CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

BARITONE’S FURY

JOEL D. CASTRO’S MASTER OF MUSIC RECITAL

An abstract submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
For the degree of Master of Music
in Performance

By

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California State University, Northridge
Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Signature Page</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

BARITONE’S FURY

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By

Joel Daniel Dillahunt Castro

Master of Music in Performance

Many scholars throughout history have spoken about the power and profound effect that music has. Music is a means of reaching across time, languages, and distances to touch the hearts and souls of those listening. During the Renaissance this unique power was called “poetic furor,” which was one of the “Divine furors,” and was believed to have the power to reunite mortal souls with the divine. It was from this definition and belief that I chose the word Fury and have described it as “an enflaming passion.” Thus, Fury is the magical force achieved when both musical skill and emotional intent are united in song.

Creating this effective bond required a special selection of songs. The repertoire for my recital was chosen with two goals in mind: to have significant emotional qualities that matched my own aesthetics, and to represent varying historical styles and languages as mandated by the department. After careful consideration, I selected emotionally
significant songs with a strong potential for “poetic furor” from four different composers: George Frideric Handel, Franz Schubert, Maurice Ravel, and Charles Ives. The songs were grouped together by composer, and arranged within each group to provide contrasting moods. The groups were then ordered by stylistic chronology. Representing the earliest style of music was a pair of arias by George Frideric Handel.

The Handel set represents the Baroque style from the early 18th century. Although German born, Handel was well versed in writing operas in the Italian style, as well as composing English oratorios. The first song, “How Willing My Paternal Love,” is from the oratorio Samson. It is sung by Samson’s father Manoah, who vows to rescue his son from Philistine captivity. The soft and lyric sonority of the music underlines the gentle paternal strength of Manoah. This gentle paternal nature is starkly contrasted by the second song of the set, “Empio dirò tu sei,” from the opera Giulio Cesare. This opera begins at the end of the Roman Civil War between Julius Caesar and Pompey Magnus and is a dramatic retelling of Julius Caesar’s first encounter with Cleopatra, and the ensuing Egyptian Civil War. The aria occurs after the boy king Ptolemy gives the decapitated head of Pompey to Caesar as a token of friendship. Caesar is enraged and horrified at the cruelty and barbarity of the action. While Pompey had been Caesar’s enemy, he had also been his friend, son-in-law, and co-ruler of Rome. In Caesar’s mind, Pompey did not deserve such a cruel fate. The fast tempo and long coloratura phrases proclaim Caesar’s wrath.

The second set was a selection of German lieder by Franz Schubert. These German art songs were composed in the Romantic style of the early 1800s. The narrative elements in lieder covered a wide range of topics. For my recital I chose a repertoire that
dealt with a trout being caught on a hook, a seductive serenade, a Titan’s tragic fate, a secret affair, and an infanticidal Elf king.

The first is “Die Forelle” (The Trout) and accounts the tale of trout swimming happily in a stream until it is tricked, and caught by a crafty fisherman. Schubert’s accompaniment provides detailed imagery with arpeggios mimicking the flowing waters of the stream, and the fisherman’s trick of muddying the waters. This is followed by “Ständchen” (Serenade), a young man’s nocturnal plea to his would be lover. The slow, languid, and pulsing music mirrors the young man’s growing desire as he continually beseeches his lovely maid to join him. “Der Atlas,” (Atlas) contrasts the soft serenade with a heavy thundering of chords. This is a first person narrative of the mythological Titan, Atlas, who is doomed to bear the entire world upon his shoulders for all eternity. The song is filled with remorse and a strong foreboding that Atlas will one day die from unbearable exhaustion. Contrasting the heavy despair of Atlas is “Geheimes,” (The Secret). In this first person narrative: a lover takes secret delight as all around gaze longingly at a beautiful woman. Unbeknownst to them is that she is in a secret relationship with the narrator. The narrator’s joy is reflected in the light and playful music.

