

An Analytical Overview of
Dominick Argento's *Evensong: Of Love and Angels*

by

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ABSTRACT

Many of the works of Dominick Argento have been researched and analyzed, but his choral work *Evensong: Of Love and Angels* has received limited attention thus far. Written in memoriam for his wife Carolyn Bailey Argento, *Evensong* draws its musical material from her initials C.B.A. These letters, translated into note names, form a conspicuous head motive that is present in each movement of the work, and it serves multiple functions: as a melodic feature, as the foundation for a twelve-tone row, and as a harmonic base. This paper provides an overview of the work's conception with specific relation to Argento's biographical details, compositional style, and work habits; a brief review of the critical reception of the work; and a succinct analysis of the form and cyclical materials found in each movement.

DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this work to my family, without whom I could not have completed this daunting task. I offer my deepest thanks and love to my husband Nicholas Drake, my parents Gregory and Deborah Page, and my grandmother June Bean. They prodded my efforts, applauded each new step completed, and provided every help and comfort they possibly could during this process. No simple dedication can express my profound gratitude for all you have done for me. I am so humbled by your unselfish love.

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I also owe debts of gratitude to Dr. Michael McGaghie, who generously shipped his dissertation to me, and to the personnel at Boosey & Hawkes rental and copyright divisions, particularly Matthew Smith for his timely assistance with copyright clearance. Last but not least, I must express my deep appreciation for and admiration of Dominick Argento himself, both for his inspiring compositions and for his gracious consent to share his thoughts about his beautiful music.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose, Methodology, and Literature Review

The purpose of the paper is to examine the use of recurrent motives found in Dominick Argento's work *Evensong: Of Love and Angels* and to provide an analysis of forms therein. Written in 2006-2007 as a memorial to his wife, the piece demonstrates cyclical use of materials, particularly the motive "C-B-A," a twelve-tone row, and fanfare motifs. It also displays eclectic use of formal devices, including rounded binary, arch, and strophic forms, as well as contrapuntal processes and antiphony.

The early research of Harriet Sigal¹ and Virginia Saya² provided valuable observations on Dominick Argento's style, and the composer's autobiographical *Catalogue Raisonné*³ offered insights into his general process and compositional influences. The book's material ended before the composition of *Evensong*, but I located several interviews that Argento had given regarding his work, including several exchanges in which he discussed frankly the circumstances surrounding the commission and composition of *Evensong*. According to searches of standard

¹ Harriet Sigal, "The Concert Vocal Works of Dominick Argento," (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1983), in ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/pqdtft/docview/303394021/12E30D888A52C71FD25/1?accountid=4485> (accessed March 16, 2011).

² Virginia Cotta Montgomery Saya, "The Current Climate for Musical Eclecticism as Reflected in the Operas of Dominick Argento," (Ph.D. diss., University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, 1989).

³ Dominick Argento, *Catalogue Raisonné as Memoir: A Composer's Life* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 8.

academic journals, even though the earlier works of Dominick Argento have been discussed in several dissertations and theses, no refereed journal articles have analyzed *Evensong* in depth. (In fact, to date, I have been unable to locate *any* journals of music theory that have dealt with analysis of Argento's work, except perhaps via tangential reference.)

A search of the ProQuest/UMI database of dissertations and theses shows only one dissertation that focuses on this relatively new work: Michael Craig McGaghie addresses *Evensong* in his 2010 dissertation "Macaronic Things: Thornton Wilder and the Late Choral Works of Dominick Argento." In his analyses, McGaghie provides enlightening discussion of symbolism and text relationships in Argento's harmonic language and makes valuable initial observations about the properties of the tone row. Though he mentions the cyclical nature of *Evensong* and gives some examples, he does not track the cyclical materials methodically through each movement, nor does he address questions of formal structure in depth.⁴

References for my analyses included *Materials and Techniques of Twentieth-Century Music*, 3rd edition by Stefan Kostka,⁵ *Counterpoint: Based on Eighteenth Century Practice* by Kent Kennan,⁶ and *A Practical Approach to the Study of Form in Music* by Peter Spencer and Peter M. Temko.⁷ Following these guides, I created written analyses that

⁴ Michael Craig McGaghie, "Macaronic Things: Thornton Wilder and the Late Choral Works of Dominick Argento" (Ph.D. diss., Boston University, 2010).

⁵ Stefan Kostka, *Materials and Techniques of Twentieth-Century Music*, 3rd ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2006).

⁶ Kent Kennan, *Counterpoint: Based on Eighteenth Century Practice*, 4th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1999).

⁷ Peter Spencer and Peter M. Temko, *A Practical Approach to the Study of Form in Music* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1988).

include discussion of the cyclical materials found in each movement with some comments on the formal structure of each movement, as well as an appendix of formal diagrams. All remarks and analyses referring to the score are based on study of a perusal copy (#S112) of *Evensong: Of Love and Angels* by Dominick Argento, obtained from publisher Boosey & Hawkes in May 2010.⁸

After the majority of my analysis was finished, I contacted the composer for clarification on certain questions about his compositional choices, and he graciously suggested an exchange of emails regarding my questions. I then reworked portions of my analysis to accommodate the information and explanations he was able to offer. The recent research of Michael McGaghie was not available until this paper was almost complete, but I did find many of his observations helpful, and I have credited his earlier work when I found it overlapped or duplicated my own. Despite some overlap of information, there is a definitive difference in our research: McGaghie's research focuses primarily on Argento's texts and the symbolism of his harmonic language, while this paper focuses on the composer's cyclical use of musical material and formal designs.

Composer Biography and Compositional Influences

Dominick Argento was born in 1927 to a Sicilian immigrant family in York, Pennsylvania. His musical progress was largely autodidactic until he began formal music studies with piano lessons at age sixteen. After serving as a cryptographer in the U.S. Army from 1945 to 1947 (an assignment the composer attributes largely to his ability to take rhythmic dictation), Argento used his GI Bill benefits to study

⁸ Dominick Argento, *Evensong: Of Love and Angels* (New York: Boosey & Hawkes, 2008).

music at the Peabody Conservatory. He found that his ideal of being a concert pianist who performed his own works was hampered by his actual piano abilities, but he completed the entire four-year sequence of harmony studies in a single year. This brilliance with harmony impressed composer Nicolay Nabokov, who suggested that Argento should spend his summer writing music and reading the letters of Mozart. When he returned, Argento officially changed his focus to composition and began private studies with Hugo Weisgall, in addition to his studies with Nabokov.⁹

Though Argento in his memoirs expressed great thankfulness that Nabokov had pushed him toward composition, he revealed that Weisgall was a far superior teacher,¹⁰ and even decades after his study with Weisgall, Argento cited him as one of the contemporary American opera composers he most admired. Weisgall introduced the younger composer to the operas of Benjamin Britten as well as his own operatic works, *The Tenor*, *The Stronger*, and *Six Characters in Search of an Author*.¹¹ Prior to this, Argento explains,

. . . the form had no appeal to me. People often assume my interest in opera must stem from an Italian heritage, but in fact, it is due, oddly enough, to the influence of an American and an Englishman . . .¹²

After earning his bachelor's degree in 1951, Argento received a Fulbright scholarship to study in Italy with composer Luigi Dallapiccola and pianist Pietro

⁹ Dominick Argento, Interview with Harriet Sigal, March 15, 1979, in appendix to "The Concert Vocal Works of Dominick Argento" by Harriet Sigal (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1983), in ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/pqdtft/docview/303394021/12E30D888A52C71FD25/1?accountid=4485> (accessed March 16, 2011), 1-11.

¹⁰ Argento, *Catalogue Raisonné*, 8.

¹¹ Saya, 31.

¹² Argento, *Catalogue Raisonné*, 8.

Scarpini. According to his own account, the year was not what he expected: barriers between the Italian spoken in Florence and the Sicilian dialect he learned from his parents, fourteen-year-old Italian girls who regularly bested him in piano classes, and a composition teacher who espoused a compositional system of twelve-tone pitch series and was preoccupied with his own premieres. The year was profitable, however, with Argento completing a large choral work, *The Temptation of St. Joseph*, as well as a portion of another work, *Aria Da Capo*.¹³ He returned to the United States to take a position at Hampton University and pursue his master's degree at Peabody, this time studying with Henry Cowell. After more strictly controlled lessons with Nabokov and Dallapiccola, Argento felt liberated by Cowell's encouragement and acceptance of whatever work he showed the teacher.¹⁴

During his senior year at Peabody, Argento met a talented young soprano from his hometown, Carolyn Bailey, who premiered one of his earliest works, *Songs About Spring*. After a courtship of over three years, they married in 1954. Though his experiences with Weisgall introduced him to opera, marriage to a professional singer was an educational experience. In the first years of their marriage, Carolyn Bailey the performer eclipsed her husband the composer. "I was just 'Carolyn Bailey's husband,'" Argento commented in an interview. "It was much, much later that she became 'Dominick Argento's wife.'"¹⁵ It was largely due to her influence that Argento turned to vocal composition, which would become his primary medium,

¹³ Argento, interview with Sigal, 11.

¹⁴ Ibid., 15.

¹⁵ Dominick Argento and J. Reilly Lewis, interview with Deb Lambertson, *Classical Conversations*, Classical WETA 90.9 FM, February 27, 2008, <http://www.weta.org/fm/features/classicalconversations/full> (accessed March 11, 2011).

and her frequent commentary, sometimes penciled into his sketches, became his chief guide in writing for voice:

I would come back to my piano . . . and I'd see my manuscript from the morning, and in the margins were — in this little handwriting — little questions such as “Don't you think you've overdone that note?” or “Who's going to sing this?” or “Who could *possibly* sing this?” Sometimes a little insulting, sometimes a little burning. Questions that were all very sensible from a singer's point of view, like “Don't you think she's been up there for a long time?” Things that I think composers don't think too much about . . . as a result, they were, in effect, tiny lessons to me on how to write for the voice. And thank God for those lessons, because left to my own devices, I probably would still be writing as if for a double bass.¹⁶

Shortly after their marriage, Argento and his wife moved to Rochester, New York, to attend the Eastman School of Music, he to pursue a doctorate in composition while serving as an opera coach and theory teaching fellow, she to study voice in the opera department.¹⁷ Argento worked hard to please Bernard Rogers, his first composition teacher at Eastman, and eventually succeeded with a ballet work, *The Resurrection of Don Juan*, quickly followed by *Ode to the West Wind*, a concerto for soprano and orchestra. Under the tutelage of Alan Hovhaness, during the summer between his two years at Eastman, Argento tried to embrace a more spontaneous style with his String Quartet, written in a week. His first successful operatic venture, *The Boor*, was completed while he studied under Eastman director Howard Hanson (earlier attempts were withdrawn from the composer's catalogue). Argento's pieces impressed Hanson, who arranged for excellent performances under the baton of Frederick Fennell and promoted Argento's work to several publishers; Boosey & Hawkes picked up *The Boor* and became Argento's exclusive publisher. Years later,

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Argento, *Catalogue Raisonné*, 11.

