

A Methodology of Rewriting Orchestral Reductions for Piano

by

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ABSTRACT

Numerous orchestral reductions for piano are plagued by cumbersome passages that impede pianists from delivering phrases with flow and elegance. The vocal works of George Frideric Handel (1685-1759) and Richard Wagner (1813-1883) are among the more unwieldy of these. While arrangers of the piano vocal scores by these two composers admirably include as much orchestration as possible, their efforts often result in writing that is not idiomatic for the piano.

The frustrating difficulties in the orchestral reductions of Handel's "Empio, dirò, tu sei" (*Giulio Cesare*), his *Messiah* chorus "For unto us a child is born" as well as Wagner's aria "Du bist der Lenz" (*Die Walküre*) all plead for a new, fresh arrangement for the working pianist. Concerning itself with the formation of one's hands, stamina preservation, and the need to give proper support to the singers, this paper makes examples of these three pieces to document and justify the steps and techniques one may take to customize both these and any variety of orchestral reductions.

With great emphasis on the methodology of rewriting operatic and choral orchestral reductions, this document presents newly arranged note-for-note piano vocal scores of the above arias and chorus. By customizing and rewriting complex scores, our partners benefit by singing above the identical accompaniment every time. It is the intent that the collaborative pianist can apply these methods to future rewrites, with the result of producing scores that are conducive to proper technique and flow.

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PREFACE

INSPIRATION TO REWRITE

My motivation for researching the art of rearranging unfeasible piano vocal reductions stems from my love of the Richard Strauss *Vier letzte Lieder*. As I prepared a recital featuring the works of Richard Strauss, I labored intensely with these four orchestral songs. I knew it would be necessary and perfectly acceptable to utilize octave displacements occasionally, leave out notes entirely, or perhaps add lower octaves to give depth to the sound and more support to the singer. My justification for these standard practices was influenced by careful study of the full orchestral score and listening to recordings.

Yet the more I worked, the more I found that these songs—namely, “Frühling” and “September”—were next to impossible to satisfactorily play without completely rewriting almost each and every note. In addition to the three techniques mentioned above, I also found it imperative to re-order the many passing sixteenth notes buried within the texture of “Frühling” and “September” so that my hands could play these notes more easily; this allowed me to focus my energy on the longer phrase rather than the small, decorative notes within the phrase. As a result, these choices enabled me to play with the same seamless flow of an orchestra.

Vier letzte Lieder served as a case study for how to convert perplexingly difficult piano vocal scores into transparent arrangements that would be enjoyable to play. This highly rewarding experience taught me the art of rearranging

currently existing orchestral reductions for piano to meet my needs, my abilities, and my stamina. It was a natural progression, then, to transfer this thought process to a much grander project that immediately followed the *Vier letzte Lieder*: the Richard Strauss opera *Ariadne auf Naxos*.

Many pianists have developed quite a good skill for faking and improvising their own reductions of piano vocal scores. It was with *Ariadne auf Naxos* that I learned the benefits of spending more time truly customizing the score to meet my needs. Not only was it of vital importance to my pianistic capabilities, but having a customized score also greatly increased my stamina for long hours of rehearsal or for entire run-throughs of the opera.

After having determined what notes I could and could not play—or which notes I might even add—I used a pencil at first to delineate my choices. Eventually, I went back and applied white-out to all the notes or chords that I wished to change, and then neatly redrew the staves and the newly chosen notes with a ruler and black ink. All this was done upon the original piano vocal score. As a result, my penmanship developed and I now rewrite all scores by pen rather than computer software.

The advantages of taking the time to do myself this service were manifold: I saw only the notes that I would play without extra clutter; I played the same thing every time; the people with whom I was working heard the identical accompaniment every time. My technique benefited greatly from this scenario, since I did not have to fake through hours of rehearsals. When one fakes for extended amounts of time, the ability to play with accuracy and finesse is likely to

be hindered. Rather, because I had customized it, practiced it, and perfected it, it was quite clear what I was to play. I had taken true ownership in the performance of the piece.

Through the process of making the work my own, I learned that I could be an artist as I played, rehearsed, and performed *Ariadne auf Naxos*. I no longer endured hours of difficult operatic accompaniments in which my brain exhausted itself in attempts to create tolerable solutions to the many impossible passages of the piano vocal score. I had crafted each measure to be completely playable and revoiced each chord to fall quite naturally into my hands. In so doing, I was able to play with a freedom and comfort that allowed me to have continual visual contact with the conductor, rather than staring at the piano vocal score.

The joy of playing the formidable Richard Strauss scores at last with ease and confidence creates within me now the desire to prepare every challenging orchestral reduction in a similar manner. Although I have to test many options at first to successfully rewrite a piano vocal score, the results are highly rewarding. Fortunately, it is not always necessary to rewrite an entire aria or choral piece; sometimes I only need to facilitate short passages.

Due to copyright restrictions, I am not permitted to show any examples from my *Vier letzte Lieder* or *Ariadne auf Naxos* arrangements. Nonetheless, the three pieces I present in this research paper are further products of my desire to play orchestral reductions at the piano with the utmost in artistry.

I am grateful to Bärenreiter-Verlag for the kind permission to reproduce several examples from their piano vocal scores in this document.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Playing music for orchestra and voice at the piano is a standard part of the collaborative pianist's profession. The myriad orchestral sounds one recreates heighten creativity and passion for music-making. In addition to mimicking orchestral sonorities, the opera and choral rehearsal pianist has the task of reproducing the flow of an orchestra. When the piece is romantic in style, for example, the pianist typically plays long phrases that proceed smoothly and seamlessly over the bar lines. Here one finds many occasions to play with rubato. Baroque music, in contrast, often demands rhythmic precision that remains constant throughout an entire piece. With the exception of slower arias or certain cadential passages, the pianist plays with no freedom of tempo.

To execute the flow of certain passages effectively—regardless of style—one accepts as a truism the need to facilitate the piano vocal score. Reasons for this are not necessarily the fault of technical shortcomings, but rather a result of too much information supplied by the dutiful arranger.

Occasionally, the collaborative pianist encounters arias or choral pieces that are so unidiomatic for the piano that they require facilitations in their entirety. Pianist and coach Robert Spillman describes the “warning signs” of these arrangements:

Many overzealous disciples and epigones who have wished to reproduce all the details of the music of their masters have furnished us with incredibly complicated arrangements....you will begin to recognize

warning signs of defective arrangements—certain configurations that are not logical, mountains of sixteenth notes in double thirds and/or sixths, . . . textures of such density that, although possible to understand in an orchestra, confuse the ear on the piano.¹

Many arias and choruses by George Frideric Handel as well as arias by Richard Wagner are among the vocal works that a pianist can be loath to rehearse and perform at the piano. Each of these styles has its own unique challenges, yet they all contain the common feature of pervasive musical passages that are not idiomatic for the piano.

This essay offers a unique solution to the challenges posed by the piano vocal scores of the following pieces, as they are published currently. Here, the reader finds a newly arranged piano vocal score of Handel's aria "Empio, dirò tu sei" from *Giulio Cesare*, the famous chorus "For unto us a child is born" from *Messiah* and Wagner's aria "Du bist der Lenz" from *Die Walküre*—all of which are now completely playable, from beginning to end. Concerning itself most with rendering the flow of an orchestra at the piano and less with the art of imitating orchestral sounds, this paper exposes the challenges of previous arrangements on a case-by-case basis, followed by examples of what has been done to resolve specific issues.

