Midas always wore a hat, no one else knew except his barber, who had been sworn to secrecy on pain of death. The barber, anxious both to share his secret and live, dug a hole in a river bank and shouted in his secret. Unfortunately, as the reeds grew along the river, they whispered the news until it was known by all.

Midas captured the river god Silenus as the latter sunned himself in Midas’s rose garden; having indulged in too much wine, Silenus told Midas of a secret magical fruit, which would restore the youth even of the very aged. Midas returned Silenus to Poseidon, who offered Midas the granting of a wish as reward; loving money, Midas wished that all he touched would turn to gold, a wish Poseidon laughingly granted. When Midas discovered that his “gift” caused nothing but harm (his beloved daughter was turned to gold at his touch), he repented his greed, and was cured by washing his

hands in the Pactolus River, turning the banks to gold, and effectively returning the gift to its giver.

In Goddess mythology, the Goddess reigns supreme; her chosen consort/son is the waxing (or approaching) year, who alternates in the Goddess's favor with his darker self, the waning (or ending) year. The title of the poem places us near the beginning of the winter season, during which the god of the waning year is defeated and supplanted by the god of the waxing year, and the annual cycle is both completed and begun again. The first line of the poem, though, suggests that something is amiss; the expected signs of winter's approach are not present. In fact, later in the poem, we discover that it is still warm enough for ripe berries and blooming ivy. This is extraordinary; the physical surroundings portrayed in the poem, along with the image of Midas reclining at ease on a river-bank, would seem to be those of summer.

A more detailed examination of those surroundings, and Midas's appearance in the poem, suggest a probable solution to this seeming inconsistency. Having washed himself free of the curse, Midas rests in a landscape in which time, in the form of the seasons, has been reversed; he shares with the butterflies an extension of the usual life-span. He has been humbled, first by the reeds which broadcast his deformity to all, and then by having to atone for his greed; but now Midas may rest "fearless" of his former torments. The ritual washing of his hands in the river, which cured him of his curse, was also a mark of submission and an admission of guilt--the most important thing was not, after all, money; it was love.

The mature fruit and flowers, in addition to setting the scene of youth, also hold deeper symbolic meaning in Goddess mythology. The bramble and the ivy are both

sacred to the Goddess;³³ their maturity suggests her strong presence. The butterfly is a symbol of rebirth, due to its transformation from larvae to butterfly. Its life-span, however, is brief; yet, here it lives, in the warmth of a perpetual summer.

The poet also placed himself amidst this mythically warm, Goddess-inhabited landscape. As in so many other poems, Graves identified himself with a mythological character; he assumed Midas's role of the submissive, and thereby redeemed, man; like Midas, Graves had determined that love was the most important thing (from "To Juan at the Winter Solstice": "There is one story and one story only/ That will prove worth your telling.")--love and allegiance to the Goddess. His poetry, a gift from the Goddess, is freely returned to her. The appeal, "Spare him a little longer, Crone"--addressed to the Goddess in her end-of-the-year guise as Old Woman and death--could easily be that of the poet on his own behalf, as well as on behalf of Midas. Midas washed his hands free of the curse of material greed in an act of submission to the god Poseidon; so the poet, hands clean and heart submissive, sought redemption of his Goddess.

Cyclic Elements in the Musical Settings

We have examined how the texts of *Mid-Winter Songs* share a common vocabulary of poetic imagery, derived from Graves's ideology, biography, and interest in mythology; in addition, we have seen that the poems form a temporally and chronologically logical progression from first poem through fifth. Their musical

³³As are other five-pointed leaves, such as fig, plane, cinquefoil and five-petalled flowers, such as periwinkle and primrose. Interestingly, the ivy was particularly sacred to the cult of the Goddess as Ariadne, whose female followers used it as an intoxicant. Ariadne, whose worship included human male sacrifice, is named in *The White Goddess* as "the daughter, or younger self, of Pasiphaë, a Cretan Moon-goddess." [Italics mine.] This certainly ties the end of this set of poems to the beginning, although I am sure, from conversations with the composer, that this rather hidden aspect of unity was unknown to him.

settings also show a unity within the overall structure of the work. As stated above, Lauridsen selected these poems because of his perception of a common motif, but states that one appealing feature of the individual poems was their diversity of style and feeling within the similar motif; he describes the musical settings as contrasting “character pieces.”³⁴ Lauridsen typically composes multi-movement works in an overall arch form; in each of his choral cycles and in his *Lux aeterna*, a multi-movement work premiered in 1997, the movements are arranged in comparable pairs around a central movement.³⁵ Instead of composing each movement in a key that forms part of a planned tonal progression, Lauridsen pairs movements based on their dramatic and expressive content.³⁶ In *Mid-Winter Songs*, this practice pairs movements 1 and 5, 2 and 4 around the central third movement; thus, the fast, lively “Like Snow” is matched with “Mid-Winter Waking,” and “Intercession in Late October,” which Lauridsen describes as a “hymn” or a “prayer,” serves as the dramatic foil for “Lament for Pasiphaë.”³⁷

Along with the overall arch form, Lauridsen seems to use a common harmonic and melodic vocabulary in each movement in much the same way as the vocabulary of poetic imagery ties the disparate texts into a whole. Lauridsen states, “The principal musical materials for the entire work, especially the intervals of ascending major

³⁴Telephone interview with the author, February 6, 1997.

³⁵Interview with the author, March 9, 1997, in Los Angeles. Lauridsen further stated that he took as his inspiration for this formal aspect of his works, as well as many other compositional traits, the Brahms *Requiem*.

³⁶The tonal centers of the movements are E flat, F sharp, G sharp, E flat, and A. These will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

³⁷Interview with the author, March 8, 1997, Los Angeles.

ninth and descending major second, are derived from the opening choral setting of 'dying sun' and recur throughout the work. . ."³⁸ (see Example 1). The musical

The image shows a musical score for the first three measures of 'Lament for Pasiphaë'. It includes staves for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass, and Piano. The tempo is 'Appassionata (♩ = 76)' and the dynamics are 'ff'. The lyrics 'Dy - ing sun.' are written under the vocal staves. The piano part features complex harmonic textures with many accidentals and dynamic markings.