Lastly is “Der Erlkönig,” (The Elf-King). This a dramatic narrative story with four characters: the Narrator, the Father, the Son, and the Elf-King. A father and son are riding late through the night when the Father begins to worry about his son, and asks him what is wrong. The young boy replies that he sees the Elf-King, but the Father dismisses it as only a “wisp of fog.” The Elf-King appears to the child and tempts the child to join him. Growing impatient after several attempts, the Elf-King tells the boy that, “if you are
not willing, I will use force!” Terrified the boy cries out to his father, but it is too late. When the Father arrives at his destination, the child is dead in his arms. Schubert’s musical accompaniment vividly conveys the text of Goethe’s ominous poem. The hammering rhythmic motif portrays the frantic and urgent hoof beats of the galloping horse. The motif’s sudden departure at the end conveys the quiet sense of dread as the Father discovers the fate of his child.

The third set is a French three-song cycle by Maurice Ravel called Don Quichotte a Dulcinée. These late Romantic songs are sung from the perspective of Miguel de Cervantes’ classic character, Don Quixote, as he sings to or about his beloved Dulcinea. First is “Chanson Romanesque,” (Romantic Song). The rhythmic hemiola establishes the Spanish setting as Don Quixote boasts and pledges loyalty to Dulcinea. The song begins with knightly bravado, but becomes sincere chivalry when Don Quixote claims he would die if Dulcinea rejected him. This is followed by “Chanson Èpique,” (Epic Song). Where the first song was loud and proud, this is a quiet and reflective prayer. Quixote stands vigil and prays that he might have the strength to defend and serve his beloved. The prayer quality is emphasized by the chant like nature of the vocal line. Last is “Chanson à boire,” (Drinking Song). This is a rowdy and rancorous drinking song with descending chromatics and a fast coloratura line meant to mimic Quixote’s inebriation as he dismisses the other drinkers and naysayers. Quixote says that he drinks for joy, and that is all that really matters.

Although Ravel’s works are the most recent in terms of chronology, his compositional style is late Romantic. Stylistically, this places Ravel before the last composer, Charles Ives. This final set by Ives represents the early modern American
style and his songs fall into two general categories. They are either songs of wit and humor, or songs of reminiscence and nostalgia.

The first song, “Down East” represents reminiscence. The first half of the song is a chant, a conjuration, and a journey back through time. This is juxtaposed by the lyric triple meter melody in the second half, signifying an arrival at the past. This journey back through time acts as a gateway into the world of Charles Ives. Following this nostalgic song is the witty “In the Alley.” Here Charles Ives plays with audience expectations, and delivers a sad yet humorous tale of unrequited love and misinterpretation. Contrasting this love song lyricism is “The Cage.” Atonality abounds as the singer relates the story of a leopard in a cage waiting for the keeper to bring meat. A boy who had been watching the events casually wonders, “Is life anything like that?” This simple question ends the song on a held rest, allowing the question to dangle before the audience. Next is a return to the nostalgia with “Songs My Mother Taught Me.” The text is derived from the Dvorak song of the same name. Ives’ legato line invokes a soft remembered tenderness for all the things we learned from our mothers and pass on to our own children. “Memories: A,-Very Pleasant; B,-Rather Sad,” offers up both humor and sad nostalgia. The first part recounts a child’s frenetic joy and anticipation as he energetically waits for the curtains to rise in the opera house. The second part is a memory triggered by a sad yet familiar tune, when the singer recalls his uncle humming.

The closing song of the set and recital is “Autumn.” This personification of the Earth changing seasons is a metaphor for death. The Earth, now finished with her work, allows Winter to close her eyes as she turns her face to once more be warmed by the Sun. The Sun in turn smiles upon her and brings God’s peace. This musical death is soft,
gentle, and as peaceful as going to sleep. The themes of accomplishment and finality make it an appropriate finish to a recital.

A live performance is a mortal and finite entity. While it can be recorded and documented, the recordings will never truly replicate the in-the-moment conjuration of emotion and “poetic furor” as experienced by both singer and listener. Like life itself, a live performance is an impermanent experience. A voice recital is born at the sound of the first note, and dies in the moment of silence that follows the last note.