Methodology

As a *Repetitor* for many years at the American Institute of Musical Studies (AIMS) in Graz, Austria, and having played numerous operas for Arizona Opera

¹ Robert Spillman, *The Art of Accompanying: Master Lessons from the Repertoire* (New York: Macmillan, Inc., 1985), 183-184.

as a staff pianist, I have learned that the first step in learning an orchestral reduction for piano is to become knowledgeable of the orchestration. This is achieved by both studying the full score and listening to a recording or performance of the piece. When beginning to practice, I continuously examine how to arrive efficiently from one beat to the next in a manner that is both organic and representative of how the orchestra plays. Thus, in each of the pieces included here I begin by experimenting with how the hands proceed from one note or chord to the next. I then determine which notes need to be omitted or rearranged to render them more playable and fluid, then I pencil over the original score with my own choices.

In rearranging scores to fit the hand, I also consider stamina—both physical and mental. In isolation, some previously published versions of the above works may be moderately playable with many hours of practice; however, when put into the context of the entire opera or oratorio from which they are derived, pieces such as these can put a great deal of burden on the pianist. It is not uncommon for an opera *Repetitor* to play nine hours a day. It is essential therefore to arrange scores that can be played over the course of many hours, not just for flow, but for maintaining healthy playing.

In Cesare's second aria "Empio, dirò, tu sei" for example, the repeated sixteenth notes pose an immediate challenge to the pianist. In playing a difficult aria such as this many times over in long staging rehearsals, one must combine artful playing with both healthy technique and stamina. Knowing one's own stamina for playing many hours in a row—or the entire opera in a run-through—

the pianist learns in practicing that he² can neither play these repeated notes with the same ease and lightness as an orchestra nor can he play them and have sufficient energy left for the remaining hundreds of pages. The sixteenth notes continue with few breaks throughout the aria; these melismatic sixteenth-note passages are not melodic, but rather an embellishment of the highest note in each beat. Armed with this information, the pianist can seek a more accommodating order of these notes that maintains the melodic arc and liveliness of the phrase without weighing it down with uncomfortable fingerings.

Similarly, in “For unto us a child is born,” the pianist encounters many lengthy passages of sixteenth notes throughout the chorus. One may compare playing the sixteenths here—particularly in the *forte* sections, excluding the prelude and postlude—with playing complicated accompaniments in large operatic choral numbers. The pianist’s intricacies can seldom be heard. Experience demonstrates that it is better to give solid musical information for large *forte* numbers. Regular patterns within these passages solidify hand placement. In other selected passages, employing a metered tremolo accompaniment in the right hand gives light and facile support to the vocal melisma above.

The final piece discussed in this document is Sieglinde’s aria “Du bist der Lenz” from Wagner’s *Die Walküre*. This aria is replete with passionate sweeps and swells from both the voice and the orchestra. Within the inner texture of these large swells, however, many sixteenth notes are swirling about, seemingly

² Out of convenience, the masculine pronoun is used throughout this paper.

in all directions. As in “Empio, dirò, tu sei,” after determining that these notes are non-melodic, they are here re-ordered in a way that allows the hands to play the consecutive sixteenths easily. The exact order of these underlying and non-exposed sixteenth notes is not important. Rather, this paper proposes an order that falls into a more natural fingering and which all the while contributes to the *schwungvoll*³ spirit within these enormous phrases.

The previous arrangers of all these selections have no doubt provided marvelous orchestral reductions, in terms of reproducing the majority of the orchestral parts in two piano staves. This is extremely helpful for academic purposes. Greater clarity and efficacy, however, is the pursuit of my new orchestral reductions for voice and piano. Despite the term “efficacy,” they still require energy and practice for the technically-sound pianist to perform them well. This paper documents the changes that I have made to previous standard piano vocal scores and why I deem these changes necessary. Finally, it presents the newly arranged versions in their entirety.

The methods of rewriting discussed and employed in these three pieces are applicable to the collaborative pianist who seeks techniques for artfully discovering solutions to playing other difficult orchestral reductions or textures. This results in better phrasing, greater confidence, and the ability to healthily play long hours of rehearsals. The collaborative pianist need not strive to be a hero; rather, an artist.

³ *The Oxford Dictionary of Music* defines the term *schwungvoll* as both “full of go” and “vigorous.”

CHAPTER TWO

HANDEL'S "EMPIO, DIRÒ, TU SEI" FROM *GIULIO CESARE IN EGITTO*

The Pianist as *Repetitor*

Martin Katz wonderfully describes the facets of orchestration at the piano in his book *The Complete Collaborator*. Using musical examples to support his claims, he discusses ways to imitate a variety of instruments at the piano, his process of rewriting certain tricky passages to make them more playable, and his duty of knowing when to add essential orchestral parts to the piano vocal score that were omitted by the arranger.⁴ The following pages of this chapter focus on these first two points with the principal goal of achieving the same fluidity from the piano that is heard in the orchestra.

The orchestration of "Empio, dirò, tu sei" is fortunately not a highly complex one: it is comprised of only violins, low strings, and continuo. The Bärenreiter-Verlag piano vocal score (Plate BA 4078A) is similarly sparse and gives the impression of being challenging but playable. When one considers the *allegro* marking or the series of repeated notes throughout the piece, one may have cause to reevaluate the aria's playability. It is interesting to note the tempi of two well-known mezzo-sopranos. In a 1984 recording, Dame Janet Baker sings the aria at $\text{♩} = 112^5$ and Sarah Connolly performs it live in a 2005

⁴ Martin Katz, *The Complete Collaborator: The Pianist as Partner* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

⁵ George Frideric Handel, *Giulio Cesare*, DVD, English National Opera, conducted by Sir Charles Mackerras (London: RM Arts, 1984).

Glyndebourne production at $\text{♩} = 120$.⁶ Either of these tempi is frighteningly fast for the orchestral lightness and forward propulsion that the pianist must emulate.

The aria “Empio, dirò, tu sei” is a fine example of how the *Repetitor* must disabuse himself of the notion that he should play each note as printed. It also demonstrates how he must plan out his endurance level for an aria. For example, if he develops increasing tension in his muscles in the course of an aria or finds that he must add rubato in moments that are pianistically difficult, a rewrite is quite often necessary. As rubato is only allowed at very specific moments within the baroque style, one may not allow technical challenges to be an excuse for taking freedoms with the tempo. This *da capo* aria sung by the character Giulio Cesare superbly exemplifies when, why, and how a pianist should unapologetically rewrite all or portions of an aria in order to reduce tension and to preclude completely the use of technical rubato.

At first glance, this aria resembles the finale of nearly any Haydn or Scarlatti piano sonata. The pianist, having learned and performed such pieces during his earlier solo studies, thinks instinctively that he may need to devote a great deal of time to practicing a piece like this. The repeated notes look difficult yet pianistic enough to lure one into wanting to play them. To be clear, one should always attempt the orchestral reduction as originally published first, armed with the translation, knowledge of the opera, the full score and a sound recording. This earlier publication is, after all, a guide for what to personalize and alter later.