Example 1 "Lament for Pasiphaë," mm. 1-3

materials to which Lauridsen refers may be described as a set of intervals based on the number of half steps from a given pitch; the major second and ninth, for example, may both be written as {0, 2} in set notation, which assumes octave equivalence. The pitches in the first seven measures of the work include D flat, E flat, F, G flat, G, A flat, and B flat; this {0, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9} set and its subsets form the basis for many harmonic and melodic elements throughout the work. A strong argument for considering the interval set when seeking devices of unity is the fact that the same interval collection and its subsets appear even with pitches different from those of the

³⁸Jerry McCoy, "Choral Poetry: The Extended Choral Works of Morten Lauridsen," 27.

original set; for example, the pitches of the climax of the first movement, the “dying sun” statement of mm. 74-75, form a {0, 2, 3, 5, 7, 9} subset (see Example 2), but differ from the original list of pitches (using C flat, and lacking the G natural and B

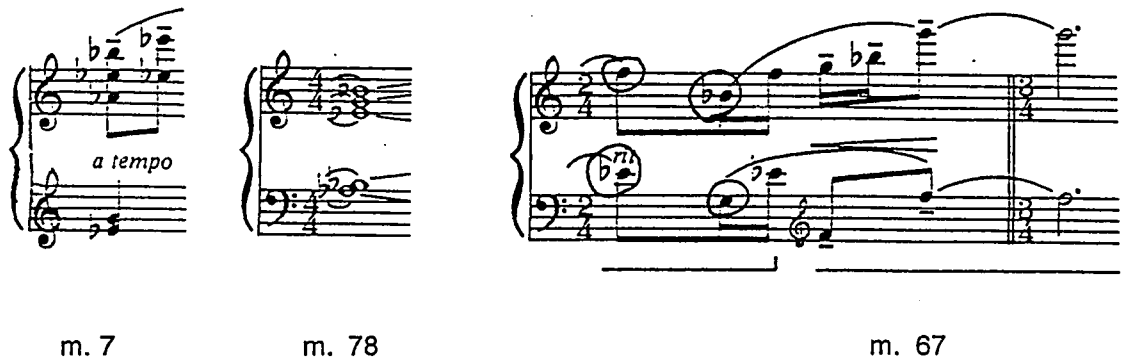
The image shows a musical score for four parts: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The lyrics are "dy - ing sun." and "a tempo". The score includes tempo markings "molto rit." and "a tempo", and dynamic markings "f" and "fff". The piano part features a prominent bass line with a large circle around a specific measure.

Example 2 “Lament for Pasiphaë,” mm. 74-75

flat of the previous list), and movements 2 and 3, which use sharps instead of flats, also exhibit harmonic and melodic structures that form subsets. An examination of the musical settings for common chordal structures, development and repetition of motives, and inclusion and transformation of materials from one movement in another will show the various ways Lauridsen uses the set and its subset to achieve musical unity through a common musical vocabulary.

Measures 1-7 contain several vertical (harmonic) structures whose intervals form subsets of the entire {0, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9} collection. The structures of both the chord sung by the chorus on “dy-” ({0, 2, 4, 7}) and the final choral chord of “sun” ({0, 2, 3, 7}) in measure 2 (see Example 1 above) are repeated throughout the movement, as for instance in the piano part, mm. 7 and 78 ({0, 2, 3, 7}) and m. 67 ({0, 2, 4, 7}) (see Example 3 below). These two chords, a major triad plus either an

added perfect fourth or major second, are found in every movement, and are sometimes combined to make a five-note chord of major triad plus second and fourth. Lauridsen



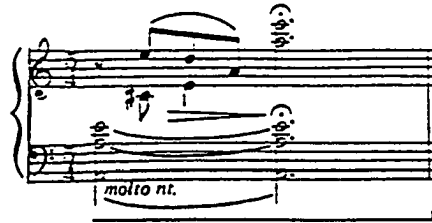
Example 3 From "Lament for Pasiphäë"

has stated that he uses this chord in all of his works; this structure is particularly prominent in the *Madrigali* and *Lux aeterna*.

In *Mid-Winter Songs*, the major triad with added fourth and/or second appears both in root position and inversion, and at all points of the musical phrase, including the cadence. In fact, the final cadence of the first movement includes both second and fourth (see Example 4), while the cadence of the fifth movement contains the added fourth (see Example 5 below); indeed, the triad plus added note is so common at cadence points that the final cadence of the third movement is remarkable because it is the first one in the movement that does not include the added fourth. In the final



Example 4 "Lament for Pasiphäë," mm. 80-84



Example 5 "Intercession in Late October," m. 64

cadence of the fourth movement, second and fourth appear on the downbeat, but resolve to a triad (see Example 6); and in the second movement, whose final cadence is simply



Example 6 "Mid-Winter Waking," m. 60

triadic, the final choral cadence, m. 83, is a B major triad, with the pitches E and C sharp appearing in the accompaniment (see Example 7 below). The effect of these added notes, particularly the added fourth, is a sense of instability and motion, which seems stronger the more prominent the added fourth is in the chord.

The interval set found on the chorus's syllable "-ing" and at the beginning of the word "sun" ($\{0, 1, 3, 5\}$) is also found throughout the movement, and the work; this set is related through transposition to the last four pitches of the original set-- $\{4, 5, 7, 9\} = \{0, 1, 3, 5\}$ (see Example 8 below, which is m. 4 of the accompaniment). In "She Tells Her Love While Half Asleep," the $\{0, 1, 3, 5\}$ set is



Example 7 "Like Snow," mm. 82-83



Example 8 "Lament for Pasiphaë," m. 4 accompaniment

featured as the opening chord of what Lauridsen calls the "sleeping earth" motive (see Example 9 below).³⁹

The climactic chord of "Lament for Pasiphaë," which uses the pitches C flat, D flat, E flat, F, and G flat, forms a {0, 1, 3, 5, 7} set, structured like the first five notes of the Lydian scale (see Example 2 above). It also appears at poetically

³⁹Interview with the author, May 8, 1997; Los Angeles.

Andante, tempo rubato $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 48$
free and flowing like Gregorian chant *mp*

SCPRANO She tells her love while half a-sleep,

ALTO She tells her love while half a-sleep,

TENOR She.

BASS She.

Andante, tempo rubato $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 48$

PIANO *mp* *p*

The image shows a musical score for a vocal quartet and piano. It consists of five staves. The top four staves are for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass voices. The bottom staff is for the Piano. The tempo is 'Andante, tempo rubato' with a metronome marking of approximately 48 quarter notes per minute. The music is marked 'mp' (mezzo-piano) and 'p' (piano). The lyrics for the vocal parts are 'She tells her love while half a-sleep,' for Soprano and Alto, and 'She.' for Tenor and Bass. The piano part features flowing, arpeggiated figures.

Example 9 "She Tells Her Love While Half Asleep," mm. 1-4

important points in the fourth and last movements of the work, such as the opening choral statement in "Intercession in Late October," which concludes in m. 3 with a chord spelled F, G, A, B, C (see Example 10 below), effectively tying together the first movement's "dying sun" to "dies" and "Crone" in the last movement.