Hanson eventually offered Argento a job teaching at Eastman, but Argento turned down the offer on the advice of Rogers, who felt that Hanson would overshadow the young composer, as Rogers himself felt overshadowed.¹⁸

With Hanson's recommendation, Argento won a Guggenheim fellowship to return to Italy in 1957. At the end of their sojourn in Italy, the Argentos returned to the United States with no job offers on the horizon. A last-minute call in September 1958 from the University of Minnesota sent the couple to the Midwest, where Dominick Argento accepted a position teaching music theory. The couple was unimpressed with the city and fearful that an extended time in the Midwest, rather than on the East or West Coast, would be detrimental to their careers. In the first year, Argento said, "I don't believe we unpacked our bags."¹⁹ Within a few years, though, the couple had thrown themselves into what Minnesota Orchestra historian Mary Ann Feldman termed "a cultural renaissance" in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area.²⁰ Artistic alliances with the Walker Art Center and the newly-opened Guthrie Theatre eventually led Argento to become a founding member of the Center Opera Company (now known as the Minnesota Opera Company).²¹ When speaking with Feldman about his decision to stay in Minneapolis despite the various offers for

¹⁸ Ibid., 13-24.

¹⁹ Argento, interview with Sigal, 25-26.

²⁰ Feldman, Mary Anne. "Dominick Argento: Minnesota Romantic," Minnesota Public Radio, October 2002. http://music.minnesota.publicradio.org/features/0210_argento/ (accessed March 2, 2011).

²¹ Argento, *Catalogue Raisonné*, 27-28.

positions on the East or West coast – positions he once coveted – Argento explained,

In Minnesota . . . there is real love of the arts. They're not a social toy but are held in high esteem. Not only in the audiences, but among the donors, including the foundation and corporate levels, there's an honesty and dedication. People realize that what's happening is a good thing, and they support it. I'm here to stay.²²

Argento has remained in Minnesota since 1958, though he retired from the University of Minnesota in 1997 after 39 years of service. His compositional output spans over 60 works, mostly vocal writing including 14 operas, numerous songs, and sacred and secular works for choirs. He has been commissioned by acclaimed performers and arts organizations throughout the United States, and his works are performed around the world. His song cycle *From the Diary of Virginia Woolf*, written for Dame Janet Baker, garnered him the Pulitzer Prize in 1975, and he was nominated to the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1979. He was honored as Composer Laureate of the Minnesota Orchestra in 1997,²³ and a Minnesota Orchestra recording of his song cycle *Casa Guidi* (originally commissioned by the organization in 1983) with Frederica von Stade earned a Grammy award for Best Contemporary Classical Composition in 2004.²⁴ The Argentos enjoyed great artistic success from their home base in Minnesota, and were able to divide their time to

²² Feldman, “Minnesota Romantic.”

²³ “Dominick Argento: Biography.” Boosey & Hawkes, April 2010. http://www.boosey.com/pages/cr/composer/composer_main.asp?composerid=2691&ttype=BIOGRAPHY&ttitle=Biography (accessed March 17, 2011).

²⁴ Argento, e-mail message to the author, March 11, 2011.

spend a portion of each year in Florence, Italy, where a second Guggenheim Fellowship took them from 1963 to 1964.

Many of Argento's most successful works have involved the setting of prose, rather than poetry, including using journals and letters, such as in *From the Diary of Virginia Woolf* and *Casa Guidi*, *Letters from Composers*, *The Andrée Expedition*, *Walden Pond*, *A Few Words about Chekov*, and *Miss Manners on Music*. Though he has collaborated with librettists, notably John Olon-Scrymgeour in his early operas, and John Donahue and Charles Nolte in later operas, he often creates or adapts text himself, usually in a prose style when writing for solo voice.²⁵ The key to his lyrical style with prose setting involves creating motives around speech-derived rhythms inspired by the text.²⁶

The primary hallmark in Dominick Argento's style, however, is his eclectic use of musical materials. Virginia Saya discusses this feature at length in her dissertation "The Current Climate for American Musical Eclecticism as Reflected in the Operas of Dominick Argento." In her analyses, she notes a surprising amount of twelve-tone writing,²⁷ *leitmotiv*,²⁸ *bel canto*, parody, and style simulations, references, and musical quotation ranging from the medieval and Renaissance styles to Tin Pan Alley tunes and "pseudo-aleatory" styles.²⁹

²⁵ Argento, *Catalogue Raisonné*, 112.

²⁶ Saya, 31.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 230

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 53

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 235-240.

Evensong: Commission and Composition

In 2004, Argento's wife was struck with an unidentified neurological illness. She spent the last months of her life at Bethesda Rehabilitation Center in Minnesota. During her illness, the composer was offered a commission to write a work for the 100th anniversary of the Washington National Cathedral. He refused the work on the basis that he "didn't feel like shouting 'Hallelujah'"³⁰ when his wife was so ill. His wife, however, encouraged him to take the commission, as she had fond childhood memories of visiting the Episcopal-affiliated Cathedral with her father, a Protestant minister. After her death in February 2006, Dominick Argento ceased composing, but the director of the Cathedral Choral Society, J. Reilly Lewis, persisted in asking him to write the piece, eventually persuading him to do so as a memorial for his wife.³¹

Originally, Argento had planned to set text by Thornton Wilder from his novel *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*, but the Wilder estate denied permission. He then turned to texts in the public domain.³² Beginning on his 52nd wedding anniversary in September 2006 and finishing exactly one year later,³³ Argento crafted music for the

³⁰ Argento, interview with Fred Child Minnesota Public Radio (May 22 2009), http://minnesota.publicradio.org/display/web/2009/05/25/argento_memorial/ (accessed March 11, 2011).

³¹ Dominick Argento, Liner notes on *Evensong: Of Love and Angels*, Gothic CD G-49269 (2009).

³² Ron Hubbard, "Argento's 'Evensong: Of Love and Angels' Honored the National Cathedral, but More Important, It Eased His Grief," *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, 25 September 2009, 1E.

³³ Karl Gehrke, "New work honors Argento's late wife," *All Things Considered*, Minnesota Public Radio, February 28, 2008, <http://minnesota.publicradio.org/display/web/2008/02/28/argengtowashington/> (accessed March 11, 2011).

Episcopal service of Evening Prayer, appropriate to the setting of the National Cathedral. His intentions were clear:

Normally, a choral Evening Prayer service is a hodgepodge of musical pieces, some old, some new, nothing standard except the traditional order or sequence of its parts. I wished to compose an evening service unified from beginning to end with recurring themes and motives.³⁴

The subtitle “Of Love and Angels” indicates the major themes of the texts and is an homage to his wife’s love of angel figures. Argento expressed a wish that, while the work is *in memoriam* for his wife, it is not intended to be a requiem, since, as he remarked in an interview, “Carolyn hated memorial services.”³⁵ An ultimately uplifting work meant for the twilight, the vesper hour, seemed the most appropriate way to mark her passing, and a church piece would honor her work as a church soloist. For the text of *Evensong*, he chose a mixture of scripture from the Vulgate and King James Bibles, slightly altered liturgical texts, and a Sermon and Anthem of his own authorship, with language based loosely on the model of Thornton Wilder’s texts from *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* and the play *The Angel that Troubled the Waters*.³⁶

The suggestion for Argento’s order of prayers and choice of scripture is found in the Book of Common Prayer. After short responses of welcoming, the service proper commences with a general confession, followed by the *Phos hilaron* (common to both rites of Evening Prayer as the welcoming of the vesper light) and a

³⁴ Argento, Liner notes on *Evensong: Of Love and Angels*.

³⁵ Argento and Lewis, interview with Lamberton.

³⁶ McGaghie, 141-153.

choice of psalms.³⁷ In his *Evensong*, Argento replaced the general confession with an orchestral prelude³⁸ and continued with the *Phos hilaron*. The *Phos hilaron* has a special connection to the Psalm that follows. Argento chose Psalm 102: 1-7, 9, 11 from the King James Version of the Bible, which in many editions includes a description at the beginning of each psalm; the description of Psalm 102 reads, “A Prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the Lord.” Argento specifically identified the chorus as “The Afflicted,” probably in reference to either this description, or the line “pity the afflicted” from the Prayer-Lullaby.³⁹

The choice of the Lesson was another important way for the composer to express his feelings of loss. As he visited his wife each day at Bethesda Rehabilitation Center, he was reminded of the Biblical story of Bethesda in John 5, a bathing pool where an angel came and “troubled the water” to allow people to be healed. Argento chose the story of “the angel that troubled the water” (also the title of a play by Thornton Wilder) to be the Lesson read during the prayer service. A sermon of Argento’s own writing became the central movement of the work, a twelve-minute

³⁷ *The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, Together with The Psalter or Psalms of David, According to the Use of the Episcopal Church* (New York: Church Publishing Incorporated, 1979), 109-126.

³⁸ Jeffrey Douma, "Building a Well-Made House: An Interview with Dominick Argento," *Choral Journal* 47, no. 12 (2007): 28-35.