⁶ George Frideric Handel, *Giulio Cesare*, DVD, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, conducted by William Christie (East Sussex, UK: Opus Arte, 2005).

Having accomplished the first two measures of the introduction successfully—and possibly the third—the pianist is likely to begin developing tenseness in his muscles by the fourth bar. Below is a brief portion of the introduction from the Bärenreiter-Verlag score, on which all the comparisons are based:



Example 1. Measures 3-6. © Bärenreiter-Verlag Karl Vötterle GmbH & Co. KG, Kassel.

An observation of the full score reveals that Bärenreiter-Verlag has produced a very accurate piano vocal score:



The image shows a musical score for three parts: Tutti (Violini), CESARE., and Bassi. The score is written in a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a common time signature (C). The Tutti (Violini) part is in the upper staff, featuring a complex, rapid sequence of repeated notes. The CESARE. part is in the middle staff, showing a series of rests. The Bassi part is in the lower staff, featuring a steady, rhythmic pattern of repeated notes.

Example 2. Measures 3-5, Full Score. (Deutsche Händelgesellschaft)

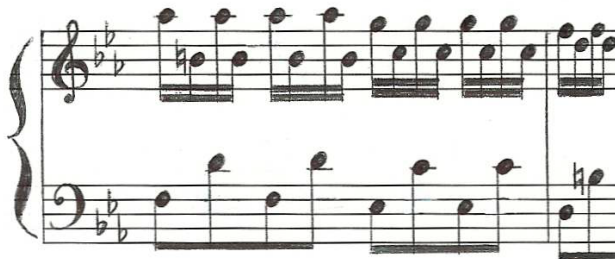
Measure six brings brief relief, but accomplishing the five preceding bars is the issue. In attempting to play the opening, one quickly learns that it is impossible to realize these repeated notes either at $\text{♩} = 112$ or 120. The arms will grow tense, the brow will furrow, and one's blood pressure will likely rise. When defeat is not an answer, what is there to do? Conductors at both university and professional levels value steady rhythm, flow and style far more than individual notes. It is therefore fully permissible to rewrite a score.

Two of the three questions posed earlier have now been answered: when and why can the score be altered? To be sure, there are other similar long phrases of repeated notes that need rewriting. This paper highlights one further example of this issue later. Currently, a solution must be found to the issue of altering measures 3-5 in a way that keeps the same rhythmic vitality and speed while minimizing tension.

Accompanied by a full score and a recording, one can allow hand position and fingering to guide in what is now pure trial and error. Below are two brainstorming possibilities of the third measure.



Example 3. First possibility, measures 3-4.



Example 4. Second possibility, measures 3-4.

One may extend these two oscillating possibilities from measure 3 to the end of measure 5 to test their feasibility. In defense of the first proposal is the discovery that it is quite comfortable to play throughout these three bars. The hand is continually alternating, with both the little finger and thumb maintaining the hand grounded and centered above the keys. The full texture and added chordal harmonies either between or below the two originally-printed notes is justified because it is marked *forte*. Furthermore, in addition to the upper and lower strings, there is always a harpsichord filling in the harmonies. The negative aspect of this idea is that the full texture of option 1 contrasts too greatly to

measure 6, which is quite playable as it currently exists. This sixth measure will sound overly thin.

A second proposal takes the highest and lowest notes of each pair of sixteenth notes and simply alternates them, adding no additional notes. Because it is thinner in texture, it transitions into measure 6 naturally. This is ironically technically more demanding. The thumb and little finger are alternating effortlessly in measure 3; however, as is evidenced at the beginning of measure 4, either the 3 and 5 fingers or the 2 and 4 fingers will alternate the F and D. The hand will feel unbalanced and weak when the thumb is abandoned.

Not content with both of the alternate arrangements presented so far, one must make a third attempt. The result is, in essence, a combination of the above arrangements with the original Bärenreiter-Verlag. Although the right hand plays three different notes in each four-note group, the rearrangement maintains the original first and last sixteenth notes in all of the groups.



Example 5. Third possibility, measures 3-4. (Peterman)

This third possibility keeps the right hand steady through the consistent use of all parts of the hand. It avoids playing dyads, although it adds a third pitch to each four-note set of sixteenths. This provides a texture that is neither too full nor too sparse. Because the hand is grounded and the notes have been rearranged

so as to provide ease of playing, the opening of this aria can be played over and over again—such as in staging rehearsals—while keeping constant eye contact on the conductor’s baton. Lastly, since it maintains the repeated pattern on the highest and most obvious notes, it gives the allusion of being unaltered. After three proposed alterations, it is clear that this third one greatly supersedes the rest.

This is the mark of a successfully facilitated passage of music: it allows the pianist to play with tension-free wrists and a relaxed posture while permitting him to easily imitate the orchestra’s sound and flow. The pianist can therefore play while giving full attention to the singer and conductor. Lastly, the score is now replete with very specific choices that the pianist has made; his technique benefits because he now practices and plays the exact same notes every time.

A second challenging passage occurs in the antepenultimate bar of the introduction—the seventh bar—and likewise in measure 36. In playing the original, one will inevitably experiment with several different fingerings before arriving at a satisfactory one. Below is the excerpt, along with my preferred fingering.



Example 6. Measures 7-8, with suggested fingerings.
© Bärenreiter-Verlag Karl Vötterle GmbH & Co. KG, Kassel.

This is an example of a passage that is achievable at the piano with some degree of accuracy in one's own practice time. It is done, however, at the expense of mental and physical taxation as the pianist braces for the uncomfortable downward arpeggio. As a further complication, the working collaborative pianist will seldom find it possible to practice or refresh every difficult passage of an aria or opera immediately before playing it, such as in staging rehearsals or piano dress rehearsals. In acknowledging that he can play such a measure with only a moderate degree of total accuracy in the comfort of his own home, he should resolve to rewrite it.

As in the first trial and error experiment of measures 3-6, the pianist begins by placing his hands on the keys to try possibilities. Can one rearrange these exact notes in a more natural order that permits playing with complete technical ease and accuracy? Will this order sound orchestral and fluid? It is all the more rewarding if this new order is performable with no mental taxation.

The pianist may find a solution on the first try. The right hand naturally plays four upward notes of the F minor arpeggio at the beginning of the measure; it likewise plays downward arpeggios consisting of four consecutive notes before any hand shift. This entirely precludes the alternating leaps down and up.



Example 7. Measures 7-8. (Peterman)

This facilitation provides an affirmative answer to each question posed at the outset: When is it acceptable to rewrite a score? Why is a rewrite necessary? How does one commence, test, and arrive at an alternative solution? Example 7 demonstrates that an arpeggio that ascends or descends for three or four consecutive notes is, for the *Repetitor*, a far better ordering of notes than the alternating leaps up and down as seen in Example 6. It highlights that rearranging a score often involves playing the exact same notes but in a different order. After its rewriting, this measure is incidentally so easy that it enables the pianist to completely allocate mental and physical efforts elsewhere. Indeed, he can effortlessly manage this passage at speeds much greater than $\text{♩} = 120$.