For each of the harmonic structures described above there is a comparable melodic structure. For example, the soprano line of mm. 1-7 of movement 1 consists of the full collection of pitches found in the original set, while the bass line of those measures (E flat, F, G flat, A flat, B flat) forms a {0, 2, 3, 5, 7} subset). The descending major second {0, 2} is an important part of a group of related motives derived from motives in "Lament for Pasiphaë" that make frequent appearances throughout the cycle. The opening "Dying sun" section of mm. 1-7 contains several instances of a melodic pattern, found in all movements, whose range is a perfect

Teneramente ♩ = 60

The musical score consists of five staves. The top four staves are for vocal parts: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The bottom staff is for the Piano. The tempo is marked 'Teneramente' with a quarter note equal to 60 beats. The lyrics 'How hard the year dies:.' are written under the vocal staves. The piano part has dynamics *p* and *mp* marked.

Example 10, "Intercession in Late October," mm. 1-3

fourth, containing a major second from either the top or bottom notes (either is a {0, 2, 5} collection); for example, the soprano melody of m. 2 has a range of a perfect fourth, and contains a major second up from the lower note of the fourth, while the bass line of the same measure has a range of a perfect fourth, and a major second below the upper note of the fourth (see Example 1 above). In "Mid-Winter Waking," the bass line of mm. 7-9 contains the motive with the major second above the lower note of the fourth (see Example 11 below). In movements three, four, and five, the perfect fourth sometimes expands to a perfect fifth, with notes a major second away from both upper and lower notes included in the pattern ({0, 2, 5, 7}, again a subset of the original collection); this motive, derived from the earlier one, appears in m. 9 of the soprano line in Example 11.

Example 11 "Mid-Winter Waking," mm. 7-10

The major second is also used in another motive, that of two successive descending whole steps, the second higher than the first, as in the alto line, m. 2 of "Lament for Pasiphaë" (a {0, 2, 4} subset; see Example 1 above). In addition to appearing all over the first movement, this motive also forms the basis for the opening melodic figure of "Like Snow" (see Example 12). The {0, 2, 4} motive also appears in the choral harmony parts in "She Tells Her Love While Half Asleep" (see Example 13, alto line m. 6, below); in "Intercession in Late October" the motives appear both as part of the new accompaniment for this movement and as a direct quote from the piano part of the first movement.

Vivo, lievemente $\frac{1}{4}$ = ca. 152

Example 12 "Like Snow," mm. 1-4

5

meno mosso
p *mp* *rit.* *a tempo*

des-pite the snow. des-pite the fall - ing snow.

meno mosso
p *mp* *rit.* *a tempo*

des-pite the snow. des-pite the fall - ing snow.

meno mosso
p *mp* *rit.* *a tempo*

des-pite the snow. des-pite the fall - ing snow.

meno mosso
p *mp* *rit.* *a tempo*

des-pite the snow. des-pite the fall - ing snow.

Example 13 "She Tells Her Love While Half Asleep," mm. 5-7

An expansion of the {0, 2, 4} motive, the Lydian tetrachord ({0, 2, 4, 6}) is first seen in measure 2 of the tenor line in "Lament for Pasiphaë" (see Example 1 above); the same ascending melodic line plus its fifth, forming a pentachord ({0, 1, 3, 5, 7}), is seen in the soprano line, mm. 3-4 of "She Tells Her Love While Half Asleep" (see Example 9 above), and in the piano interlude of that movement. The F sharp major/G sharp major/F sharp major progressions that appear throughout "Like Snow" hint at a Lydian scale (see Example 14). The opening measures of "Mid-Winter Waking" contains a motive in the right hand whose pitches are F flat, G flat, A flat, and B flat, but used in the same way as the {0, 2, 4} motive, as two consecutive

5

meno mosso

Example 14 "Like Snow," m. 5

descending whole steps; these are just farther apart (see Example 15). This movement also contains a Lydian soprano melody over a harmonic Lydian pentachord at mm. 26-27 (see Example 16).



Example 15 "Mid-Winter Waking," mm. 1-2

Example 16 "Mid-Winter Waking," mm. 26-27

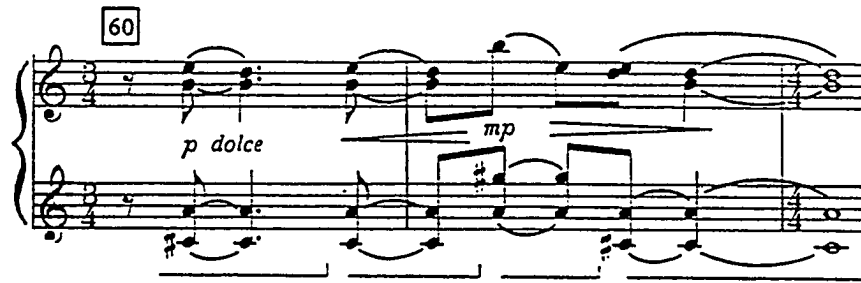
The additive development of motives through outward expansion may be related to certain choral part writing techniques Lauridsen employs, specifically, harmonic writing in an expanding wedge shape that occurs in several places throughout the work. Example 17 below shows the choral parts of m. 10 of "Lament for Pasiphaë" and mm. 50-51 of "Mid-Winter Waking;" in each of these examples, and in examples 10 and 13 above, one may see Lauridsen beginning from either a unison, {0, 2}, or {0, 2, 7}, and expanding the range outwardly from there.

Example 17 displays two musical systems. The first system, labeled '10', shows four staves of music for the lyrics 'warm a lit-tle long-er, shine'. The second system, labeled '50', shows four staves of music for the lyrics 'but found no win-ter an-y-where'. Both systems show a unison start that expands outwardly.

Example 17

In addition to using common harmonic and melodic structures in all movements to provide a sense of unity, Lauridsen also reinforces the cyclic nature of the work by using quotes from earlier movements in later movements. "Intercession in Late October" contains quotes from movements one, three, and four in its piano interlude and closing piano accompaniment; in fact, measures 60-62 (near the end of the movement) contain the music of the final measures (mm. 81-84) of "Lament for Pasiphaë," transposed up a half step (compare Example 4 to Example 18, below).

Our examination of the poetry and music of *Mid-Winter Songs* for cyclic elements has shown that Lauridsen used the musical settings of the poetry to further



Example 18 "Intercession in Late October," mm. 60-62

enhance their cyclic unity by using motivic development and repetition, common chordal structures, and quotes from one movement in a later movement. These elements are not unique to this cycle of pieces; however, they are part of an overall unity between text and music that is derived from the composer's desire to "begin with the text," to create a work that is greater than the sum of its parts.

CHAPTER 3 POETIC AND MUSICAL FORM, RHYTHM, AND METER

"Lament for Pasiphaë"

In an interview with the author, Lauridsen stated that he typically begins composition of a vocal work by working extensively with the text, notating rhythm and determining the pace of the poem and developing an overall idea of what the text is about. Only after this early work does he decide on an initial musical idea; then the "craft" of composition begins.⁴⁰ As he composes, Lauridsen keeps in mind important words in the texts that he emphasizes in various ways; we will discuss this aspect of *Mid-Winter Songs* in more detail below.