From the first notes of “How Willing My Paternal Love,” to the last notes of “Autumn,” my recital was a living and breathing entity fueled by Fury. Its performance was an effort of creation. And just like the aforementioned Earth, my “poetic furor” was done and there were no more songs to sing. I only had to turn my face to the audience, and see if they would smile from this musical voyage across distances, languages and time.
PRESENT

BARITONE'S FURY

Joel D. Castro
IN HIS Master of Music Recital
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE MASTER OF MUSIC DEGREE
IN VOCAL PERFORMANCE.
RECIPIENT OF THE VOCAL ARTS FACULTY AWARD 2011 AND 2012

A STUDENT OF Dr. David Sannerud

PIANO BY Carol Roberts

4:30 PM Music Recital Hall

2.16.13
Program

I.

How Willing My Paternal Love  
From *Samson*  
*Empio dirò tu sei*  
From *Giulio Cesare*  

G.F. Handel  
(1685-1759)

II.

Die Forelle  
Ständchen  
Der Atlas  
Geheimes  
Erlkönig  

Franz Schubert  
(1797-1828)

Intermezzo

III.

Don Quichotte a Dulcinée  
I Chanson Romanesque  
II Chanson Épique  
III Chanson à boire  

Maurice Ravel  
(1875-1937)

IV.

Down East  
In the Alley  
The Cage  
Song My Mother Taught Me  
Memories:  
A.-Very Pleasant  
B.-Rather Sad  
Autumn  

Charles Ives  
(1874-1954)
Translations

Empio Diro tu sei (Pitiless I say you are)

Pitiless I say you are.
Remove yourself from my sight,
You are pure cruelty.
The heart of a king is not a heart
That is severe, not a heart without pity.

Die Forelle (The Trout)

In a clear little brook,
There swims in happy haste,
A whimsical trout:
Darting like an arrow.
I stood on the bank
And watched in sweet content,
The little-fish’s merry bath
In the clear little brook

A fisher with a rod
Stood on the other shore,
And looked down with cold blood
How the fish swam about.
As long as the water was clear,
I thought nothing could happen.
He would not catch the trout,
With his rod and line.

But finally, for the thief,
It became too much time.
He made the little brook treacherously muddy,
And before I knew it: His rod twitched—
The little fish wriggled on it—
And I with agitated blood,
Looked at the deceived fish.
STÄNDCHEN (Serenade)

MY SONGS SOFTLY PLEAD
THROUGH THE NIGHT TO YOU.
TO THE QUIET GROVE,
SWEETHEART, COME DOWN TO ME!
WHISPERING, SLENDER TREE-TOPS RUSTLE
IN THE MOONLIGHT:

OF ANY EAVES DROPPERS LISTENING,
DO NOT FEAR, LOVELY ONE.

DO YOU HEAR THE NIGHTINGALES' CALL?
AH, THEY ARE IMPLORING YOU.
WITH THE TONES OF SWEET LAMENTATION,
THEY PLEAD TO YOU FOR ME.
THEY UNDERSTAND THE HEART'S LONGING,
THEY KNOW LOVE'S PAIN,
THEY TOUCH WITH THEIR SILVER-TONES,
EVERY TENDER HEART.
ALLOW TOO YOUR HEART TO BE MOVED,
SWEETHEART, HEAR ME!
TREMBLING, I AWAIT YOU HERE!
COME, MAKE ME HAPPY!

DER ATLAS (Atlas)

I, UNHAPPY ATLAS!
A WORLD,
A WHOLE WORLD OF SORROWS MUST I BEAR.
I BEAR THE UNBEARABLE,
AND MY HEART WILL BREAK IN MY BODY.

YOU PROUD HEART,
YOU HAVE WHAT YOU WISHED FOR.
YOU WANTED TO BE HAPPY, ETERNALLY HAPPY,
OR ETERNALLY MISERABLE, PROUD HEART.
AND NOW YOU ARE MISERABLE.
GEHEIMES (THE SECRET)
ABOUT MY SWEETHEART’S GLANCES,
every person stands in wonder.
but i, on-the-contrary,
know very well what it means.

for it means: i love this-one.
and not him or the other.
so, good people, stop
your wondering, and your longing!

yes, with enormous charisma
she gazes into the company,
but she seeks only to tell
him the next sweet hour.