This chapter lastly discusses measures 51-53 on the final page of the aria. This passage contains similar instrumental writing as found in the introduction. Based on the “When, why, how?” formula, it behooves the pianist to rewrite all the repeated note gestures. As differentiated from the introductory bars, the singer is now singing above the accompaniment and the pianist must play it softly. It is easy to play this arrangement *forte*, but is it also practical at the *piano* dynamic? Knowing that one must play briskly and softly here, the author found his impetus for rewriting the entire aria in this passage.

The following examples show the original orchestral reduction of the Bärenreiter-Verlag, followed by a proposed facilitation.

Example 8. Measures 51-52. © Bärenreiter-Verlag Karl Vötterle GmbH & Co. KG, Kassel.

Example 9. Measures 51-52. (Peterman)

The facilitation in these two measures (Example 9) achieves the desired result. It is possible to play at a *piano* dynamic and with a light forward momentum that this aria demands. The singer and conductor will never feel restrained by hearing these two bars played in this manner.

The rearrangement of this orchestral reduction, presented from beginning to end in the appendix of this paper, contains very few alterations to the realized continuo accompaniment published by Bärenreiter-Verlag. At times, passing notes have been omitted and octaves have been added to the stringed bass line to provide more support and richness (see measures 14-16). The continuo

realization is a guide and each pianist will enjoy inventing his own style and flourish.

Summary

The selections above from “Empio, dirò, tu sei” provide very straightforward examples of a methodology for rewriting passages from arias or, when necessary, an aria in its entirety. In so doing, one possesses a score that now looks and is performable.

One can never forget that it is a musical transgression for the pianist to slow down or add undue weight when an aria becomes challenging in the accompaniment. It hinders not only the musical phrase, but also our musical partners. When the piano vocal score appears beyond imposing—if not impossible—the pianist is very much granted the right to alter the score to meet his needs. The formula “When, why, how?” is an excellent building block upon which one can compose alternate arrangements of orchestral reductions. The time one devotes to rearranging the score in the beginning will save much practice time and stress in the future, should he have to play the piece at a later date. It is thus invaluable to arrange orchestral reductions for our hands and abilities—not only for the current job, but for any future engagement as well.

CHAPTER THREE

HANDEL'S "FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN" FROM *MESSIAH*

The Pianist as Performer

The previous chapter on "Empio, dirò, tu sei" discusses the benefits that a *Repetitor* gains from rewriting a score, including enhanced fluidity and greater endurance for long hours of playing. In repetiting over the course of several weeks, he will not only play the aria, but the entire opera in piano dress rehearsals. It is therefore highly beneficial to customize any orchestral reduction to be technically realistic and mentally energizing.

This chapter examines the role of the choral pianist who both rehearses with the choir and performs on stage. To be clear, the opera *Repetitor* is also a performer. One distinction is that the opera *Repetitor* plays the accompaniment exclusively from day one, whereas the choral pianist balances between playing the accompaniment and the voice parts in every rehearsal. In other words, his attention to details in the accompaniment can be partially neglected for several rehearsals as he works with the conductor to play voice parts.

Fortunately, the choral pianist rehearsing such works as Handel's *Messiah*, Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast*, Verdi's *Requiem* or any other large multi-movement work is most likely engaged only to prepare them for the choir's imminent union with the orchestra—not to perform the work in its entirety on stage. However, some choral selections are so popular that they are often excerpted from the larger work and performed in choral concerts with piano accompaniment. The oratorio

Messiah is replete with many acclaimed and frequently excerpted choral pieces, including “And the glory of the Lord,” “Hallelujah,” and “For unto us a child is born.” It is therefore beneficial for the choral pianist to have a finely sculpted reduction of these three selections.

This chapter concerns itself with the jubilant chorus “For unto us a child is born.” As in the *Giulio Cesare* aria “Empio, dirò, tu sei,” the examples here are based on a Bärenreiter-Verlag edition, Plate BA 4012B. Although the oratorio is published by other companies such as Novello, Carus, Schirmer, and C.F. Peters, the Bärenreiter-Verlag 4012B is valuable because of its continuo realization, its orchestral indications, and its use of only English in the sung text.⁷

The choral pianist undergoes a musical transformation when he performs a piece originally composed for chorus and orchestra in concert. This applies above all to some of the more challenging choruses, namely, “For unto us a child is born.” On stage, he must rise above the status of rehearsal pianist and be a confident performer. It is a challenging feat, though, on two accounts: the choral pianist often receives little chance to play only the accompaniment in rehearsals and some scores have formidable orchestral reductions, regardless of the publisher.

To rectify this concern, the appendix of this paper reveals a wholly playable score of “For unto us a child is born” that is designed for the pianist who must present this piece with chorus on the concert stage. It is intended for one

⁷ The Bärenreiter-Verlag Plate 4012A contains both German and English, with the German text placed above the English. Otherwise, it is identical to Plate 4012B.

who has already gone through the rehearsal process and wishes to perform from a score that is accessible, has fewer page turns, gives ample support to the chorus and is enjoyable to play. Its ultimate purpose is to serve as a methodological guide for rendering any orchestral reduction—with an emphasis on choral works—worthy of performance with piano accompaniment.

Many phrases within this chorus serve as inspiration for its rewriting. Since the introduction and postlude both consist of two concurrent sixteenth-note melismas at the interval of a sixth moving in parallel motion, this is sufficiently daunting to warrant commencing the rewrite here. As both passages are similar, this chapter discusses only the introductory bars.

Andante allegro

Ob., Viol.,
Va.

f

Continuo
(Cemb., Vc.,
Violone, Fag.)

s. rip.

c. rip.

Example 10. Measures 1-6. © Bärenreiter-Verlag Karl Vötterle GmbH & Co. KG, Kassel.

It is tempting to play some of the lower sixteenth notes with the left hand during the quarter rests in the bass. At the piano, this is simply futile because of the brisk tempo. It is conversely too sparse if one were to play only the upper sixteenths with no supporting harmonies other than the bass. The pianist may therefore experiment playing occasional sixths, particularly at the beginning of each beat. For those with a wide finger span, it is easy to play sixths with 1 and 3 fingers in the right hand. Other instances can be found in which to re-insert sixths. To supply richness to the texture, it is also useful to add lower octaves to the bass line. Finally, with a modification of the final beat of measure six, one may be able to add an omitted trill in the violin, above the F-sharp.

Andante allegro

1

4

32
1
(tr)

Example 11. Measures 1-6. (Peterman)

This example demonstrates the necessity and even pleasure of crafting a piano vocal score that agrees not only with one's technical capabilities but also

with the properties of one's hand. A wide finger span permits its playing with the provided fingerings. Incidentally, this arrangement forces one to play with a non-legato attack that emulates the sprightliness of the orchestra; the added octaves in the left hand more accurately resemble the double bass playing along with the cello. If the above suggestions are uncomfortable or impossible for the reader, he has now observed a few methods for finding other playable solutions to various arrangers' orchestral reductions.

Following the prelude, the pianist encounters a rather facile accompaniment at the *piano* dynamic. Depending on the size of the choir, he will have to judge how softly to play. It is nevertheless of great importance for the pianist to perform bass patterns ♮ ♯ ♮ ♯ with sufficient sound to support the entire choir. A classic example can be found in measures 15-18. As in the introduction, it is highly recommended to add a lower octave in the bass to provide more resonance. It will sound like and visually resemble the stroke of a stringed bass. This is aesthetically more pleasing than a solitary bass note.