³⁹ *Book of Common Prayer*, 109-126.

aria for solo soprano and orchestra⁴⁰ that parallels, in part, much of the language found in Wilder's play.⁴¹

Argento composed an orchestral interlude marking the time for private reflection after the Sermon, then set the canticle "Nunc dimittis" from Luke 2:29-32. The text is adapted from one of the three canticles suggested from Rite II of Evening Prayer and is particularly appropriate for acknowledging the departure of one of God's servants. The composer deliberately chose to use the Latin Vulgate version of this prayer to invoke a sense of tradition.⁴² The text for the Prayer/Lullaby that follows is adapted from a prayer found in both the Rite II Evening Prayer and the Order for Compline.⁴³ Argento crafted the text of the final choral Anthem to revisit ideas from the Sermon: "Love is not consolation. It is light."⁴⁴

Critical Reception

To date, *Evensong: Of Love and Angels* has received only two live performances: the world premiere at the centenary of the Washington National Cathedral on March 2, 2008, and at the opening of the concert season of VocalEssence in Minneapolis on September 25, 2009. The Cathedral Choral Society of the National Cathedral issued a

⁴⁰ Dominick Argento, Interview with John Birge, Minnesota Public Radio, September 23 2009, http://minnesota.publicradio.org/display/web/2009/09/23/argento_vocalescence/ (accessed March 19, 2011)

⁴¹ McGaghie, 97.

⁴² Argento, e-mail message to the author, March 11, 2011.

⁴³ *Book of Common Prayer*, 124, 134.

⁴⁴ Dominick Argento, *Evensong: Of Love and Angels* (New York: Boosey & Hawkes, 2008), ii-iii.

recording on the Gothic label in February 2009. Though no reviews of the recording have been published, critical reception of the performances was largely favorable, lauding both the performers and the work itself. In reviewing the premiere at the National Cathedral, Tim Smith of the *Baltimore Sun* expressed some “small qualms” about the effectiveness of the Lesson and Sermon sections, but was positive about the overall “expressive weight,” and “shimmering orchestration.” Smith especially praised the Prayer-Lullaby as “musically inspired and emotionally stirring,” deeming it the “profound heart” of the work.⁴⁵ Joe Banno of the *Washington Post* seemed pleased with the “warmth and melodic accessibility” of the score and stated that it was understandably “consistently elegiac in tone.” In an odd juxtaposition with other reviewers who described the “shimmering” qualities of the piece, Banno noted a lack of colorful orchestration.⁴⁶ Charles T. Downey, a reviewer for the prominent Washington events blog *DCist*, commented, “Yes, there were elements of the work that seemed facile or overly sentimental, but much of the piece had a quiet, shimmering beauty.”⁴⁷ Michael Anthony, a reviewer of the Midwest premiere, expressed more enthusiasm, saying it was “radiant” and “among [the] best” of

⁴⁵ Tim Smith, “*Evensong* Strikes a Chord in Washington,” *Baltimore Sun*, 4 March 2008; http://articles.baltimoresun.com/2008-03-04/features/0803040128_1_evensong-argento-cathedral-choral-society (accessed March 19, 2011).

⁴⁶ Joe Banno, “MUSIC,” *The Washington Post*. 4 March 2008. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/03/03/AR2008030303021.html> (accessed March 9, 2011).

⁴⁷ Charles T. Downey, “Argento Premiere for Cathedral Centenary,” *DCist* blog, entry posted March 4, 2008, http://dcist.com/2008/03/04/argento_premier.php (accessed March 19, 2011).

Argento's works,⁴⁸ while Ron Hubbard of the St. Paul Pioneer Press described the work as a "process...assisted by music that doesn't transport with lovely melodies as much as float meditatively."⁴⁹ These plaudits give rise to the hope that *Evensong* will receive more recognition and that an analytical overview will be a helpful implement for future performances.

⁴⁸ Michael Anthony, "Review: Classical Music," *Star Tribune* (Minneapolis, MN), 30 September 2009, 6E, in LexisNexis Academic, <http://www.lexisnexus.com/hottopics/lnacademic> (accessed March 19, 2011).

⁴⁹ Ron Hubbard, "Music Review: 'Evensong' Confronts Death by Celebrating Life," *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, 30 September 2009, 1E.

CHAPTER 2

FOUNDATIONS: THE CIPHER-MOTIVE AND THE "PREGNANT ROW"

In keeping with his background as a cryptographer, Argento embedded a code within *Evensong*: his wife's initials, C.B.A. (Carolyn Bailey Argento), appear as a musical cipher in each movement of the work. Often, it is placed obviously in a prominent melodic line. At other times, the motive is situated more subtly in the bass, or hidden in the roots of a chord progression. Furthermore, Argento confirms that it is present in every movement. "I enjoy doing things like that, burying those little signals, those little icons, all through a piece," he stated in an interview with Minnesota Public Radio.⁵⁰

After his initial distaste for dodecaphony as a young composer and his resistance to his teacher Dallapiccola's subtle suggestions to employ that technique, Argento eventually adopted it, in his own way. In a Boosey & Hawkes press release, Hans Heinsheimer quotes Argento as saying of Dallapiccola,

When I went to him, twelve-tone serial music was totally unacceptable to me. He helped me to understand that a tone row can be rich in resources and above all vocal.⁵¹

In his memoirs, the composer writes,

Years later, when I had matured a bit more, I made my accommodation with serialism, and, oddly enough, it was Dallapiccola's brand – Italianate and vaguely tonal – not Schoenberg's, that I chose to emulate.⁵²

⁵⁰ Gerhke, "New work."

⁵¹ Hans Heinsheimer, "Dominick Argento," Boosey & Hawkes publicity release, New York, n.d., typescript as quoted in Tacey A. Brewer, "Characterization in Dominick Argento's Opera *The Boor*" (DMA thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 1981), x, in Virginia C.M. Saya, "The Current Climate for Musical Eclecticism as Reflected in the Operas of Dominick Argento" (Ph.D. diss., University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, 1987), 33.

⁵² Argento, *Catalogue Raisonné*, 6.

This idea of vague tonality is important to the musical ideas that stem from the row the composer utilizes in *Evensong*. The C-B-A idea, while treated often enough in the various movements of the work as a motive or a set, also forms the beginning of a larger twelve-tone series that plays a significant part in the construction of much of the work (Figure 1). In an email to the author, he described his somewhat intuitive method for creating the row:

Like a lot of my pieces, I began by working out what I call a “pregnant row,” i.e., a twelve-tone series that interests me in its various forms and when the notes are compacted into three-, four-, five-note chords. . . . In this case the first notes were obvious, the other nine were arrived at without any consideration of where they’d be used . . . I think notes in themselves don’t matter very much in a piece; it is what the notes are doing . . . ⁵³

Figure 1. Tone row in its original form, as found in mm. 1-10 of the Threnody



As the central focus of the work, the C-B-A set is obvious in its original form [0 2 3], but it is often found in its prime form [0 1 3] as well. The addition of G#, forming the tetrachord [0 1 3 4], creates a plaintive motive with strong tonal tendencies in A minor. The circling of the E which follows (F D# E) seems to emphasize $\hat{5}$ of A minor, while the C# that follows may be construed as a resolution to $\hat{3}$ of the parallel major or leading to the D that follows. The last tetrachord – D G Bb F# [0 1 4 8] – may be viewed as a minor-major seventh chord collection or as a dyad centered on G followed by a dyad on F#/Gb major. The last pentachord of the row may be grouped in several ways: as a Gb triad with a G-D dyad, as a G minor triad with an F#-C# dyad, an augmented triad on D, F#, or Bb with a G-

⁵³ Argento, e-mail message to the author, March 11, 2011.

C#(diminished) dyad, or a C# diminished seventh chord (sans third) with a D-F# dyad.

In addition to its quasi-tonal properties, the tone row demonstrates interesting qualities in its subsets. The first hexachord, C B A G# F D# [0 1 3 4 7 9], and the second hexachord, E C# D G Bb F# [0 1 3 5 6 9], are Z-related sets with a shared interval vector of <224322>. The first two tetrachords of the row, C B A G# [0 1 3 4] and F D# E C# [0 2 3 4], share similar interval vectors: <212100> and <221100>, respectively, avoiding fourths, fifths, and tritones. This opening tetrachord comprises one-half of an octatonic collection beginning on G#, which plays an important role in the sixth movement of this work.

The first hexachord features two triads nestled within each other: F major and G# minor. From adjacent pitch groupings within the hexachord, it spawns trichord sets [0 1 3], [0 1 4] and [0 2 5]. The second hexachord, E C# D G Bb F# (set [0 1 3 5 6 9]) is formed with two trichords of similar sets: [0 1 3] and [0 1 4]. [0 1 3] occurs as a set of adjacent pitches four times within the row, while set [0 1 4] occurs twice.

The matrix offers additional enlightenment (Figure 2, next page). The row ends a tritone removed from its starting pitch, creating a certain balance to the corners of the grid. Argento not only employs the outer edges of the matrix involving the P₀/I₀ and P₆/I₆ forms and their respective retrogrades;⁵⁴ he subtly exploits the oblique positions of C and F# in corners of the matrix as a chordal relationship, most prominently in the first movement. In his study of the matrix,

⁵⁴ Rows identified with subscripts “T” and “E” refer to row transpositions of 10 half-steps and 11 half-steps, respectively.