Lauridsen describes the poetry of "Lament for Pasiphaë" as "passionate," "dramatic," "bold," "biting;"⁴¹ his use of the major ninth as a bold opening gesture seems to underscore the drama he senses in the text (see Example 1 above). (The text of "Lament for Pasiphaë" is found on pages 8 and 9 above.) "Lament for Pasiphaë" consists of two eight-line stanzas, in which most lines have ten syllables, except for lines 4, 9, and 14, which have eleven; the last pair of lines in each stanza are identical but for one word, while the last line of each stanza is a repeat of the first line of the poem. Poetic meter seems to be the formal organizational principle of this poem, as there is no rhyme scheme, recurring syllable count pattern, regular sentence length, or repetitive pattern of syllabic stress at the beginning or end of lines. Each line has between three and six stressed syllables in a basic pattern of iambic meter; however, the first and last lines of each stanza are in trochaic meter, perhaps both for formal definition and for emphasis of the text presented. Temporary reversals of stressed and

⁴⁰Interview with the author, March 8, 1997, Los Angeles.

⁴¹Interview with the author, March 8, 1997, Los Angeles.

unstressed syllables that occur, for example, in lines 2 and 11, and substitution of strong or weak syllables for the type dictated by the metrical pattern, such as in lines 5, 6, 12, and 13, alter the even flow of the iambic meter. The speed of the text declamation is slowed by frequent interior and line-end punctuation, which is present in all lines except 6 and 12.

In the musical setting, the poetry is presented in successive lines, with some repetition of individual words or phrases; before the last line of the poem, Lauridsen repeats lines 2-7 of the poem, which provides a longer period of time between statements of the "dying sun" line, and a delay of the inevitable repeat (since line 7 led into line 8, the listener may easily assume that line 7's near twin, line 15, should lead the same place); when line 8 recurs after the repeat of lines 2-7, the listener has a strong sense that it is both the end of stanza one and the end of the entire poem.

This repetition of stanza 1 of the poem also lends itself to a three part, or ABA setting; the divisions between sections and smaller components are delineated by tempo changes and changing tonal areas. The A section is divided into five smaller sections--A¹ mm. 1-8, A² mm. 9-13, piano interlude mm. 14-19, A³ mm. 20-25, and A⁴ mm. 26-32--and the B section is divided into three smaller sections--B¹ mm. 39-43, another B¹ mm. 44-48, and B² mm. 49-54, which shares tonal and harmonic materials with the piano interlude of section A. In the repeat of lines 2-7, the musical material used for the repeat contains the same number of measures, but contains slight variations of rhythm and harmony the second time the text is presented.

There are three main tonal areas in "Lament for Pasiphaë," which correspond to the above sections. A¹ and A² are written with an A flat major collection, although the tonal center seems to be E flat. With the A flat collection, there is no third until m.

7, where a C natural occurs; this A flat collection is also used in the other two occurrences of A¹ mm. 33-38 and mm. 69-76. Another tonal area, which appears in the piano interlude, section A³, A⁴, and B², is centered on C, but uses both E and E flat and B and B flat; this mix of tones from two or more modes (from parallel scales) used simultaneously is quite common in Lauridsen's music, and, as we will see, is used in each movement of *Mid-Winter Songs*. The third tonal area, occurring in the B¹ section and briefly in the final statement of A¹, combines the A flat collection with whole-tone tetrachords; in the final A¹ section, this combination produces the {0, 1, 3, 5, 7} chord at m. 75, at the climax of the final "dying sun" statement (see Example 2 above).

Poetic meter and rhythm are at the heart of Lauridsen's vocal lines; early in the compositional process, the composer writes out a rhythmic transcription of his reading of the poem, noting which syllables are stressed through either raised pitch inflection or length, which syllables are particularly short, and how the text seems to fit best into an accurate musical notation. Thus, when one speaks the text of these settings in their composed rhythm, one immediately notices that short, unaccented syllables of text are given short notes off the beat, while strong, long, stressed syllables appear on downbeats or with lengthened notes, or both. An accurate rhythmic transcription of poetic rhythm means, in this case, frequent changes of meter, and attention to the subtleties of length of syllabic pronunciation; for example, line 2 contains two forms of the word "dazzle"--"dazzle" and "dazzled"--but they are set rhythmically differently because of the words around them and their different positions within the entire line of text. (see Example 19 below).

Certain lines of text have regular patterns of stressed and unstressed syllables that are heightened by their rhythmic settings. For instance, the repeated text of lines



Example 19 "Lament for Pasiphaë," mm. 20-21 soprano

7 and 15 also has an even pattern of iambic pentameter; it is set musically so that, even though all syllables are the same length, the stressed syllables correspond to the notes on the beat, while the unstressed syllables serve as upbeats (see Example 20).



Example 20 "Lament for Pasiphaë," mm. 51-53

Other lines of text have irregular numbers of syllables between stressed syllables, such as line 13; the musical setting for the line, "Tempted her pity and her truth betrayed," is a triplet, four sixteenth notes, and a dotted eighth/sixteenth combination for "truth be-" (see Example 21 below). This setting keeps the strong syllables on the beat, with the unstressed syllables on notes of the same length between occurrences of stressed syllables--except for the extra-short anacrustic syllable of "betrayed," which is appropriately given a sixteenth note.



Example 21 "Lament for Pasiphaë," mm. 48-49 soprano

It is through such rhythmic and metrical analysis that one may arrive at a version of the poem the way the composer likely read it; Lauridsen's reading of the poetry is revealed in his rhythmic settings. There are some words, however, that Lauridsen sets to notes whose duration is longer than would occur in spoken text; this is because he uses note length as a way to emphasize words in the poem that are essential to his ideas of the meaning of the poem. This is also accomplished through repetition; obviously, "dying sun" is an important concept of this poem to Lauridsen; the text is repeated much more frequently than it appears in the poem, and is given the most dramatic harmonic treatment of any phrase in the poem. Lauridsen states, "I identified with the poet as 'dying sun,' which seems to me to speak to middle age and the prospect of losing one's 'brightness' as one ages."⁴²

With the exception of the climactic moment at m. 75, Lauridsen consistently uses the same chordal structure on the word "sun" in each occurrence of the "dying sun" motive; it is a major triad plus added fourth, or {0, 2, 3, 7}. The word "moon" is also given a consistent harmonic structure, one more suited to the sense of loss and incompleteness felt by the poet--an open fifth plus added fourth, or {0, 2, 7}, similar in structure to the "sun" chord, but less full (see Example 22 below).

⁴²Interview with the author, March 9, 1997, Los Angeles.