Just as in the *Giulio Cesare* piano reduction, the Bärenreiter-Verlag *Messiah* score provides continuo accompaniments that are indicated in a smaller size than the primary orchestral reduction. In my rewriting of the entire chorus, one may notice occasional differences between the Bärenreiter-Verlag continuo realization and my own. These alterations are of little consequence, however, since neither definitive and since the original poses little inconvenience to the pianist as performer. It is very helpful that their scores present continuo

accompaniments with smaller fonts as this inevitably influences how the pianist colors his playing. I have maintained this technique in my own reduction.

An orchestral *tutti*, including brass and timpani, occurs from measures 33-36 at the first proclamation “Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God.” Here, the pianist must play with regal sound and firm support. The sixteenth notes moving in parallel thirds can potentially hinder the tempo in this passage. However, there is ample opportunity to play a portion of these sixteenth notes with the left hand, unlike the introduction and postlude.

Example 12. Measures 33-36. © Bärenreiter-Verlag Karl Vötterle GmbH & Co. KG, Kassel.

Example 13. Measures 33-36. (Peterman)

Although one does not wish to blend harmonies in Handel, the pianist should apply judicious use of the pedal throughout beats three and four of measures 33 and 34 to assist in maintaining a *forte* volume. With assistance from the pedal, dividing the sixteenth notes between both hands enables the pianist to play this long passage with speed, endurance, and supportive volume. An additional advantage of rewriting these four bars is that the identical passage takes place two more times, albeit in different keys. One simply needs to transfer these markings to the later occurrences.

The final musical passage requiring discussion is the accompaniment below the extensive melismatic duet between the soprano and alto voices.

73

uns ein Kind ge - born, es ist uns ein Sohn ge -
us a Child is born, un - to us a Son is

74

The image shows a musical score for measures 74-77. It consists of five staves. The top two staves are for the vocal parts (Soprano and Alto/Tenors). The third and fourth staves are for the vocal parts with German lyrics: "ge - ben, es ist uns ein Sohn ge -", "giv - en, un - to us a Son is". The fifth staff is for the piano accompaniment, starting at measure 76. The piano part features a complex rhythmic pattern with many sixteenth notes in the right hand and a simpler bass line in the left hand.

Example 14. Measures 74-77. © Bärenreiter-Verlag Karl Vötterle GmbH & Co. KG, Kassel.

This passage is exceedingly difficult for both the upper two voices. The pianist is an essential component here in implementing a solid foundation and a rhythmic accuracy that neither grows slower nor faster. Furthermore, he has the additional responsibility of being in continuous visual contact with the conductor: no vexatious accompaniment may preclude the partnership between pianist and conductor. Therefore, he must seek to arrange an orchestral reduction that enables him to sit erect, to provide the utmost support for the choir, and to play with accuracy and commanding leadership.

The instinctive tendency in facilitating this passage is to play the melody (soprano) line and the bass, while perhaps including an occasional third below the soprano. Although I use a similar strategy with the parallel moving sixths in the

introduction, this remedy does not bolster the chorus with sufficient sound in this instance. Below is an initial facilitation of this passage:



Example 15. Measures 76-78. (Peterman)

As each pianist has a different technique and ability level, the individual must seek the means that accomplishes his goal most efficiently. In attempting the above reduction, for example, playing the melody with a regularly inserted lower third produces a labored sound and uncomfortable hand placement which together impede the goal of orchestral flow. As an alternative, subsequently consider neither doubling the soprano melisma nor that of the alto. Rather, experiment with oscillating thirds and a lower note in the chord. It permits the delivery of a steady stream of sixteenth notes—which occasionally double the soprano melisma—while also providing lower supporting harmonies.



Example 16. Measures 74-76. (Peterman)

Performing the above measures completely unencumbered now produces myriad positive results: the sound is enriched in the treble with the addition of a tone under the thirds; the consistent use of the thumb throughout these sixteenths anchors the right hand; the pianist may give complete focus to the choir and conductor. He now has the entire ability and control to play as quickly, loudly, or softly as the conductor wishes while the soprano and alto voices easily glide above the accompaniment. Thus, through several trials, a conclusive facilitation can be found that is specifically tailored to the hands, abilities, and performance standards of the pianist.

The piano vocal score of “For unto us a child is born” found in the appendix is the entire definitive version from which I play in concert. In addition to rewriting the score for performance, the four voice lines are comprised into one staff which highlights only one motive at any one time. As mentioned in the opening of this chapter, this reduction is for performance only; the pianist should play from the score that has been distributed to the choir during music-working rehearsals. Upon switching from the rehearsal score to the rewritten performance score, the conductor and choir give no concern to omitted notes in the piano accompaniment. To the contrary, the only change remarked upon is the fluidity, elegance, and confidence in the sound.

The reason for removing the auxiliary vocal lines is simply to minimize distracting page turns. Although a great deal of the suggested continuo realizations has been altered, these changes are of negligible consequence to the purposes of this paper.

Summary

When the choral pianist encounters an orchestral reduction, he shares many of the same preparatory duties as the opera *Repetitor*. This includes knowing the translation if applicable, being familiar with the orchestration, and possessing the knowledge needed to manufacture orchestral sounds at the piano. In sum, he must strive to fully prepare the singers for imminent rehearsals and performances with the orchestra.

Occasionally, a choral group performs a substantial orchestral work with piano accompaniment rather than with orchestra. In such an event, it is essential that the pianist dignifies the piece with as much orchestral sound, flow, and grace as possible. To fulfill this honorable task, it is indispensable to follow certain stratagems for developing a customized orchestral reduction.

In altering “For unto us a child is born,” it is useful to seek patterns and to create facilitations in which the fingering is the same for each statement within that pattern. If that is unsuitable, then he should discover another pattern. It is also vital that the pianist recognizes when he must add notes—such as lower bass octaves and inner harmonies—to enrich the texture and bolster the choir. Indeed, the larger the choir, the more applicable is this rule.

The pianist who embraces these responsibilities elevates himself from accompanist to performer. His attention is turned toward the choir and the conductor as he now plays with an orchestral sound and relaxed efficacy. Similarly, the audience enjoys witnessing a pianist who is performing with enthusiasm, effortlessness, and collaboration with his colleagues. In combining

skill and high performance standards, the pianist on stage becomes a veritable performer.

CHAPTER FOUR

WAGNER'S "DU BIST DER LENZ" FROM *DIE WALKÜRE*

The Pianist as Artist

Chapter Two referred to three essential points of Martin Katz's book *The Complete Collaborator*, which are immensely helpful to anyone studying and performing orchestral reductions. Indeed, many of the topics that Katz discusses are essential for the pianist who is preparing an opera such as Wagner's *Die Walküre*, or any portion thereof.

When mounting a production, all the musical staff, stage directors, and singers of an opera company benefit from using the same edition of a score. Therefore, the pianist may not be able to choose from which score he will play. His lack of choice notwithstanding, the pianist will nonetheless find it advantageous to compare and contrast other piano vocal scores in his preparation. The various arrangers may have unique insight into difficult accompaniments that the pianist could apply to the score from which he must play.