McGahie notes a rule of invariant subsets, in which rows $I_{(n)}$ and $P_{(n+4)}$ share invariant subsets in the first tetrachord, the trichord that follows, and the last pentachord (Figure 3).⁵⁵

Figure 2. Matrix

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| | I_0 | I_E | I_9 | I_8 | I_5 | I_3 | I_4 | I_1 | I_2 | I_7 | I_T | I_6 | |
| P_0 | C | B | A | G# | F | D# | E | C# | D | G | Bb | F# | R_0 |
| P_1 | C# | C | Bb | A | F# | E | F | D | D# | G# | B | G | R_1 |
| P_3 | D# | D | C | B | G# | F# | G | E | F | Bb | C# | A | R_3 |
| P_4 | E | D# | C# | C | A | G | Ab | F | F# | B | D | Bb | R_4 |
| P_7 | G | F# | E | Eb | C | Bb | B | Ab | A | D | F | C# | R_7 |
| P_9 | A | G# | F# | F | D | C | C# | Bb | B | E | G | Eb | R_9 |
| P_8 | G# | G | F | E | C# | B | C | A | Bb | D# | F# | D | R_8 |
| P_E | B | Bb | Ab | G | E | D | Eb | C | Db | F# | A | F | R_E |
| P_T | Bb | A | G | F# | D# | C# | D | B | C | F | Ab | E | R_T |
| P_5 | F | E | D | C# | A# | G# | A | F# | G | C | Eb | B | R_5 |
| P_2 | D | C# | B | Bb | G | F | F# | Eb | E | A | C | G# | R_2 |
| P_6 | F# | F | Eb | D | B | A | Bb | G | G# | C# | E | C | R_6 |
| | RI_0 | RI_E | RI_9 | RI_8 | RI_5 | RI_3 | RI_4 | RI_1 | RI_2 | RI_7 | RI_T | RI_6 | |

Figure 3. Example of invariant subsets between I_6 and P_T

I_6 : F# G A Bb C# Eb D F E B G# C
 P_T : Bb A G F# D# C# D B C F Ab E
Set: [0 1 3 4] [0 1 2] [0 1 4 7 8]

Argento's treatment of row form and matrix is somewhat freer than what he deems to be true "serialism." In an email to the author regarding this work, the composer commented,

⁵⁵ McGahie, 257-259.

As you already know, I am never very strict about my usage, and theorists and analysts probably wouldn't dream of calling it "serial." Apart from using that series in its complete form (usually at the very beginning part of the work), from there on the 48 versions [of the series] on my piano or desk become a nice big swimming pool, and as I look around, or swim around, in it, I spot little cells, fragments, etc., that I like and play with them.⁵⁶

Within a row form, Argento freely repeats segments of previously stated pitches, usually in groups of three or four notes but sometimes in longer segments, until he reaches the end of the row (Figure 4). Even in the Threnody and the Anthem, in which he uses row forms most prominently and completely, he chooses to interrupt the rows. Sometimes he continues or finishes them at a later point, but usually he leaves them as fragments.

Figure 4. Repetition within row form RI₆, Anthem (mm. 18-31)

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In other areas, Argento uses "cells" as the basis of elaborate melodies, "cherry-picking" (Argento's term for the technique)⁵⁷ motives from fragments within the matrix. This use of serialism freely combines with tonal idioms; at times he derives great tension from chromatic voice leading, as in his setting of Psalm 102,

⁵⁶ Dominick Argento, e-mail message to the author, March 11, 2011.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

but his writing is also occasionally unapologetically tonal, as in the circle of fifths progressions found later in the *Nunc dimittis* and the Anthem.

CHAPTER 3

ANALYSIS

I. Threnody

Evensong begins appropriately with a threnody, a lament. The movement is an arch form, ABCB'A'.⁵⁸ The A and A' sections show elements of contrapuntal process. The B and B' sections feature the voice weaving freely through sparse orchestra textures, interrupted by short, non-functional chord progressions that seem to hover around the P_0/I_0 and P_6/I_6 “corners” of the matrix. The C section is a short fantasy-style interlude on row P_T .

The composer terms the A section a fugue,⁵⁹ though the designation “fugato” may be more apt. While the imitative nature of the counterpoint is clear, a closer examination reveals that it is constructed as a double fugue. Dividing the melody into two distinct halves, the first using a prime form of the row and the second using an inverted form, the first 10 measures of the extended oboe solo can be viewed as the first entrance of the first subject (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Threnody, Subject I using P_0 (mm. 1-10, oboe)



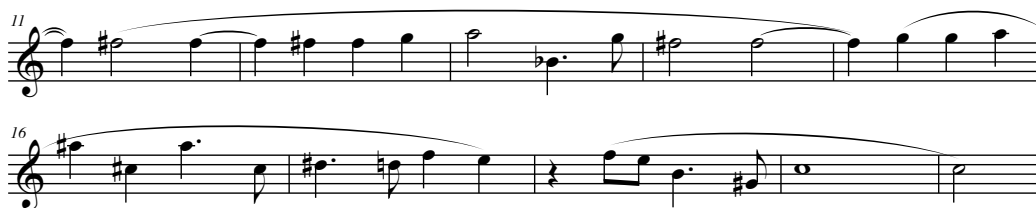
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⁵⁸ Form diagram, p. 54.

⁵⁹ Argento, e-mail message to the author, March 11, 2011.

Instead of creating a direct $\hat{3}-\hat{2}-\hat{1}$ descent with C-B-A in a tightly spaced minor third, the composer treats this central motive as a descending minor second followed by an ascending leap of a minor seventh, and this striking leap makes each entry of the first subject easily recognizable. He finishes the row form but overlaps iterations of the final pitch of P_0 (F \sharp) with the beginning pitch of I_6 , and the line continues as a countersubject to the solo viola (Figure 6), which answers the subject beginning in m. 11 using row P_E .

Figure 6. Threnody. Countersubject I using I_6 (mm. 11-20, oboe)



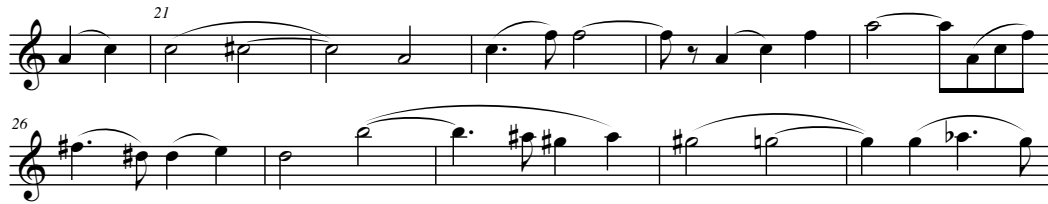
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This pairing of the subject with countersubject is a distinction that favors the fugal, rather than the canonic, analysis of this section. Not only are the pairings consistent throughout the section, the entrances imply tonality in that the final pitch of the subject (also the first pitch of the countersubject) is a perfect fifth above the answer, inviting the ear to receive it almost as a dominant-tonic relationship, despite the fact that iterations of the first subject appear as rows in transpositions of descending minor seconds ($P_0 - P_E - P_T - P_9$).

The violins are the next instruments to enter in m. 20, using row RI_7 in a second subject within the fugue, but Argento reorders the pitches of the first trichord slightly, from C \sharp -A-C to A-C-C \sharp (Figure 7, next page). Thus, the first

entrances of the Threnody subtly reinforce the cipher-motive: the oboe on C, the viola on C \flat (B), and the violins on A.

Figure 7. Threnody, Subject II using RI $_6$ (mm. 21–30, violin)



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The viola continues with the first countersubject (on P $_4$) as the cellos enter with the first subject on row P $_T$ in m. 21.

In balance to the first subject-first countersubject pairing, in mm. 31-40 a second countersubject (Figure 8) appears in the flutes, first violins, and violas to accompany the second subject, which moves to the first oboe, first clarinet, and second violins.

Figure 8. Threnody, Countersubject II using R $_1$ (mm. 31-40, flute I/violin I)



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The final statement of the first subject also appears in mm. 31-40, in the bassoons and contrabasses, paired with its faithful countersubject in the English horn and first clarinet. Once the first subject is stated in the lowest voices, the A section abruptly ends.

This B section (mm. 41-54) is relatively short, but changes of musical material, tempo, and texture confirm the sense of a definitive section break at measure 41, marked *Più mosso* in the score. Throughout this section, Argento places short groupings of non-functional chords, in which the roots of the chords derive their pitches from the beginning of the P_0/I_0 and P_6/I_6 row forms and their respective retrogrades. The first chords, C and F \sharp , establish the same tritone relationship found earlier at the beginnings of the first subject and first countersubject in the A section. McGaghie identifies this interval as symbolic of *distance*, rather than *dissonance*, in light of Argento's use of the tritone in other works and the composer's own comments regarding the relative consonance of the tritone in comparison to more closely spaced dissonances, such as the minor second.⁶⁰

From a visual perspective, the chord roots work inward from the corners of the matrix: C, F \sharp , A \flat , B, C \sharp , F, D, B \flat . This "rule" continues briefly in the B' section (Figure 12, p. 28), but appears to be a fascinating byproduct, rather than a governing factor, in Argento's compositional process. Row P_7 seems to be the governing factor. Its completion also signals the end of the B section within one measure. The pitches of the row are usually placed in the highest voice, though they occasionally drop to an inner voice. The short chord progressions are built around pitches of the row providing at least one member of each chord (Figure 9, next page).

⁶⁰ McGaghie, 215-217.

Figure 9. Threnody, B section, dispersion of row P₇ and resulting chords (mm. 41-53)

41 (Vln. I) (Hn. I) (Fl. I) (Fl. II)

C F^{#6} C₄ A^b C F[#]

47 (Cl. I) (Bsn. I) (Vln. I) (Vla.)

B C[#] F[#]₄ D bb⁶

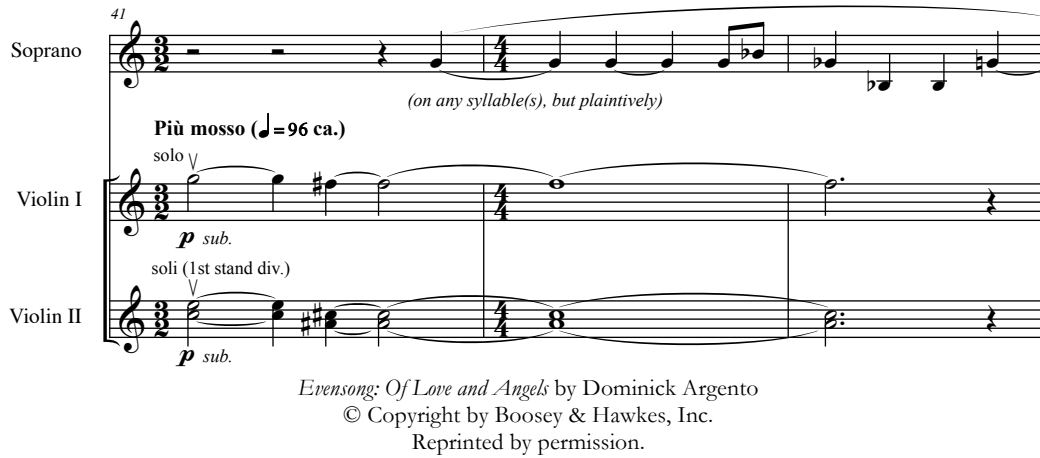
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The B section also features the first entrance of the voice. Argento wanted the voice to sound as if it were an orchestral instrument,⁶¹ so the soprano line has no text, only the instruction “on any syllable(s), but plaintively.”⁶² The set used in the beginning of the vocal line may be found in the trichord at the top right corner of the matrix (G B^b G^b/F[#]), in keeping with the pattern previously found in the chord progressions. For the most part, however, the line follows an improvisatory style, adhering to no row form and expanding or contracting the intervals as needed to create an expressive line. In his melodic process, Argento uses a technique of “circling” pitches to imply tonal centers, sometimes in unexpected ways. For instance, in mm. 41-43 (Figure 10, next page), one might expect the use of G B^b G^b/F[#] to imply G minor (as the set C B A G[#] implied A minor in the original row). In light of the harmony underneath, however, the melody is actually circling G^b/F[#], using G as a $\hat{b}2$.