Example 22 “Lament for Pasiphaë,” m. 73, m. 54

“Like Snow”

“Like Snow” consists of nine lines in two sections, each section introduced by the words “like snow” and closed with a line of iambic trimeter (the poem’s only lines of regular meter) and a full stop (refer to page 13). The only other full stop (line 2) is weakened both by its position within a line, amidst four unstressed syllables, and by the conjunction “and” which begins the next sentence, connecting the two sentences and drawing the reader forward. What leads our ear through the poem is not a rhyme scheme but a series of alliterations (world/waked, dazzling/drowsy, curtains/close) coupled with the repetitions, at the ends of lines 6-9, of the sounds that had ended lines 2-5 respectively. The shortness of lines 5, 7, and 9 heightens their finality as full or half stops (especially true of line 5, a six-syllable line following four eight-syllable lines). The extreme shortness of line 7, combined with its two successive stressed syllables and the triple interior consonants of “soil friendly,” slows the pace further and strengthens its half stop; then line 8, the longest of the poem, returns to familiar aural territory with alliteration, end rhyme, and accented final syllable. These

elements, combined with line 9's iambic trimeter and full stop, provide the poem's strongest sense of finality.

Lauridsen composed a ternary setting for Graves's text by repeating the first sentence of text at the end of the piece; the first sentence, framed by solo piano passages, forms the A sections (mm. 1-32 and 65-98), while B (mm. 33-64) includes the rest of the text separated into two smaller sections by a piano interlude that shares material with the opening music of A. Thus, the three sections are very close to the same length, but the two A sections, identical except for an extra cadential measure at the end of the movement, contain much less text than does B, with its two text sections and central interlude; Lauridsen repeats words and phrases frequently within the A sections, in a way that lends a breathless quality to the musical setting of the "snowflake."

Lauridsen stated that the F sharp center of this piece was selected deliberately because it sounds "crisp" and "sparkly"; as in "Lament for Pasiphae," the tonal collection includes pitches from more than one F sharp mode, in this instance both A and A sharp, E and E sharp, and B and B sharp. Lauridsen seems to move fluidly among the modes, as opposed to using pitches simultaneously with their modally-altered counterparts; for example, no single vertical structure contains both an A natural and an A sharp, but successive chords might. This use of subtly shifting modes provides some sense of ambiguity; the first "V-I" cadence of the movement occurs in the choral parts, mm. 18-19, and it is on B major (see Example 7 above). The E sharp essential for a V-I cadence in F sharp major doesn't appear in the movement until m. 29, where it doesn't resolve; in fact, the first time a C sharp major triad resolves to an F sharp triad is mm. 45-46 (see Example 23 below), and the cadence is weakened by the F sharp pedal of m. 45 and the added seventh (an E natural) in the F sharp chord. There



Example 23 "Like Snow," mm. 45-47

is finally a V-I cadence in F sharp major in the choral voices mm. 64-65, though again, there is an F sharp in the C sharp chord (another instance of Lauridsen's favorite chordal structure of {0, 2, 3, 7}). Even the final cadence of the movement is modally ambiguous; the final measures contain alternating C sharp major and minor chords, and the piece ends with octave C sharps.

The very fast tempo of this movement (half note = ca. 152) and frequent staccato notes in the piano along with frequent quarter rests in the vocal parts leads to a sense of hurry and breathlessness, of snow swirling in the wind. Lauridsen states of "Like Snow": "I wanted to write a snowflake," and describes the poetry as evoking the words "sparkle," "crispy," "shimmery," and "delicate."⁴³ Poetic meter takes second place to poetic imagery; one certainly would not read the poem with stops as frequent as those indicated in the vocal lines, but this setting reinforces the mood of the poem.

⁴³Interview with the author, March 8, 1997, Los Angeles.

Lauridsen's use of quarter notes at this tempo means that the text will be declaimed rapidly. In addition, this poem contains many fricative and stop-plosive consonant sounds (f, sh, s, k, t, z, d), used in alliterative pairs of words, which also lend a crispness to the sound of the work when sung.

Syllabic stress and poetic meter again play an important role in the rhythmic musical setting of the poem; stressed syllables are placed on longer notes, on the beat; at this tempo, the text declamation is not too different in speed in its musical setting than it would be when spoken. For instance, the text of mm. 60-64 is set so as to provide for the stressed syllables of "hold-," "his-," and "-melt-," while incorporating the slight pause between the words "night" and "in" (see Example 24).



Example 24 "Like Snow," mm. 60-64 soprano

As indicated above, the speed of declamation in the poem slows in lines 6 and 7; this is reflected in the relatively longer note values used in the B section; the short, fast notes return with the repeat of the A section.

This setting also includes a textual overlap, as in "Lament for Pasiphae," mm. 40-50; two voices sing different texts simultaneously at mm. 43-46. Unlike the previous poem, however, in "Like Snow" the overlap is not a simultaneous presentation of two lines of text, but rather the repeat of previous text combined with a continuation of the poem. Overall, this clarity of textual presentation leads to a clear and easily-understood singing text, which was one of the primary goals of the composer.

“She Tells Her Love While Half Asleep”

In this poem, found on page 15 above, the ABC rhyme scheme of the first stanza repeats in the second, along with an additional line (the seventh) which rhymes with C; the first stanza’s 8+4+6 syllable count pattern also repeats in stanza 2, with an additional six-syllable line (the fifth). There are only two short disruptions of the iambic meter; punctuation at the end of each line in stanza 1 slows the even pace of text, but in stanza 2, the first three lines are run together, minimizing the added length of the extra line. All of these characteristics combine to make the poem a fluid, even, smoothly flowing text in which the regular meter is a soothing background rather than a strict and obvious effect.

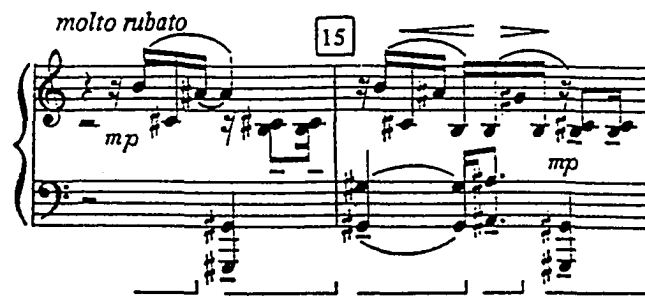
In Lauridsen’s setting, stanza 1 appears in the first fourteen measures; following a contrasting piano interlude, stanza 2 repeats the music of stanza 1, forming an ABA structure. Lauridsen interjects the last two lines of the poem into both A sections as a refrain; Lauridsen states, “The poem is so short that I decided to repeat the refrain and include an interludium right in the middle that develops the musical ideas.”⁴⁴

The opening bars for piano, the “sleeping earth motive” (see Example 9 above), emphasize the intervals of ninth and second, linking it to the opening piano motive of “Lament to Pasiphaë.” The emphasis on ninth and second again creates a feeling of instability, as does Lauridsen’s use of shifting modes on the same tone. Lauridsen characterizes this movement as “a chant” and “personal.”⁴⁵ He included the performance instructions “free and flowing like Gregorian chant,” and he seems to

⁴⁴Interview with the author, March 9, 1997, Los Angeles.