The evolution of the piano vocal score of *Die Walküre* is fascinating. The arranger Karl Klindworth (1830-1916) created three different versions of this music drama for the B. Schott's Söhne publishing company.⁸ First published in 1865, the initial Klindworth version resembles more a piano sonata of extraordinary difficulty than an orchestral reduction; furthermore, it pays little

⁸ All three scores published by B. Schott's Söhne are freely available at [http://imslp.org/wiki/Die_Walk%C3%BCre_WWV_86B_\(Wagner,_Richard\)](http://imslp.org/wiki/Die_Walk%C3%BCre_WWV_86B_(Wagner,_Richard)).

heed to the possibility of rendering all the notes in the timeframe permitted.

Klindworth later made many notable facilitations to this score in preparation for his second version, in 1900. Many of these facilitations are almost humorous, in comparison to the 1865 score. Below is a comparison of measures 38-39 in the opening of *Die Walküre*. It presents one radical revision that Klindworth made in 1900 to his earlier 1865 score.

The image displays two musical staves for piano, comparing the 1865 and 1900 editions of measures 38-39 from Act 1 of *Die Walküre*. The top staff, labeled '1865', shows a complex texture with sixteenth-note runs in the right hand and a dense bass line. It includes dynamic markings *fp*, *f*, and *fp*, and features several sixths (marked '6') and a right-hand (R.H.) section. The bottom staff, labeled '1900', shows a significantly simplified version of the same measures. The right hand is reduced to a few chords and notes, while the left hand maintains a similar rhythmic pattern but with fewer notes. Dynamic markings *fp*, *f*, and *fp* are present, along with a 'P.' marking and an asterisk (*) at the end of the piece.

Example 17. Measures 38-39, Act 1 of *Die Walküre*. They show the degree to which Klindworth further reduced his own arrangement between 1865 and 1900. (B. Schott's Söhne)

His final version of 1908 is still another attempt to resemble the orchestral sound while allowing further accommodations for the abilities of the pianist.

Arguments can be made which score—the 1900 or 1908—is more conducive to the pianist. Upon visual examination, in many ways the 1908 score appears more

a fine-tuning of his craft at piano vocal reductions than an entirely new edition of the score. It consists primarily of minute revisions to the 1900 score that allow for more comfortable hand positions and fingering. The juxtaposition of the three figures in Example 18 from the first bar of Act 1 shows that Klindworth made significant alterations in preparation of his 1900 score. It is clear, therefore, that Klindworth is continually making alterations to each edition of his score in order to truly combine artistry with practicality.

Stürmisch.
Stürmisch.
Stürmisch.

1865
1900
1908

Example 18. Measure 1, Act 1 of *Die Walküre*. Three different versions by Karl Klindworth in 1865, 1900, and 1908. (B. Schott's Söhne)

Such evolution in just one arranger's published orchestral reductions of a single opera demonstrates that the collaborative pianist is completely justified in altering an operatic vocal score to make it realistic. It is also evidence that the pianist should compare other editions, when they exist, for various interpretations of the score.

In 1904, G. Schirmer reissued the B. Schott's Söhne score of 1900 into the United States.⁹ A Dover score exists too; however, it is a reprint of G. Schirmer's 1904 score.¹⁰ Since Schott's score of 1900 is the source for all these various reissues, the author will focus on it in all musical examples, unless otherwise specified. The front page of the G. Schirmer states that it is a vocal score "In a facilitated arrangement by Karl Klindworth."¹¹ This is evidence enough of the necessity, stemming from a much earlier period, to create arrangements that are more accommodating to the pianist. The table below summarizes the development and republications of Karl Klindworth's *Die Walküre* piano vocal scores.

Evolution of Karl Klindworth's *Die Walküre* Piano Vocal Scores

Publisher	Year	Plate	Notes
B. Schott's Söhne	1865	17995	Original score
B. Schott's Söhne	1900	26590	Greatly revised from 1865
B. Schott's Söhne	1908	27752	Somewhat revised from 1900
G. Schirmer, Inc.	1904	37218	License reissue of 26590
Dover Publications, Inc.	2005	44324-8	Reprint of 1904 Schirmer

Table 1.

⁹ Richard Wagner, *Die Walküre* (Mainz: B. Schott's Söhne, 1900; reissue, New York: G. Schirmer, Inc., 1904), Title Page.

¹⁰ Richard Wagner, *Die Walküre* (New York: G. Schirmer Inc., 1904; reprint, New York: Dover Publications, Inc. 2005), Title Page.

¹¹ Richard Wagner, *Die Walküre* (Mainz: B. Schott's Söhne, 1900; reissue, New York: G. Schirmer, Inc., 1904), Title Page.

Of the three pieces discussed in this document, “Du bist der Lenz” from Act 1, scene ii of *Die Walküre* demands the greatest re-evaluation of the piano vocal score. Transitioning seamlessly from the previous aria, “Winterstürme wichen dem Wonnemond,” Sieglinde here proclaims her ecstatic joy upon being reunited at last with her long-lost brother Siegmund. In this extremely rapturous aria of love and spring, the pianist’s primary concern in the opening is what to make of the sixteenth notes buried within the thick texture of the orchestra. Combined with the many rests that punctuate the sixteenth notes of the left hand, both of these concerns can unduly inhibit the flow and mood of this euphoric piece.

The image shows a musical score for three staves. The top staff is the vocal line with lyrics in German and English. The middle staff is the right hand of the piano accompaniment, and the bottom staff is the left hand. The left hand has a very dense texture of sixteenth notes. Dynamics include *f*, *p*, and *cresc.*

Du bist der Lenz nach dem ich ver-
 Thou art the spring that I have so

Example 19. Measures 4-6. (B. Schott’s Söhne)

The downbeat of this passage is *tutti* orchestra, with the viola sixteenth notes immediately following. Klindworth has prepared us for an inauspicious beginning: the first measure of the above example is a terribly unfavorable arrangement of notes in the left hand; the following measures are admittedly quite manageable when the sixteenth notes are divided between both hands. Sufficient

use of the pedal will no doubt aid in sustaining the flow of these opening bars of this B. Schott's Söhne score. However, the first measure of this example (Measure 4) is so grand on beats one and two that the order of the viola notes in our orchestral reduction is of no consequence. These notes are not heard with any clarity, neither with piano accompaniment nor with orchestra. The essential duty is to play any order of sixteenth notes that encourages proper momentum.

Klindworth agrees. It is useful to examine the 1865 B. Schott's Söhne edition of this fourth bar and compare it with his arrangements from 1900 (above) and the later 1908 version. Klindworth clearly recognizes the struggles in beat one of this bar, because all three of his editions are different.

The image displays two side-by-side musical score excerpts for Measure 4. Both excerpts feature a vocal line at the top with the lyrics 'Du bist der' and a piano accompaniment below. The left excerpt represents the 1865 B. Schott's Söhne edition, showing a vocal line with a long note on 'Du' and a piano accompaniment with sixteenth notes and rests. The right excerpt represents the 1908 version, which includes a 'Ped.' (pedal) marking and an asterisk in the bass line, indicating a specific performance instruction or modification.

Example 20. Measure 4. (1865 and 1908 B. Schott's Söhne)

In measure four and following, the sixteenth rests pose as much a problem as does the viola line. The attempt to observe the rhythmic value of these sixteenth rests results in devoting too much energy to each individual beat. For the very long and horizontal arch of this phrase, a solution is to modify the left hand pattern in bars 4-8, 12, and 14 so as to always have a finger in the left hand

playing on each and every beat. This is easily accomplished by reordering the notes in convenient patterns that fit comfortably in the hands. As the right hand is doing very little, some notes are relegated to the right hand.