⁶¹ Argento, e-mail message to the author, March 11, 2011.

⁶² Argento, *Evensong: Of Love and Angels*, 4.


Figure 10. Threnody (mm. 41-43)



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The very brief C section (mm. 55-62) uses row P_T as its basis, with harp and horns grouping the row into six dyads presented in a Scottish step rhythm, the last dyad repeated for emphasis. In mm. 55-56, the solo second violin states the opening tetrachords of P_0 and I_0 in a graceful sixteenth-note gesture while the solo first violin provides harmony above, then the first violin takes over the opening tetrachord of P_1 , and both violins continue the rhythmic motives of mm. 55-56 through mm. 58-60, playing freely with the $[0\ 1\ 3]$ set and its inversion $[0\ 2\ 3]$. The result is a moment of lighter texture that provides contrast to the weightier sections surrounding it.

Figure 11. Threnody (mm. 55-57)



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Argento places various transpositions of the C-B-A motive in offset counterpoint above the return of the short, non-functional progressions in the B' section. The inward progression from the corners of the matrix continues with chord roots A, F, and C \flat (Figure 12), after which this ostensible method of adding pitches disintegrates. As in the first B section, Argento utilizes a row form to dictate the approximate length of the section and to provide chord members, this time choosing P $_9$. In its first entrance in the B' section, the voice joins the C-B-A motive and adds A \flat and F to continue the first part row P $_0$ before breaking into free material, often returning to the opening tetrachord of I $_7$ (Figure 13, next page).

Figure 12. Continuation of B section chord progression into B' section (mm. 63-65)

| | I $_0$ | I $_E$ | I $_9$ | I $_8$ | I $_5$ | I $_3$ | I $_4$ | I $_1$ | I $_2$ | I $_7$ | I $_T$ | I $_6$ | |
|--------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------|
| P $_0$ | C | B | A | G \sharp | F | D \sharp | E | C \sharp | D | G | B \flat | F \sharp | R $_0$ |
| P $_1$ | C \sharp | C | B \flat | A | F \sharp | E | F | D | D \sharp | G \sharp | B | G | R $_1$ |
| P $_3$ | D \sharp | D | C | B | G \sharp | F \sharp | G | E | F | B \flat | C \sharp | A | R $_3$ |
| P $_4$ | E | D \sharp | C \sharp | C | A | G | A \flat | F | F \sharp | B | D | B \flat | R $_4$ |
| P $_7$ | G | F \sharp | E | E \flat | C | B \flat | B | A \flat | A | D | F | C \sharp | R $_7$ |
| P $_9$ | A | G \sharp | F \sharp | F | D | C | C \sharp | B \flat | B | E | G | E \flat | R $_9$ |
| P $_8$ | G \sharp | G | F | E | C \sharp | B | C | A | B \flat | D \sharp | F \sharp | D | R $_8$ |
| P $_E$ | B | B \flat | A \flat | G | E | D | E \flat | C | D \flat | F \sharp | A | F | R $_E$ |
| P $_T$ | B \flat | A | G | F \sharp | D \sharp | C \sharp | D | B | C | F | A \flat | E | R $_T$ |
| P $_5$ | F | E | D | C \sharp | A \sharp | G \sharp | A | F \sharp | G | C | E \flat | B | R $_5$ |
| P $_2$ | D | C \sharp | B | B \flat | G | F | F \sharp | E \flat | E | A | C | G \sharp | R $_2$ |
| P $_6$ | F \sharp | F | E \flat | D | B | A | B \flat | G | G \sharp | C \sharp | E | C | R $_6$ |
| | RI $_0$ | RI $_E$ | RI $_9$ | RI $_8$ | RI $_5$ | RI $_3$ | RI $_4$ | RI $_1$ | RI $_2$ | RI $_7$ | RI $_T$ | RI $_6$ | |

Figure 13. Threnody, B' section, (mm. 63-65)

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The presence of portions of I_7 in the B' section serves an important function as a seamless transition to the A' section. In mm. 72-74, the voice employs B, B \flat , and G, all of which may be found in the opening tetrachord of I_7 , but are also found in the opening trichord of RI_5 . Above the voice, the oboes and first clarinet also employ the opening of I_7 , but at m. 75, they transition to RI_5 , beginning a statement of the second subject from the opening fugato section.

In this second fugato section, first subject, first countersubject, and second subject appear together in mm. 75-84 in statements that continue to descend in half-steps from the previous A section. The second countersubject joins in mm. 84-93 using row R_E . Argento creates a short, overlapping bridge using the invariant subset (G A \flat B \flat C \flat) from I_7 and R_E . The strings sustain an E major chord below the voice, as an extension of the last tones of R_E and RI_4 . There is a melodic convergence on C at m. 96, a natural outgrowth from the B of the I_7/R_E subset and the end of the first subject on C#. The soprano returns in m. 96 with the original melody on P $_0$, ending on a clipped F#. Argento wanted the ending to sound as if “the soprano was cut off

before she had a chance to finish,”⁶³ hence the shortened final soprano note over the sustained E major chord underneath, implying a tonality the soprano never quite achieves in her line.

II. *Phos bilaron*

In the *Phos bilaron*, Argento does not utilize any row forms, but he emphasizes the tonal center of A minor in the first portion of this movement to create a sense of continuity with the previous musical material, in which the original row had strong tendencies toward A minor and ended on E major. Set in a versicle-response form, each of the six sections of the text is separated by harp and woodwind glissandi and the addition of a trilled pedal note in the strings to coincide with the lighting of a candle, according to Argento’s stage directions in the score.⁶⁴ In the first three versicles and responses, A remains the primary tonal center through various modal inflections. In versicles four and five, the tonal center shifts to F minor, B, G, C and C# before returning to A in the solo line of the last versicle. The “Amen,” however, yields a firm cadence in C minor.

Adjunct to the tonalities of the versicles and responses, beginning in the second versicle, Argento begins a methodical process of accumulating a whole-tone collection in the trills that accompany the treble solos. With the lighting of the second candle in m. 9, the *divisi* second violins trill on a tritone dyad with B and E#, providing a sparse accompaniment to the treble solo through m. 12. In m. 15, with

⁶³ Argento, e-mail message to the author, March 11, 2011.

⁶⁴ Form diagram, p. 55.

the third candle, the second violins return with B and E#, and the violas join with C#. In m. 23, the violas divide to add G, and in m. 37, the first violins enter with A. In m. 46, with the last candle, the first violins divide to add D#, thus completing the whole-tone collection. The collection is reaffirmed with the choral statement in mm. 48-50 (Figure 14).

Figure 14. *Phos hilaron*, Whole-tone collection in choral statement (mm. 48-50)

The musical score for Figure 14 shows four vocal parts: Soprano (div.), Alto (div.), Tenor (div.), and Bass (div.). The music is in 4/4 time and begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. A fermata is placed over the first measure, with the number 49 written above it. The lyrics are: "is now and e-ver shall be." The Soprano and Alto parts have a long melisma over the word "e-ver".

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When questioned about the significance of the whole-tone collection, the composer indicated that it had a sound of “innocence,” which he pairs with the sound of the boy soprano, who here represents a specific angel, a “cherub.”⁶⁵

The C-B-A motive is embedded at several levels in the *Phos hilaron* movement. The first appearance is fairly obvious, as a fragment of P₀ in the opening treble solo (Figure 15).

Figure 15. *Phos hilaron*, C-B-A motive (mm. 2-4)

The musical score for Figure 15 shows a Treble solo in 4/4 time. It begins with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The lyrics are: "Hail, Gra-cious Light, pure bright-ness e-ver-last-ing!". A *poco più f* marking is present above the music. A bracket labeled "P₀ fragment" encompasses the final notes of the phrase.

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⁶⁵ Argento, e-mail message to the author, March 11, 2011.

The second level finds C-B-A in the bass line of the fourth response, at the beginning of the section marked *appassionato* (m. 30), and again in the bass line at the beginning of the fifth response in m. 39-40 (Figure 16).

Figure 16. *Phos hilaron*, C-B-A motive (mm. 30, 39-40)

The musical score for 'Phos hilaron' is presented in two systems. The first system, starting at measure 30, features a vocal line for Soprano (S.) and Alto (A.) in treble clef and a vocal line for Tenor (T.) and Bass (B.) in bass clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The Soprano and Alto parts are marked *ff* (fortissimo). The lyrics for this system are 'liv - ing wa - ters'. The second system, starting at measure 39, features the same vocal parts. The Tenor and Bass parts are marked *f* (forte). The lyrics for this system are 'Let Thine e - ver - last - ing'. The score includes a double bar line between measures 30 and 39.

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Careful study of the overall tonal plan shows that A is the primary tonal center of the first half of the movement. At exactly the midpoint, in m. 26, the composer makes a dramatic shift to B as the tonal center. At m. 39, halfway through the second half, Argento plainly switches to C as the tonal center; he ultimately ends in C minor. These points seem too exact to have happened arbitrarily, and indicate an even higher structural level, in which Argento embeds C-B-A as tonal centers in reverse order.