⁴⁵Interview with the author, March 8, 1997, Los Angeles.

have incorporated some aspects of early chant-based polyphonies, such as frequent use of harmonies of a perfect fifth as well as “stacked” fifths, or quintal harmony; the last chord of measure 4 for voices, for instance, uses the pitches F sharp, C sharp, G sharp, and D sharp, a {0, 2, 5, 7} structure (see Example 9 above). Section A (mm. 1-13) is centered around G4, including both A and A sharp, B and B sharp, and E and E sharp, while section B (mm. 14-27) uses G sharp Dorian and natural minor. The different modes share enough common pitches that changes from one to another are not obtrusive, even in mid-phrase, as for instance at mm. 5, 7, and 10 (See Example 13 above, bass and tenor lines, m. 6); as in the previous movement, there are no chord structures in which a note sounds together with its modally-altered counterpart. The descending A/G sharp/F sharp pattern of the piano in mm. 1-2 and the ascending scale of the soprano voice in mm. 3-4 appear transposed up a step in section B, although G sharp is still the tonal center; this is possible because of the shift to Dorian mode in section B (compare piano part of Example 9 above and Example 25).



Example 25 “She Tells Her Love While Half Asleep,” mm. 14-15 accompaniment

Although the refrain of lines 6 and 7 is set to the same pitches each of the four times it appears, the word “falling” changes rhythmically according to the position of each refrain in the overall form of the piece. “Falling” covers three eighth-note pulses in the two rhythmically identical refrains that occur after the first line of each

stanza, whereas it lengthens to four eighth-note pulses at the end of the first stanza, delineating the end of section A; the greatest lengthening of the refrain, providing the strongest sense of finality, occurs in its final statement at the end of the piece, in which the word “falling” covers five eighth-note pulses, and is further extended by an eighth rest that separates it from the final chord of the piece (see Example 13 above, and Example 26).

Example 26 “She Tells Her Love While Half Asleep,” mm. 6-7, mm. 40-41

Another factor in the repeated refrain that underscores a sense of movement or finality is the harmonic cadence that occurs after “falling,” on the word “snow.” At each occurrence of the refrain, the final chord is a G sharp major triad with an added fourth (the familiar {0, 2, 3, 7}), a chord that provides some sense of finality, but also of instability; likewise, the chord at the end of the piano interlude of section B, consisting of the pitches G sharp, A sharp, B, and C sharp is not very restful harmonically, but the allargando of the previous measure and the fermata over the chord (m. 27) signal a point of rest. However, the cadence with the strongest sense of harmonic closure is the final one of the piece (see Example 26 above); since it is set

apart from the preceding word “falling” by an eighth rest, and because we have heard the refrain end with the added fourth three times, the purely triadic chord (second inversion G sharp major) sounds surprisingly final, even though a second inversion chord is not typically the final chord of a piece.

In this movement, Lauridsen seems to have focused more on using a chant-like style to create a mood than on maintaining close rhythmic accuracy of text declamation; unlike each of the other movements, some words in this setting are set against the natural flow of the stresses of the language, as for example, the word “in” of mm. 10-11 and 37-38, which extends over the barline, giving it emphasis and importance that it certainly doesn’t receive when one reads the poem aloud (see Example 27).



Example 27 “She Tells Her Love While Half Asleep,” mm. 37-38 soprano

However, performers who are aware of Lauridsen’s idea of chant may find that such settings do lend a certain evenness of flow through a deliberate lack of stress on metrically regular pulses; chant, after all, flows metrically upon the syllabic stresses of its text, not according to meter signature. The downplay of metrical stress may also mirror the smooth, flowing regularly-stressed quality of the text.

“Mid-Winter Waking”

“Mid-Winter Waking” (see page 17 above) consists of three five-line stanzas, which rhyme on lines 3 and 5; in each stanza, lines 1, 2, and 5 have the same syllable count (11, 9, and 10, respectively). The sense of closure at the end of each stanza is strengthened both by the rhyme and the return to a line of consistent length after the

variable lengths of lines 3 and 4 (10, 11; 8, 12; 8, 9). This closure is strongest in the third stanza, as the first uses near rhyme ([principali-]ties/eyes), and the second closes with a dash, propelling the reader forward; the last two lines of the third stanza end with stressed syllables, so that the rhyme, punctuation, and syllabic stress combine to produce the strongest stop. Thus the structure of the poem carries the reader from the first stirrings after a “long hibernation” to the confident optimism at the end.

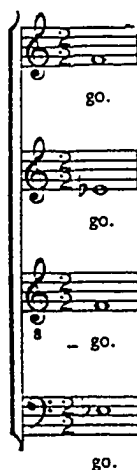
Lauridsen’s setting of the poem is ternary, A/B/A¹ +coda; each musical section corresponds to a stanza (stanza 3 occupies both A¹ and coda). Although the progression of ideas in the poem does not suggest a ternary structure, Lauridsen’s ternary form, with its slower-moving B section (mm. 21-31) between the faster-moving A sections (mm. 1-20 and 32-47), matches the pace of Graves’s poem, in which the second stanza moves at a slower pace than the first and third, due to the three commas of its first line, the high proportion of stressed syllables in its second and third lines, and its open vowels throughout. Lauridsen describes this movement as “jazzy” and “lively.”⁴⁶

Pace of the poem is also a factor in the musical settings of stanzas 1 and 3; although text appears in nine measures in both A and A¹, section A¹ contains only the first three lines of stanza 3, so that the coda is needed to complete the poem. This is due both to the slower pace of the first line of stanza 3, which Lauridsen sets in four measures as compared to two in stanza 1, and to Lauridsen’s shortening of stanza 1 by overlapping textual phrases and deleting the word “presently.” The coda (mm. 47-60) is an augmentation of the musical material of mm. 13-16, and uses the greatest

⁴⁶Interview with the author, March 8, 1997, Los Angeles.

number of long notes; this, combined with the repetition of the last two words (“to see,” the only instance of text repetition in the setting), emphasizes the importance of the last two lines of text while slowing the pace of the music to the end.

Tonally, all sections use an E flat center with F and F flat, G and G flat, C and C flat, and D flat; in section B and the coda the tonality is less clearly defined, with the tonal center seeming to occasionally shift to C flat. Reinforcing the near-rhyme of stanza one, the vocal cadence of section A (m. 16) gives some sense of closure, although the accompaniment quickly returns to the instability of the previous tonality and provides forward motion. Section B cadences on an unaccompanied second at m. 31 (See Example 28), which produces the same momentum as the dash in the poetry (which



Example 28 “Mid-Winter Waking,” m. 31

has been replaced by a period in the musical setting). As in the poem, the strongest sense of closure in the musical setting is found at the end of A¹-coda, in which the last harmony is an E flat major chord in the piano (m. 60).