Example 21. Measures 4-6. (Peterman)

The dividing of these sixteenth notes among the left and right hands is nothing revolutionary. The choice to consistently add an invented—albeit relevant—note on each beat in the left hand simply for the purposes of facilitation may give pause to the reader. If one desires more justification for this action, an observation of the full score shows that some instrument in the string section is always playing a new note on each beat, primarily the cello. Example 22 below shows measures four through six. However, when extended another two measures, the cello part is seen continuing in steady quarter notes.

The image shows a musical score for measures 4-6 of the aria "Du bist der Lenz" by Carl Friedrich Peters. The score is arranged for a full orchestra and soloist. The instruments and their parts are:

- Viol. I & II:** Violins I and II, playing sustained notes with dynamics *f*, *p*, and *cresc.*
- Br.:** Brass section, playing a rhythmic pattern of sixteenth notes with dynamics *f*, *dim.*, *p*, and *cresc.*
- Sl.:** Soloist, singing the lyrics "Du bist der Lenz, nach dem ich ver-".
- Vel.:** Violoncello, playing sustained notes with dynamics *f* and *p*, and a *cresc.* marking.
- K. B.:** Keyboard, playing a bass line with dynamics *f* and *p*.

Example 22. Measures 4-6, Full Score. (C.F. Peters)

In his book *The Complete Collaborator*, Martin Katz confronts one of the challenges within “Du bist der Lenz” very directly. It happens to be the most exposed spot of the aria for the pianist, namely, measures 16-19. The woodwinds have very sustained and unmelodic notes while the upper strings play an extended passage of rhapsodic sixteenth notes. In his opening remarks on this passage, Katz states, “With orchestral reductions we must always balance learning time against effect provided. In many cases, *anything* busy of a scalar nature will provide the identical effect.”¹² Indeed, in the sweep of sound created by violins, the musical effect of the whirlwind of spring is more important than the exact notes. Below is an excerpt of Klindworth’s arrangement, complete with the very precise notes of violins I and II playing in unison.

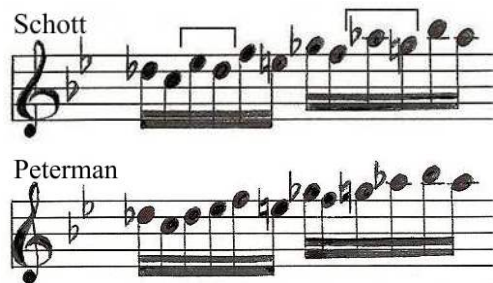
¹² Katz, 207.

Example 23. Measures 16-17. (B. Schott's Söhne)

Katz and the present author both independently arrive at the need to rewrite this passage, and for identical reasons. Different, however, is the manner in which we realize the desired artistic effect. By omitting the first F in the right hand, one can keep all of the notes of bar 16 in their original order. This allows the right hand to put a thumb on the Ab, thus giving the hand a more favorable position from which to commence this long phrase. In addition, I remove the Eb of beat three to get a clean start up the scale. There is plenty to mask this omission: the soprano is on a high F and the left hand is playing a rich chord underneath. In further support of this rewrite, an Eb exists in the bass on beat three, so the harmony is not affected. The rewritten passage therefore can be performed guiltlessly.

Example 24. Measures 16-17. (Peterman)

With exception of the sixteenth rest on the downbeat, Katz indicates that he plays sixteenth notes throughout measure 16 without adding rests.¹³ To accomplish this, he alters the scale on beat three in a way that ends on an Eb on the downbeat of measure 17, as opposed to a C. My aim in measure 17 is to maintain the original first note of each beat in the right hand, C-Db-Gb, and to create a consistent pattern around these. The first beat of measure 17, with no need of altering, becomes a rubric for the following two beats (Example 24). As seen above, the left hand plays one note, thereby allowing an easy continuation of the pattern on beats two and three. Example 25 shows the simple adjustment that liberates it from the etude-like writing.



Example 25. Measure 17, beats two and three.

Unfortunately, the instrumental writing seen in beats two and three of measure 17 is a brief allusion to a much longer passage that begins in bar 27 and continues until bar 34. This is certainly the most precarious writing within the entire aria. The pianist who seeks to be a true artist must find a means of performing this foreboding passagework with ease and grace. Furthermore, his

¹³ Ibid., 208.

playing must exude the joy of Sieglinde's text as she rejoices in having laid eyes upon a member of her own clan—her brother—after being friendless for such a long time. Having set these goals, there is no choice but to rewrite each of these figures.

As shown in Example 26, the myriad sixteenth notes that leap up and step down from measures 28-34 are played by the viola.

Gr. Fl. I, II.
Hob. I, II.
I. in B.
Klar.
III. in A.
I.
Fag. I, II.
III.
Hr. I, II.
in E.
I.
Viol.
II.
Br.
Sl.
Vel.
K. B.

dieb kannst' ich deutlich und klar: als mein'

Example 26. Measures 28-31, Full Score. (C.F. Peters)

One can imagine them as increasingly joyous outbursts, which attain their goal at last in measure 35. Because many of these gestures are similar in

construction to what is encountered in measure 17, one can use a similar tactic to perform these sixteenth notes acceptably. Indeed, a simple reordering of the notes already provided will, quite literally, unravel every technical obstacle found within these eight bars. Focusing on upwards motion towards the left hand thumb, it is beneficial to maximize the number of ascending notes, and minimize any downward rotation toward the pinky. Having only five fingers for each of the sextuplets, one note must go down. The juxtaposition below demonstrates as well as any further explanation the clarity and ease that this reordering brings.

The image shows a musical score for measures 27-30. The top staff is the vocal line with lyrics: "Doch dich kannt ich deut" and "When thou cam est all". The bottom two staves are the piano accompaniment. The right hand has sextuplets of eighth notes, and the left hand has sextuplets of sixteenth notes. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 3/4. The piano part uses fingering numbers 1-5 for the sextuplets.

Example 27. Measures 27-30. (B. Schott's Söhne)

This image shows a reordering of the piano part from Example 27. The lyrics are "Doch dich kannt ich deut". The piano part features sextuplets in both hands. The right hand sextuplets use fingering 2, 5, 4, 3, 3, 3. The left hand sextuplets use fingering 5, 5, 5, 4, 4, 4. The key signature and time signature remain the same as in Example 27.

Example 28. Measures 27-30. (Peterman)

The viola line is now more idiomatic for the piano. With generous application of the pedal, the alternating upward leaps and downward steps of the original viola writing will never be missed. It is worth mentioning that the viola line, as played by violists, is also difficult. Yet they are playing only these notes and have no preoccupation with the bass line or soaring melody above, unlike the pianist. The rewriting of the viola figures is therefore justified because it is the character of their notes—not the notes themselves—that is our concern. The rewrite demonstrated in Example 28 enhances one’s ability to control and deliver swells of sound in the left hand. This subsequently serves to intensify the passion of Sieglinde’s text. The goal has been accomplished: these bars can now be performed with great finesse, and all out of service to the text.