III. Psalm 102

The third movement of *Evensong* is perhaps the most problematic movement from an analytical standpoint. At first glance, the selection of pitches is a daunting mélange. Any attempt to define a specific process from a strict serial perspective results in unwieldy and inconsistent application, and the accumulation of the aggregate within the first few measures does not coincide with a clear structural division. Instead of outright row forms, it is smaller motivic relations and short

sections of rhythmic imitation that link this to the first movement; its harmonic complexities are actually a framework of tonal relations obfuscated by a high degree of chromaticism in the voice leading (Figure 17).

Figure 17. Roman numeral analysis of Psalm 102 (mm. 1-9)

Molto intenso e ben sostenuto (♩ = c. 44)

Soprano
Hear my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come un - to thee. Hide not thy

Alto 1
Hear my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come un - to thee. Hide not thy

Alto 2
Hear my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come un - to thee. Hide not thy

Tenor 1
Hear my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come un - to

Tenor 2
Hear my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come un - to

Bass
Hear my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come un - to

fm: i (♭)VI ii/vi V⁶/vi vi ii⁷

5
S face from me in the day when I am in trou - ble. mf

A 1 face from me in the day when I am in trou - ble. mf

A 2 face from me in the day when I am in trou - ble. mf

T 1 the. O LORD, in the day when I am in trou - ble. mf

T 2 the. O LORD, in the day when I am in trou - ble. mf

B the. O LORD, in the day when I am in trou - ble. mf

iv⁶ V₃ ii^o iv V

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Psalm 102 is a modified strophic form, with significant cadences that reinforce the primary key of F minor.⁶⁶ The first strophe divides unevenly into A and B sections, with two nine-measure phrases in the A section and a (3+4)+3 construction in the 10 measure of the B section. Argento expands the A' section in mm. 29-45 with the insertion of new material (C) in mm. 37-43, between the two nine-measure phrases. Similarly, the B' section has an internal expansion, with material from the last three measures of the B section broken by an insertion of new material (D) in mm. 48-51.

The composer links this movement to the Threnody and to the matrix with subtle methods. First, he takes the interval of a major third encompassed by the [0 1 3 4] set (here D-D \flat -B-B \flat from the first tetrachord of the row P_T) and chromatically saturates it in the soprano and first tenor lines in the opening measures of this movement. Although this may be a valid assessment of the effective relationship, the composer's own description of his compositional technique favors the more likely scenario that Argento – as he might say in his own words – “cherry-picked” from the matrix.⁶⁷ The set (D C C \sharp B \flat B E), a chromatically saturated major third topped with a major second [0 1 2 3 4 6], forms the opening melody of this movement, and it is found in the central portion of the row P₉. Row RI_E also seems to play a role in the first two measures, as roots of the (mostly) tonally functional chords within those measures (fm-D \flat ⁶-em-A⁶). This progression employs a ii-V relation between the em-AM chords, which eventually does resolve to dm (ii-V/vi to vi, in this key). Though

⁶⁶ Form diagram, p. 56.

⁶⁷ Argento, e-mail message to the author, March 11, 2011.

superficially an insignificant moment, the ii-V relation becomes important in later movements as an often-repeated motive implying an “interrupted cadence.”⁶⁸ After having provided the initial motivic and harmonic material, P₉ and RI_E dissolve in the chromaticism.

The C-B-A motive is harder to locate in this movement than in other movements; its appearance is inserted subtly in the bass in mm. 19-20 with the words “and withered like grass.” The motive returns in mm. 25-26 and 45-46 in the bass, transposed to E-D-C# in both instances. In the final statement, “and I am withered like grass” in mm. 50-53, the bass line utilizes the motive again, but transformed to the [0 1 3] prime form as C-B \flat -A and extended to complete the descent to $\hat{1}$ in F major (Figure 18).

Figure 18. Psalm 102, C-B-A motive in bass line (mm. 19-20, 50-53)

The image shows a musical score for Psalm 102. It features vocal parts (Soprano, Alto 1, Alto 2) and three Tenor parts (Tenor 1, Tenor 2, Bass). The lyrics are: "and wi - thered like grass; and I am wi - thered like grass." The bass line is highlighted with a slur, showing the C-B-A motive in mm. 19-20 and 50-53. The score is in 3/4 time and includes a key signature change from G major to F major.

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One may argue that these occurrences result from the chromaticism Argento employs, or that any $\hat{3}\text{-}\hat{2}\text{-}\hat{1}$ descents could be identified as a use of the cipher-motive. The instances noted above, however, are significant because they occur at the beginning of a phrase or subphrase (as indicated by slurs) – not in the midst of such a line, and each instance uses the motive in the bass consistently. It would seem,

⁶⁸ Ibid.

therefore, that the occurrence of the head motive is not the *result* of the chromaticism, but rather the *basis* for the composer's chromatic treatment. As a point of speculation, Argento's use of C-B-A in the bass may be a musical self-descriptor. Psalm 102 is written from the point of view of the mourner, and Argento frequently sang bass in the choir of the church where his wife was the soprano soloist.⁶⁹

V. Sermon

The initial impression of this movement is that of a spontaneous, through-composed piece, but there are certain sections and materials that recur so that the movement divides into two large sections that each exhibit characteristics of rondo and arch forms.⁷⁰ The large sections divide the movement on textual considerations. The first section, a quasi-rondo with some characteristics of arch form (mm. 1-91), sets the text in which the homilist creates a depiction of the angel at Bethesda, who, according to the John's Gospel, stirred up the waters of a certain pool so that miracles of healing were performed. In the second large section, a somewhat more straightforward arch form (mm. 92-208), the homilist deals with how the story of Bethesda touches life in a modern context.

Argento uses several recurrent ideas in the Sermon: the pregnant row⁷¹ and the cipher-motive (C-B-A) found in earlier movements, and a flourish and an "interrupted cadence" fanfare introduced in this movement. The first instance of the

⁶⁹ Argento and Lewis, interview with Deb Lamberton.

⁷⁰ Form diagram, p. 57.

⁷¹ Argento's term *pregnant row* is defined on p. 16.

pregnant row material is found in mm. 5-9, with a statement of row RI₆ shared between the voice and solo violin. RI₇ appears multiple times in mm. 149-178, in conjunction with a canon. This use of contrapuntal process, inserted to heighten the tension in the homilist's discussion of death,⁷² hearkens to the fugato sections of the first movement and creates a cyclical use of textural devices, as well as motivic and pitch materials.

Immediately following the spoken Lesson (Movement IV contains no music, only the reading of the Lesson), the Sermon commences with a flourish and fanfare.

Figure 19. Sermon, Flourish and Fanfare (mm. 1-4)

Moderato (♩ = 79 ca.)

Chord progression: C_b bb Ab f B_b

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The C-B-A motive is has a prominent (though transposed) placement as a chord progression in the flourish, beginning on P_E: C_b-bb-Ab. A short fanfare of two

⁷² Argento, e-mail message to the author, March 11, 2011.

chords immediately follows the flourish, reminding the listener of the short chord groupings in the B and B' sections of the Threnody. The flourish and fanfare recur in several places, often in augmentation in the solo vocal line, especially in references to the “Angel that troubled the water” (Figure 20).

Figure 20. Sermon, Flourish and fanfare motive in augmentation (mm. 46-51)

Più mosso (♩ = 72)

Soprano *mf* 46 But the An-gel John speaks of _____ had a spe-cial mis-sion, _____

49 _____ a spe-cial mu-sic. *p*

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The two-chord fanfare that follows the flourish was introduced as part of a longer chord progression in the third movement.⁷³ Here, though it is tempting to label this as a minor dominant-major tonic progression (v-I), the composer specifically designates the motive as an “interrupted cadence,” identifying the chords as ii-V.⁷⁴ The presence of an interrupted cadence implies an *uninterrupted* cadence at some point, and the composer realizes that implication later in the movement. A deceptive cadence may be found in mm. 10-12, but the composer delays resolution of ii-V until mm. 63-66, where a contrasting section begins and masks the sense of cadence to I (Figure 21, next page).

⁷³ See p. 34.

⁷⁴ Argento, e-mail message to the author, March 11, 2011.

Figure 21. Sermon, uninterrupted cadences (mm. 10-12, 63-67)

Soprano

the An - gel That Trou - bled the Wa - ter.

Orchestra reduction

(Obs.) (Bsns.) (Vln. I) (Vln. II, Vla, Vc.) (Harp)

mp *mf* *mp* *pp* *p* *mp*

(e♭: VI (v⁶) VI (v⁶) IV⁶ ii V VI) (C: ii V I)

Quasi largo ♩. = 42

Di - vine Love. With his

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The next ii-V-I resolution happens in passing, in mm. 104-106, and, though there are several repetitions of the interrupted cadence, another full resolution to major or minor tonic in that context does not occur in this movement. The ii-V motif is the most significant idea by force of repetition, but Argento does not limit his cadences to the ii-V context. In mm. 110-112, for example, the composer chooses an A major collection, followed by a G major collection that resolves to a C major chord; he repeats the idea in mm. 190-192 with a satisfying use of B \flat major, A \flat Lydian, and D \flat major. This occasional use of VI-V-I may be viewed as a refreshing substitute for the prominent ii-V motif.

The first rondo-arch form (ABA'CA''B'DA''' in mm. 1-91) uses the flourish and fanfare in the recurring A sections. It forms significant musical material in the vocal line, as noted earlier in the comparisons of mm. 10-12 and mm. 63-67 (Figure 21, p. 39), but it is most easily recognized in its original rhythms in the brass as it signals a separation point between the large sections, similar in function to a ritornello (mm. 86-91). Though the interrupted cadences of the fanfare appear frequently in the second large arch form (EFGHIIH'G'F'E' in mm. 92-208), the full flourish and fanfare ritornello is saved until the very end in mm. 196-201, where it alternates with free material from E in the voice.

VI. Meditation

In this orchestral intermezzo, Argento again chooses an arch form, a subtle tie to formal designs in both the opening Threnody and to the Sermon.⁷⁵ Cello solos arpeggiating chords (CM-bm-AM) on the C-B-A motive (Figure 22) frame the more heavily orchestrated middle sections, begin and end this movement on C major.