This movement showcases Lauridsen’s use of poetic rhythm as the source of musical rhythm; throughout this movement, rhythmic notation is consistent with syllabic length and stress, and pace of declamation. There is possibly no finer example of this than the setting of the opening two lines of text (see Example 11 above), in

which such niceties as the slight lengthening of the syllable “-ly” and the syncopated nature of “I knew myself once more a poet” are taken into account. The word “hibernation” is set so that both rhythm and higher pitch emphasize the stressed syllable. At the shift to the slower pace of lines 14 and 15, m. 47, the rhythmic notation shows almost a halving of the preceding rate of speed (see Example 29); the



Example 29 “Mid-Winter Waking,” mm. 47-49

slower rhythms play up the change in perspective in the poem, as well as the beginning of a new sentence. This notation also illustrates the word “silence” by the insertion of rests, reinforced by rests in the piano part.

“Intercession in Late October”

“Intercession in Late October” has no recurring rhyme scheme, no regular metric pattern, and no pattern of beginning or ending stress or speech sound (see page 20 above); there is, however, a syllabic count pattern of 8/10/10/10/8 and 8/10; but what seems to carry this poem is the increasing ease with which each line flows from beginning to end. The first line of stanza 1 begins with alliteration on the letter h, which, as an aspirant sound, takes a bit longer to produce than, say, a stop-plosive

consonant such as k or t; the sentence is further slowed by successive stressed syllables ("year dies") and an interior colon, which is followed by three one-syllable words that could all be read as stressed syllables, slowing the line even more.

Line 2 is in iambic pentameter, but there is a shift in accent on the word "Midas," which slows the line. Line 3, also in iambic pentameter, seems to flow more easily because the one accent shift in this line occurs right at the beginning, so the end of the line flows smoothly. Line 4 is the first line to contain an even pattern of meter, in this case trochaic pentameter, with only a slight lengthening for the aspirant Fs and alliterative Bs. Like line 1, line 5 has eight syllables, but these are organized into a very comfortable and smooth series of stressed and unstressed syllables.

Pace of text in the second stanza is once again slowed by pairs of stressed one-syllable words ("spare him," "clean hands"); the interior punctuation and double consonant sound that begins the word "crone" also slows the end of line 6, but the end of line 7 flows smoothly in iambic meter, making this couplet a miniature version of the procedure employed in the longer first stanza.

Lauridsen's musical setting of this poem, like that of "She Tells Her Love While Half Asleep," consists of two vocal sections separated by a piano interlude, again forming an ABA structure; section A (mm. 1-35) contains the entire poem, while the second A section is a literal repeat of mm. 20-35, which is the second stanza of the poem. Section B (mm. 36-59), with no vocal parts, is a lengthy rhapsodic solo in which the piano quotes directly from "She Tells Her Love While Half Asleep" and develops motives from that movement and the material from section A, especially the ascending major ninth in the bass of the piano part and the subtly syncopated rhythmic figure first found in the left hand of the piano, m. 16 (see Example 30 below); the piano then quotes from "Lament for Pasiphae," with mm. 53-59 a combination of the



Example 30 "Intercession in Late October," m. 16 piano

opening and final "dying sun" statements from that movement, here centered on A natural instead of the original A flat, but retaining the Lydian sound of the final "dying sun" statement in mm. 58-59. As noted above, the piano part of the coda (mm. 60-62) is a transposition of mm. 81-end of "Lament for Pasiphae," again centered on A natural instead of the original A flat (see Examples 4 and 18 above).

As in previous movements, Lauridsen uses the cadences as aural guideposts that give a sense of varying degrees of finality. Each cadence point prior to m. 35 in both sections A and A¹ contains an added second, fourth, or both. At m. 35 the C sharp in the bass of the piano completes a major triad with the open fifth of the voices, but, as before, this triad, in inversion, is not the most final-sounding of the piece; the last chord of the movement combines the voices' octave on E natural with the piano's bass A natural, in long notes, to provide the strongest point of rest, even though the piano's treble C sharp and D natural are both still sounding due to pedal indications. Thus even on the last chord of the entire work we are presented with Lauridsen's favorite chord structure ({0, 2, 3, 7}) and the subtle harmonic confusion it creates (see Example 5 above).

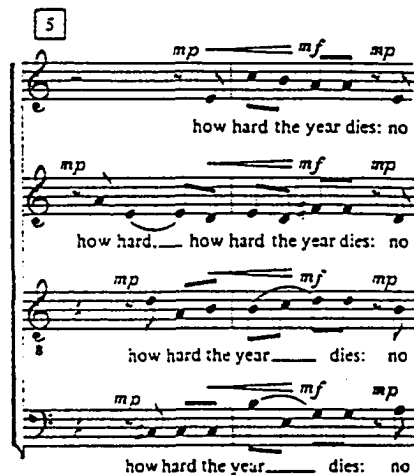
Lauridsen's text setting again conforms to the rhythm and pace of the spoken poem; his use of the same music for the second stanza as for the first (mm. 1-9 are repeated mm. 20-27), but with slight differences in rhythm and metric indication to

accommodate text, shows that Lauridsen was sensitive to text even when he wanted to tie two thoughts together musically. Measure 13 shows Lauridsen's skill at musical text-setting (see Example 31); here, even though the word "fearless" begins on an upbeat, the upbeat is given a tenuto line to indicate syllabic stress (the same technique is used for the word "firm" in the women's choral parts m. 16), and the word "moaning" is highlighted by metric stress, large interval leap, and falling pitch on the unstressed final syllable.



Example 31 "Intercession in Late October," m. 13

In several instances, choice of stressed syllables or words would depend upon one's interpretation of the text, or one's own reading; for example, the first line could be read in a number of different ways, with stresses possible on any word but "how" or "the." Observation of Lauridsen's use of musical meter enables us to read the line of text the way the composer stressed it. In the musical setting of mm. 2 and 3, "hard" falls on a downbeat and thus receives stress; "year" also falls on a downbeat and is given a quarter note, providing both metric and length stress; "dies" is given the strongest stress of any word, falling on the first beat of the measure using a half note tied to an eighth (See Example 10 above). In the repeat of the text, mm. 5-6, the stress hierarchy is a little different, with "hard" and "year" still falling on downbeats, but "dies" occurring on an upbeat; in both instances, however, the highest dynamic level of the line of text occurs on "dies" (see Example 32 below). The setting of the second line of text in 3-4 meter shows how Lauridsen coped with the problem of having "sand" and "Mi-," two potentially stressed syllables, consecutively; if he had



Example 32 "Intercession in Late October," mm. 5-6

used 6-8 for m. 10, the stress would have naturally fallen on "yel-" and "Mi-," leaving "sand" as an unstressed upbeat; the use of 3-4 enables Lauridsen to obtain metric stress on both "yel-" and "sand" plus the stress that occurs naturally on "Mi-," combining the metric stresses of 3-4 and 6-8 (see Example 33).