ERLKÖNIG (THE ELF-KING)
who rides so late
through night and wind?
it is a father with
his child;
he has the boy well
in his arm;

he grasps him safely. he keeps him warm.

[FATHER]
"my son, why do you so
fearfully hide your face?"

[Son]
"father, do you not see the elf-king,
The elf-king with crown and shroud?"

[Father]
"my son, it is a wisp of fog."

[Elf-King]
"you lovely child, come, leave with me!
I will play beautiful games with you,
many colorful flowers are on the beach,
my mother has many golden garments."
[Son]
"My father, my father, do you not hear,
What the Elf-King whispers to me?"

[Father]
"Be calm, remain calm, my child;
It's only the wind rustling dry leaves."

[Elf-King]
"Do you want to go with me, sweet boy?
My daughters will serve you well.
My daughters will lead the nightly dances,
And rock, and dance, and sing you to sleep."

[Son]
"My father, my father, do you not see it there?
The Elf-King's daughters in the dark shadows."

[Father]
"My son, my son, I see it clearly.
There shimmer the old grey willows."

[Elf-King]
"I love thee, your sweet form entices me.
And if you are not willing, I will use force!"

[Son]
"My father, my father, he's grabbing me now!
The Elf-King has hurt me."

The horrified father rides quickly,
He holds in his arm the groaning child.
He reaches the courtyard with trouble and worry;
In his arms the child was dead.
CHANSON ROMANESQUE (ROMANTIC SONG)

IF YOU TOLD ME THE ETERNAL TURNING
OF THE EARTH, OFFENDED YOU.
I WOULD DISPATCH PANZA:
YOU WOULD SEE IT MOTIONLESS AND SILENT.

IF YOU TOLD ME YOU WERE BORED BY
THE NUMBER OF STARS IN THE SKY.
I WOULD TEAR THE HEAVENS APART,
ERASE THE NIGHT IN ONE SWIPE.

IF YOU TOLD ME THAT THE NOW-EMPTY
SPACE DOESN'T PLEASE YOU,
I, KNIGHT OF GOD, WITH A LANCE IN HAND
WOULD SPEAR STARS INTO THE PASSING WIND.

BUT, MY LADY, IF YOU TOLD ME
THAT MY BLOOD IS MORE MINE THAN YOURS.
THAT REPRIMAND WOULD TURN ME PALE
AND, BLESSING YOU, I WOULD DIE.

OH, DULCINÉE.

CHANSON ÉPIQUE (EPIC SONG)

GOOD SAINT MICHAEL, WHO GIVES ME THE CHANCE
TO SEE MY LADY AND TO HEAR HER,
GOOD SAINT MICHAEL, WHO DEIGNS TO CHOOSE ME
TO PLEASE HER AND TO DEFEND HER,
GOOD SAINT MICHAEL, WILL YOU DESCEND
WITH SAINT GEORGE TO THE ALTAR
OF THE MADONNA OF THE BLUE MANTLE.
WITH A BEAM FROM HEAVEN, BLESS MY SWORD
AND HER EQUAL IN PURITY
AND HIS EQUAL IN PIETY
AS IN MODESTY AND CHASTITY:
MY LADY!

(O GREAT SAINT GEORGE AND SAINT MICHAEL!)
The angel who guards my watch
My sweet lady, who is like you,
Virgin in the blue mantle!
Amen.

CHANSON À BOIRE (DRINKING SONG)

TO HELL WITH THE BASTARD,
ILLUSTRIOS LADY,
WHO, TO LOSE ME IN YOUR SWEET EYES
SAYS THAT LOVE AND OLD WINE
WILL BRING TO GRIEF
MY HEART AND MY SOUL!

I DRINK TO JOY!
JOY IS THE SOLE AIM
THAT I PURSUE ...
WHEN I’VE DRUNK!