Figure 22. Meditation, excerpt of cello solo on C-B-A motive (mm. 1-3)

Rubato, quasi cadenza (♩ = 42 ca.)
 senza sord.
 solo

Cello

mf

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The B and B' sections are tied to the matrix with fragments from rows I₀, I₆ and I₉. The central section of this movement twice uses the pitches of row P₀ in an extended chord progression (Figure 23, next page). This echoes the way P₇ was used earlier in

⁷⁵ Form diagram, p. 58.

the Threnody (Figure 9, p. 26), in which each pitch of the row functioned as a chord member, typically in the upper voice. In this movement, though, the pitches of P_0 are used as the roots of the chords in the progression.

Figure 23. Meditation, chord progression on row P_0 (mm. 44-53, brass)

Stesso tempo, maestoso, alla corale (♩ = ♩)

Brass choir

f *mp*

Chords: C b A G^{#6} F e^b e⁶ c^{#6} d G⁶ B^{b6} G^{b6} C

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The B' section also recalls the flourish and fanfare briefly in mm. 90-94 just before the return of the cello solo in m. 95.

One distinctive feature of this movement is the use of octatonic sets. The *Phos hilaron* collected a whole-tone set in the course of the second movement, but there is no whole-tone collection among adjacent pitches in the matrix, so its addition enabled the composer to maintain a sense of tension and wonder as each candle was lit. Octatonic sets, however, are an implied feature of the pregnant row found throughout *Evensong* because the first hexachord contains six members of the same octatonic set [0 1 3 4 7 9]. In the English horn solo from the B section, for instance, Argento creates an octatonic set from the first tetrachords [0 1 3 4] of rows I_0 and I_6 with a facile seaming of pitch materials (Figure 24, next page).

Figure 24. Meditation, octatonic set in English horn solo (mm. 16-24)

Andante con moto ♩ = 84

(I₆: C D \flat E \flat E)

(I₆: F \sharp G A B \flat)

English Horn

mf

20

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VII. *Nunc dimittis*

In the canticle *Nunc dimittis*, there are no row forms present. The first presentation of the C-B-A motive is in an altered form of the [0 1 3] set, C-B \flat -A. The change accommodates F major as a functional tonality moving to G major. The F major tonality at the beginning of this movement serves as a balance to the F minor tonality of the Psalm 102, though the relation was not consciously planned according to the composer.⁷⁶ This movement also uses motives found in the Sermon, particularly the ii-V interrupted cadence, sometimes as part of a short chain of such cadences. In mm. 24-26, the chain of ii-V sonorities eventually leads to a resolution to the implied tonic (Figure 25, next page).

⁷⁶ Argento, e-mail message to the author, March 11, 2011.

Figure 25. *Nunc dimittis*, ii-V motive (mm. 24-26)

Orchestra reduction

24

ii V₅ i IV⁶ (add 9) ii⁷ ii⁷ V I

G C

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The overall structure of the movement is an asymmetrical, continuous rounded binary form.⁷⁷ Though the ternary label could be applied, the term “rounded binary” more accurately reflects Argento’s consistent use of related melodic material, as well as the harmonic function of the B section. Within the form, there are elements of antiphonal writing, particularly prominent in the beginning, when the phrase of the *a capella* chorus in mm. 1-6 is answered in mm. 6-11 by the brass choir with an ornamented version of the same phrase. The imitation continues in the B section, which begins in A minor with the choir imitated by the strings. After a brief interruption by the flourish and fanfare from the Sermon, in mm. 44-49, the woodwinds transition with material derived from mm. 1-6, using the key area of C major as a pivot to return to F major. The chorus re-enters with the actual A’ section in m. 50. The chord roots of the III-ii-I cadence in mm. 58-61 recall the original C-B-A motive, but transposed to P_T, B^b-A-G (Figure 26, next page).

⁷⁷ Form diagram, p. 59.

Figure 26. *Nunc dimittis*, C-B-A motive in transposition (mm. 58-61)

Organ

Soprano
Alto

Tenor
Bass

p

pp

pp

A - - - - men.

B \flat a 6 G 6

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VIII. Prayer-Lullaby

The Prayer-Lullaby movement is the simplest of the movements, per the composer's wish. The gently rocking 6/8 rhythms and the frequent triadic outlines in the voice are characteristic features of the cradle-song genre.⁷⁸ Inserted into the typical triadic motion, however, are dissonant chromatic pitches to emphasize words in the text associated with suffering, such as *pity the afflicted*, *dying*, and *weep*. (*Weep* and *sleep* do share the same dissonance to emphasize the rhyme present.) In keeping with the simplicity of the movement, Argento uses primarily four-bar phrases for the voice and a slightly modified strophic form to accommodate a truncated B'.⁷⁹

There are no row forms, though portions of the row, especially sets [0 1 3] and [0 1 4], play a large part in creating the conjunct lines in the strings. As in the Psalm movement, the C-B-A motive stays hidden in the bass voices of the string

⁷⁸ Don Michael Randel, ed., *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), 89.

⁷⁹ Form diagram, p. 60.

accompaniment (Figure 27). The chords that form on that snippet of bass line in their initial presentation create a strong sense of C major before slipping into E major and continuing the chromatic mediant relation with G# major.

Figure 27. Prayer-Lullaby, C-B-A motive (mm. 6-9 = 42-45)

CM: V⁷ I V⁶ IV⁶ V⁶ I V₄⁶ EM: ii₂⁴ V⁷

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In its last appearance near the end of the movement, the C-B-A motive is present at the roots of the chords, similar to the treatment found at the end of the *Nunc dimittis* (Figure 26, previous page).

IX. Anthem

Unlike the other movements, all of which have some aspects of sectional form, the Anthem is truly through-composed, pulling freely from rows, chord progressions, and motives of earlier movements without repeating any section within this movement.⁸⁰ Initially, the final movement of *Evensong* returns to the row forms, specifically P₀ and RI₆ placed over a rhythmic ostinato in mm. 1-31. The second portion (mm. 32-49) abandons the ostinato and follows the circle of fifths (from D to C_b). The third portion (mm. 50-85) is a Neoromantic showcase of harmony with a

⁸⁰ Form diagram, p. 61.

thoroughly knotty but perfectly plausible progression that tonicizes several keys before briefly succumbing to $D\flat$ as a transition to the central motive, found as $E\flat$ - $D\flat$ -C in mm. 86-88 (Figure 28).

Figure 28. Anthem, orchestral reduction and analysis (mm. 47-88)

47
 $B\flat$ $E\flat$ $A\flat$ $D\flat$ $G\flat_4$ $C\flat$ | I ii v C: III | vi ii V ($\frac{1}{2}$)
 E: | V

54
 A: ii V_4^6 iii $\frac{VI}{C\sharp/D\flat}$ | ii ($\frac{7}{\flat}$) V I^(add 6) I ii $_3^4$ V_3^4
 C \sharp /D \flat : | IV

60
 V_7^9 V_7^9/ii | I passing⁹ V_7^9/ii (add 6) V_7^9/ii ii $_7^9$ V $\frac{bIII}{G\flat}$ | V_7^9/V iii
 E \flat : | V $_7^9$

69
 (G \flat): iii $\frac{vii^{\flat 9 4}}{E\flat}$ / VI | vi iv $_6^9$ V iv V I ii $_7^9$ iii V_3^4 $\frac{IV}{D\flat}$ | iii
 E \flat : | $\frac{vii^{\flat 9 4}}{3}$

76
 I V_3^4 I $_9$ IV V $\frac{IV_6}{B}$ (add 6) | I $_6$ (iii) I $\frac{V_3^4}{V}$ V IV $\frac{V_6}{vi}$ vi V iii vi
 B: | $\frac{V_6}{(add 6)}$

82
 $\frac{vii^{\flat 9}}{D\flat}$ / V | V_9^9/vi I ii $_3^4$ V_3^4 V_9^9 vi $_4^9$ V_7^9/ii ii | $D\flat$ C
 D \flat : | $\frac{vii^{\flat 9}}{vi}$ C-B-A (transposed): | E \flat

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Though the cipher-motive appears in transposition in mm. 86-87 and in the beginning of the movement as part of row P₀, its most significant placement is in the roots of the three final chords at the end of the movement over a D pedal (Figure 29), implying, as in the first movement, a sense of the unfinished.

Figure 29. Anthem, final appearance of C-B-A motive (mm. 96-98)

96 con sord.

Vln. I (solo)
Vln. II (solo)
Vla. (solo)

C b A⁶

Vc.
Cb.

8^{vb}

(D pedal)

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CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS: OF FORM AND BALANCE

Argento strikes a certain overall balance within *Evensong* in his choices of instrumentation, forms, and tonal centers. There are two wordless movements (Threnody and Meditation), two movements involving the soprano soloist (Threnody and Sermon), two movements for the treble soloist (*Phos hilaron* and Prayer-Lullaby), and four movements involving the chorus (*Phos hilaron*, Psalm 102, *Nunc dimittis*, and Anthem). In formal designs, Argento used the arch form most frequently, employing it in the Threnody, Sermon, and Meditation. Twice he used some kind of modified strophic form, in Psalm 102 and in the Prayer-Lullaby. Of the movements for chorus, two – *Phos hilaron* and *Nunc dimittis* – use certain elements of antiphony: the *Phos hilaron* employs a versicle-response design between the treble soloist and chorus, and the *Nunc dimittis* uses antiphonal gestures between the chorus and instrumental choirs within the overall rounded binary form. Two movements (Psalm 102 and *Nunc dimittis*) use F as a primary tonal center, and the Sermon and the Anthem both use D \flat as a tonal center or pedal point.