Example 33 "Intercession in Late October," mm. 9-11 soprano

In addition to rhythmic setting of text, Lauridsen uses pitch to emphasize stressed syllables; for example, in setting "clean hands" in m. 26, he placed the first word, a stress, on the downbeat of the measure, and the second word, also a stress, on a higher pitch, so that each word is given musical importance, though in different ways. The same type of procedure is used in m. 27, in which the compound word "lovesubmissive" is set with the first stress on the first beat of the measure, and the

second stress on the secondary stress of the measure with a higher pitch (see Example 34).



Example 34

As in several other movements, repeated music ties two poetic thoughts together; in this movement, the repeat of music from stanza 1 in stanza 2 allows the {0, 1, 3, 5, 7} sonority of m. 3 ("dies") to repeat in m. 22 ("crone"), highlighting the relationship between death and the old age of the goddess in the poem to whom the poet is appealing (see Example 10 above and Example 35). This harmony is the same one found in m. 75 of "Lament for Pasiphaë," thus tying the notion of "dying sun" to "dies" and "crone," and aurally returning to the first movement. The same downbeat

Example 35 "Intercession in Late October," mm. 21-22

quarter notes are used for the two consecutive stresses of "clean hands" in m. 26 as were used for "frost yet" in m. 7.

Conclusion

The musical settings of *Mid-Winter Songs* are unified through both poetic and musical elements; through attention to the details of imagery, meter, and rhythm in the poems, Morten Lauridsen developed the musical materials of these settings from elements present in the texts. The overall form of the set is an arch, with a chronological and seasonal progression through the five poems representative of winter into spring, into an eternal summer. The arch form is emphasized in the musical settings through the incorporation of music from the first movement as a part of the last, bringing the circle to both an end and a new beginning.

Lauridsen selected the texts for their common “motif,” and reinforced the poetic unity by selecting common musical materials for the various movements, using a basic set of intervals and its subsets for harmonic and melodic structures. Thus, even though the movements are not related by any type of key relationship, they are part of the same cycle due to their similar musical materials. The development of motives from a basic whole step to more complex motives by expanding outward with top and bottom pitches is seemingly mirrored in wedge-shaped phrases in the choral setting; harmonic and melodic materials are clearly related, since the intervals of each form subsets of the materials found in the opening choral setting of “dying sun.”

In each movement, the meter and rhythm of the text have been a starting point for musical meter and rhythm, with exceptions made for important words or poetic concepts. Words the composer thought important were also highlighted by pitch, duration, and dynamic level. Poetic imagery that ties the set together, such as the relationship between “dying sun” in the first movement and the way the year “dies” in the last are also related through repetition of musical materials.

Most of the settings of the choral parts are homophonic, with syllables aligned in all parts; the occasional exceptions to this practice are brief and do not detract from a feeling of “group” speech. This practice makes the words more intelligible to the listener. As an added indication to the performer of the importance of the texts, Lauridsen also requested that his publisher present the poems in their correct linear configuration at the beginning of each movement. The close relationship between the individual movements of the poetry is highlighted by their musical settings, resulting in a choral cycle that is expressive, exciting, and enjoyable to hear and to perform.

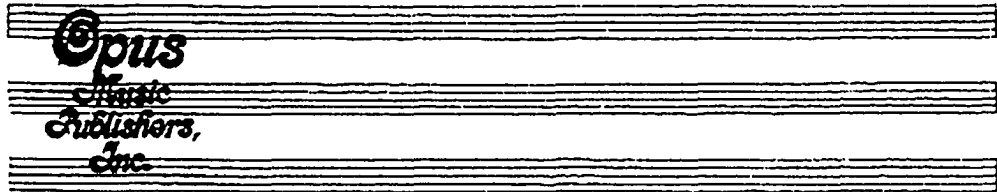
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APPENDIX: LETTER OF PERMISSION



July 6, 1998

Meg Huley
Dir of Choral Activities
Loyola Un. New Orleans
Fax - 903/759-3377

Dear Meg,

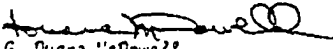
Please be advised that permission to use musical examples of Mid-Winter Songs by Morten Lauridsen is given for your monograph.

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As always Opus Music Publishers, Inc. requests one copy of all material for our files.

Thank You.

Sincerely,


G. Duane McDowell
President

Opus Music Publishers, Inc.
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Evanston, IL 60201

VITA

Dr. Margaret Sue Hulley is Assistant Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities at Loyola University New Orleans. She received the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts in Choral Conducting from Louisiana State University in 1998, where she studied with Dr. Kenneth Fulton. Dr. Hulley earned both the Bachelor of Music Education and Master of Music in Conducting degrees from Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas. From 1994-1998, Dr. Hulley was Instructor of Music at Beloit College in Beloit, Wisconsin, where she conducted the College's choral program and taught music history, theory, and conducting. She is an active clinician and has conducted honor choruses in Texas, Louisiana, Wisconsin, and Illinois. Dr. Hulley's research interests include contemporary choral music and the music of women composers.

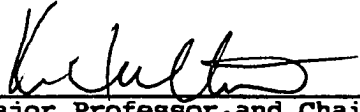
DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: Margaret Sue Hulley

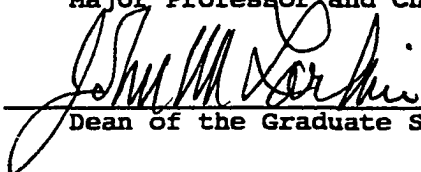
Major Field: Music

Title of Dissertation: A Study of the Influence of Text in
Morten Lauridsen's Mid-Winter Songs

Approved:

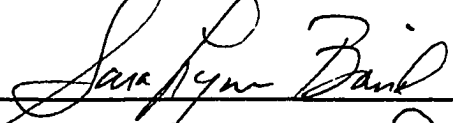


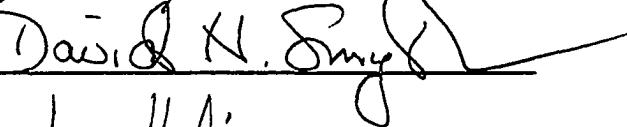
Major Professor and Chairman

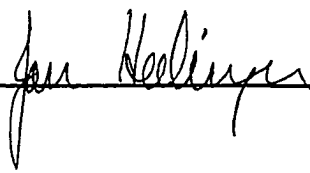


Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:







Date of Examination:

July 8, 1998