TO HELL WITH THE JEALOUS FOOL, DARK MISTRESS,
WHO WHINES, WHO WEEPS AND MAKES OATHS
TO ALWAYS BE THE PALE LOVER
WHO PUTS WATER INTO HIS INTOXICATION!
Notes

Fury

FURY – DESTRUCTIVE RAGE: AN AVENGING SPIRIT: AN ENFLAMING PASSION.

THE GREEKS AND MANY SCHOLARS THROUGHOUT HISTORY HAVE SPOKEN ABOUT THE POWER AND PROFOUND EFFECT THAT MUSIC HAS. IT IS A MEANS OF REACHING ACROSS DISTANCES AND TOUCHING THE HEARTS AND SOULS OF THOSE LISTENING. THE CRAFT AND ART OF MUSIC IS NOT TOO DISSIMILAR TO MAGIC. MUSICIANS, LIKE THE FICTITIOUS ARCANE PRACTITIONERS, STUDY OLD MANUSCRIPTS WITH STRANGE SYMBOLS AND ATTEMPT TO CONJURE SOMETHING TANGIBLE. MUSIC IS MORE THAN MATHEMATICAL OSCILLATIONS AND HARMONIC RESONANCE: IT IS A LIVING ENERGY CONJURED UP FROM OUR OWN LIFE ESSENCE. IT IS AN OFFSPRING OF THE "FLAME IMPERISHABLE" THAT BURNS INSIDE US ALL.
Special Thanks

DR. DAVID SANNERUD: If music is magic, then you are the wise sage helping his apprentice grow and navigate the powers of music. Your sagely advice has brought forth great improvement, and I will be forever grateful. Whether we were discussing German diction, Spartacus, registration, or Game of Thrones, every moment will be a treasured memory. Thank you!

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DAVID AKS AND MAURICE GODIN: Professor Aks, I must thank you for taking a chance with a new grad student, casting me in my first opera, and forever changing my life. It is hard to imagine an opera production without you. You will be missed, and I wish you well in retirement. Maurice, I must thank for your boundless patience and empathy. In all of our productions you have helped us give tangible meaning to the words and music, and have provided us a vivid landscape on which to play.
ANN BALTZ AND SUZANNE RECER: ANN, YOU HAVE ALWAYS ASKED US TO CHALLENGE THE “STATUS QUO” OF OPERA. YOUR ASYMMETRICAL APPROACH TO INTERPRETATION HAS ALWAYS LEAD TO UNIQUE AND HONEST INSIGHTS INTO THE HEART OF ANY SONG. THANK YOU! SUZANNE, YOUR RELENTLESS ENERGY AND DEDICATION HAS KEPT MANY OPERA REHEARSALS GOING. YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE IS PRICELESS.

TO MY FAMILY: IT CANNOT BE EASY TO LIVE WITH A STUDENT WHO IS CONSTANTLY ON THE GO, DRIVING TO AND FROM THE VALLEY AT ALL HOURS OF ANY GIVEN DAY. IN ALL THE CHAOS OF THESE LAST TWO YEARS, YOU HAVE BEEN THE ENDURING PILLARS OF STRENGTH AND SUPPORT. I LOVE YOU AND THANK YOU FOR IT.

TO MY FRIENDS: I WOULD LIKE TO BOTH APOLOGIZE TO YOU AND THANK YOU. I AM SORRY THAT FOR THESE PAST TWO YEARS I HAVE BEEN SCARCELY SEEN AND ALWAYS BUSY, BUT I THANK YOU FOR YOUR UNENDING UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT. I CAN FINALLY JOIN YOU FOR A DRINK AFTER THIS!

JENNY OHRSTROM: THERE ARE FEW PEOPLE IN MY LIFE WHO HAVE BEEN AS SUPPORTIVE AND ENCOURAGING AS YOU HAVE BEEN. THROUGH YOUR OWN EXAMPLE YOU HAVE HELPED ME AND INSPIRED ME TO BECOME A BETTER SINGER. JT

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