Though Argento denies any conscious intent to create dominant-tonic relationships between movements in *Evensong*,⁸¹ these relationships are nonetheless often present and aid in the overall cohesive effect of the work. The end of the Threnody is an E major chord, and the beginning of the second movement *Phos hilaron* is on A minor. The end of the *Phos hilaron* is on C minor, and the third movement, Psalm 102, is in F minor. The beginning of the Sermon emphasizes a relationship between the F minor chord and the B \flat chord that follows, but the key

⁸¹ Argento, e-mail message to the author, March 11, 2011.

ultimately emphasized at the end of the movement is Db Major, implying a deceptive resolution in the overarching plan. The Meditation after the Sermon uses a C Major chord to frame the beginning and end of the movement, and the *Nunc dimittis* begins in F Major. This movement eventually moves to G, preparing for the Prayer-Lullaby in C Major. Anthem, the final movement, employs a quartal chord ostinato (C, F, D, and G) and circle of fifths progression that emphasizes the overall importance of the relationship of perfect fourths/perfect fifths that is implied throughout the piece. McGaghie notes Argento's use of the circle of fifths as a metaphor for God, calling it a "sacred cycle."⁸²

As a whole, *Evensong* demonstrates the signature characteristics for which Argento is best known: eclectic and flexible approach in the use of musical materials, speech-derived setting of prose text, and writing that usually favors clarity of text above other considerations of contrapuntal process or orchestral forces. The overall effect is one of a varied, yet balanced, whole. The powerful melodies reflect Argento's distinctly personal choices of profound text and the memory of Carolyn Bailey Argento, the composer's especially talented and deeply loved muse.

⁸² McGaghie, 232.

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APPENDIX A
FORM DIAGRAMS

I. Threnody

Arch form with embedded fugato sections: ABCBA'

S=Subject, CS=Countersubject, A=Answer P_T and P_E=Transpositions of the row at 10 and 11 half-steps, respectively

| | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| A: Fugue/Fugato (Exposition) | | |
| mm. 1-10 | SI (P ₀) Ob 1 | CSI (I ₆) Ob 1 |
| 11-20 | AI (P _T) Vla | CSI (I ₄) Vla |
| 21-30 | SI (P _T) Vc | S II (RI ₇) Vln 1/2 |
| 31-40 | AI (P ₉) Cb, Bsns | S II (RI ₆) Ob 1, Cl 1, Vln 2 |
| | | CS II (R ₁) Fl 1/2, Vln 1 |

B: Soprano solo, chord progressions on P₇
mm. 41-54

C: Interlude for violins, harp, and horns on P_T
mm. 55-62

B': Soprano solo, chord progressions on P₉ in counterpoint with opening C-B-A motive
mm. 63-74

| | | | |
|------------|---|-------------------------------|--|
| A': Fugato | | | |
| mm. 75-84 | SI (P ₈) Bass Cl, Bsns | CSI (I ₃) Vla, Vc | S II (RI ₅) Obs, Cl 1 |
| 84-93 | SI (P ₇) Tbn 1/2 | CSI (I ₂) Hns | S II (RI ₄) Tpt 1/2 |
| 90-96 | Bridge using R _E /I ₇ | | |
| 97-106 | SI (P ₀) Soprano over EM chord | | CS II (R _E) Vln 1/2, Vla, Vc |

II. *Phos hilaron*

Versicle-Response Form

| | | | | | | |
|----------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|--|----------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| Collection: | Versicle ₁ am | Response ₁ | V ₂ A Dorian F-B 10-12 | R ₂ | V ₃ AM E#-B-C# 16-18 | R ₃ |
| Pedals: mm. | E 1-4 | 5-9 | | 12-15 | | 18-22 |
| Collection: | V ₄ fm | R ₄ BM/bm -- gm | V ₅ CM | R ₅ -- | V ₆ am/AM | R ₆ whole tone |
| Pedals: mm. | E#-B-C#-G 23-26 | 26-36 | E#-B-C#-G-A 37-39 | 39-43 | E#-B-C#-G-A-D# 44-48 | 48-50 |
| Collection: | Amen | | | | | |
| Pedals: mm. | cm none 51-52 | | | | | |

III. Psalm 102

Modified Strophic Form, with internal expansions: ABA'B'

| Section: | A | | B | | A' | | B' | | | | | |
|------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------|-------|---|-----|
| | A ₁ | A ₂ | B ₁ | B ₂ | A ₁ | A ₂ | B _{2a} | B _{2b} | | | | |
| Keys: | f | → | (d | g) f | → | C | → | f | → | f | - | F |
| Cadences: | HC | | HC | HC | HC | HC | HC | HC | | HC | | IAC |
| mm. | 1-9 | 10-18 | 19-25 | 26-28 | 29-36 | 37-43 | 44-45 | 46-47 | 48-51 | 52-53 | | |
| Psalm text | vs. 1-3 | | vs. 4-5 | | vs. 1, 6-7 | v. 9 | vs. 2 | vs. 11 | | | | |

V. Sermon

Section I: Rondo Form with arch characteristics (mm. 1-91): ABA'CA''BDA'''

| | A | B | A' | C | A'' | B' | D | A''' |
|----------------|---|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|---|---|
| Material: | Flourish & Fanfare (on P _E) | RI ₆ | Flourish & Fanfare (aug.) | Free material | Flourish & Fanfare (aug.) | RI ₆ (extended) | Upward sweeps (glissandi, P5 th s) | Flourish & Fanfare (on P ₂) |
| Instrument(s): | Brass | Soprano & Solo violin | Soprano | Soprano | Soprano | Soprano | Full orchestra | Brass/WW & Strings |
| mm. | 1-4 | 5-9 | 10-12 | 12-45 | 46-65 | 66-81 | 82-85 | 86-91 |

Section II: Arch Form (mm. 92-208): EFGHH'G'F'E'

| | E | F | G | H | I |
|----------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Material: | Free material over pedals | Upward sweeps (CM) | Free material | Fanfare | Canon @ PU/P8 with RI ₇ accompaniment |
| Instrument(s): | Soprano | Full orchestra | Soprano | Strings | Entrances at mm. 155, 161, 167, 173 |
| mm. | 92-114 | 112-116 | 117-141 | 141-147 | Soprano & Full orchestra 149-178 |
| Material: | Fanfare | Free material | Upward sweeps | Flourish & Fanfare alternating with | |
| Instrument(s): | Brass/Organ | Free material | Free material | Free material over D ^b pedal | |
| mm. | 179-181 | ≈119-128 (m2 lower) | ≈112-116 (D ^b M) | Trumpets/Soprano & Strings | |
| | | Soprano & Full orchestra | Full orchestra | Soprano & Strings | |
| | | 182-191 | 192-195 | 196-208 | |

VI. Meditation

Arch form: ABCB'A'

- A: Cello solo on C-B-A motive and octatonic collection E F# G A Bb C (Db) Eb
mm. 1-15
- B: English Horn solo on I₀ and I₁ fragments, I₉ fragments in strings (mm. 16-37) builds octatonic collection
mm. 16-43
- C: Chord progressions on P₀ (transition in mm. 65-68 using octatonic collection)
mm. 44-68
- B': Rhythmic motives from B section, I₀ and I₉ fragments (more intense version of mm. 16-37); flourish/fanfare (mm. 90-94)
mm. 69-94
- A': Truncated Cello solo on C-B-A motive, with short insertion of chord E7
mm. 95-105

VII. *Nunc dimittis*

Rounded Binary Form (asymmetrical, continuous): ABA'

| | | | | | | |
|------------------|---------------|----------------------------|--------|-------|--|--|
| Section: | A | | | | | |
| Phrase/material: | a | a' | | | | |
| Keys: | F → | G → | A | | | |
| Cadences: | | IAC | HC | | | |
| Instrumentation: | Chorus | Brass | | | | |
| Measures: | 1-6 | 6-11 | | | | |
| Section: | B | | | | | |
| Phrase/material: | b | b | c | a'' | | |
| Keys: | a (e, C) → | d (e, d, circle of 5ths) → | G → | e → | | |
| Cadences: | | IAC | IAC | | | |
| Measures: | 10-20 | 19-29 | 27-30 | 31-35 | | |
| Instrumentation: | Chorus | Strings (+WW) | Chorus | | | |
| | | | | | | Flourish/Fanfare (A-G#-F#, P ₉) DC (vi) 36-43 (+Brass, +All) WW |
| | | | | | | a'' a → C → F 44-49 |
| Section: | A' | | | | | |
| Phrase/material: | a (truncated) | from c' | | | | |
| Keys: | F → | G | | | | |
| Cadences: | | PAC | PC | | | |
| Instrumentation: | Chorus/Organ | | | | | |
| Measures: | 50-53 | 54-57 | | | | |
| | | | | | | Amen (Bb-A-G, P ₁₁) 58-61 |

VIII. Prayer-Lullaby

Modified Strophic Form

| Section/Strophe Material: | Introduction | A | B | A | B' | Amen |
|------------------------------|--------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------------------------|
| C | C | a → E → HC | b → C → PC | = 6-21 C → E → | b' → C | d' (augmented) (C-B-A) |
| Cadences: | 1-5 | 6-13 | 14-21 | 42-57 | 58-61 | 62-66 |
| mm. | | | 22-25 25-34 35-41 | | | 67-69 |

IX. Anthem

Through-composed

| | | | | | |
|---|-----------------|--|---|------------------------------------|-------|
| Material/Keys: P ₀ Ostinato | RI ₆ | Circle of 5 th s No ostinato | E → C → A → [c# / d♭ (E♭ G♭ E♭) D♭ (b) D♭] → E♭ | [0 1 3 4], I ₅ fragment | C-B-A |
| mm. 1-16 | 17-31 | 32-49 | 50-85 | 86-95 | 96-98 |

APPENDIX B

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Born in Mississippi in 1980, Carrie Leigh Page composes music for chamber ensembles, orchestra, and electronic media, with a special emphasis on vocal writing. She has collaborated with dramatic artists, vocalists, and educators to create chamber operas both for young artists and young audiences, and she is an avid researcher of 20th- and 21st-century music, especially areas pertaining to vocal music and music education. Page earned a Bachelor of Music in music education from Converse College in 2002, where she began her compositional studies with Scott Robbins. As a Moritz von Bomhard Fellow under the tutelage of Marc Satterwhite, she completed the Master of Music degree in composition from the University of Louisville in 2005. Page earned the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in composition from Arizona State University in 2011 and currently lives in Tempe, Arizona, with her husband, composer Nicholas Alexander Drake.