The final item to consider when rewriting “Du bist der Lenz” is how to conclude it. As composers began to write more through-composed arias that were seamlessly woven into the fabric of the surrounding music, precise endings often appeared less clear. This ending, for example, quickly begins modulating to Gb.

The image shows a musical score for three staves. The top staff is the vocal line, with lyrics "er - sah. the friend." written below it. The middle and bottom staves are for the piano accompaniment. The piano part includes dynamic markings such as *f* and *cresc.*, and fingerings like "1 3" and "1 2". The score concludes with a fermata and a cross symbol.

Example 29. Measures 52-54. (B. Schott’s Söhne)

If one were playing this as part of the larger scene, then the answer is already provided: simply play on. However, when playing this bar as part of the isolated aria, a suitable conclusion to this piece must be created.

The first possibility is to play a very firm Db chord under “sah” and to release the chord with the singer. This lacks creativity and seems an abrupt ending to such a rapturous aria. Rather, one might resolve to play the final instrumental gesture in the treble, cadencing after the singer on the downbeat of the following measure. This instrumental figure is the same motive sung by Siegmund in the opening of his preceding aria, “Winterstürme wichen dem Wonnemond.” Identified as the “Love and Spring Motive” in the 1908 B. Schott’s Söhne edition of *Die Walküre*,¹⁴ I see no more appropriate way to end this aria, while adding an exciting arpeggio embellishment for the left hand.

Example 30. Measures 52-54. (Peterman)

¹⁴ Richard Wagner, *Die Walküre* (Mainz: B. Schott’s Söhne, 1908), Preface.

Summary

The pianist as artist endeavors to discover the playable in the midst of the seemingly impossible. Using the formation of his hands as a guide, as well as trial and error, solutions usually lie within the very notes that already exist in the orchestral reduction. In the most precarious moments of “Du bist der Lenz,” imposing passages can be made quite facile by simply switching the order of the notes, or even adding notes. The artist’s creative spirit is shown, too, as he must invent an appropriate conclusion to the aria. No two persons will develop the same solution. Yet, when the pianist resolves strategically to rewrite an aria of this caliber in a manner that allows him to play with superb flow and service to the sung word, he attains the stature of an artist.

CONCLUSION

Every pianist owes a debt of gratitude toward those who have transcribed orchestral scores into arrangements for piano. Without this published framework, the collaborative pianist would have a daunting task indeed. These scores are not immutable works of art, however, and one must scrutinize them when practicing and performing them. “One basic assumption in all this,” Robert Spillman states, “is that these are arrangements and can therefore be altered without a feeling of sacrilege.”¹⁵

The methodology one employs to rewrite orchestral reductions into effective and transparent piano scores is determined not only by creativity, but by physical factors, such as technical facility and hand size. Although rearranging orchestral reductions is an experience unique to each individual, it is universally “imperative to know the orchestration *before* beginning to practice.”¹⁶ Following a study of the full score, the pianist can begin to experiment with ways of further customizing the orchestral reduction.

The three orchestral reductions highlighted in this paper afford many opportunities for the collaborative pianist to exploit his skill for creatively rearranging piano vocal scores. The styles of Handel and Wagner are certainly quite different, yet many of the basic principles of rewriting are applicable across musical genres. Such examples include removing notes in quick passages of

¹⁵ Spillman, 184.

¹⁶ Katz, 159.

parallel thirds or sixths, re-ordering notes in uncomfortable musical gestures buried within the texture of the score, and emphasizing larger blocks of harmony that have priority over the surrounding minutiae.

This paper puts forth a methodology for tastefully rewriting orchestral reductions of substantial difficulty. Its goal is for the reader to procure tools for facilitating current or future rewrites of scores that impede his performance of the piece. Examining this craft from the points-of-view of an opera *Repetitor*, chorus pianist, and performer-collaborator, the need to rewrite or facilitate a piano vocal score is an ever-present part of the profession. A solid arsenal of reduction methods ensures a high degree of professionalism as the pianist produces the sounds and flow of an orchestra. Having very deliberately customized and rewritten a piece, the collaborative pianist will play with elegance, confidence, and artistry.

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APPENDIX A
PIANO VOCAL SCORES

Allegro

Empio, dirò, tu sei

G.F. Handel
arr. Jeremy Peterman

Musical notation for measures 1-2. The piece is in C major, 3/4 time. The first system shows a piano introduction with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The right hand features a rapid sixteenth-note pattern, while the left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

Musical notation for measures 3-4. The right hand continues with the sixteenth-note pattern, and the left hand maintains the eighth-note accompaniment.

Musical notation for measures 5-6. The right hand continues with the sixteenth-note pattern, and the left hand maintains the eighth-note accompaniment.

Musical notation for measures 7-8. The right hand continues with the sixteenth-note pattern, and the left hand maintains the eighth-note accompaniment. Measure 7 includes fingerings 2, 1, and 5. Measure 8 includes a first ending bracket and the instruction *l.h.* (left hand).

Musical notation for measures 9-10. The right hand continues with the sixteenth-note pattern, and the left hand maintains the eighth-note accompaniment. Measure 9 includes the lyrics "Em - pio, di - rò __, tu __ sei," and measure 10 includes the lyrics "to - gli-ti a gli oc-ch mie, sei". The dynamic is piano (*p*).

10

tut - to cru del - tà, sei tut - to cru - del tà

12

This system contains measures 12 and 13. It features a vocal line with lyrics, a piano accompaniment in the right hand, and a bass line in the left hand. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The piano accompaniment consists of chords in the right hand and a simple bass line in the left hand.

14

This system contains measures 14 and 15. It features a piano accompaniment in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The piano accompaniment consists of chords in the right hand and a simple bass line in the left hand.

, sei tut - to cru - del-tà;

16

f

This system contains measures 16 and 17. It features a vocal line with lyrics, a piano accompaniment in the right hand, and a bass line in the left hand. The piano accompaniment consists of chords in the right hand and a simple bass line in the left hand. A forte (*f*) dynamic marking is present in measure 17.

Em - pio, di-rò, tu sei,

19

This system contains measures 18 and 19. It features a vocal line with lyrics, a piano accompaniment in the right hand, and a bass line in the left hand. The piano accompaniment consists of chords in the right hand and a simple bass line in the left hand.

em - pio, di - rò, tu sei, to - gli - ti a - gli oc - chi miei, sei

22

tut - to cru - del - tà

24

sei tut - to cru - del - tà:

27

em - pio, di - rò, tu sei, to - gli - ti a - gli oc - chi mie - i,

30

em-piodirò, tu sei, sei tut - to cru - del tà

31

Detailed description: This system contains measures 31, 32, and 33. The vocal line begins with a melodic phrase in measure 31, followed by a rest in measure 32 and a continuation in measure 33. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the right hand and a steady bass line in the left hand.

sei tut - to cru - del -

34

Detailed description: This system contains measures 34, 35, and 36. The vocal line continues with a melodic phrase in measure 34, a rest in measure 35, and a continuation in measure 36. The piano accompaniment maintains the rhythmic pattern from the previous system.

tà, sei tut - to cru - del-tà.

37

f

Detailed description: This system contains measures 37, 38, and 39. The vocal line has a melodic phrase in measure 37, a rest in measure 38, and a continuation in measure 39. The piano accompaniment features a dynamic marking of *f* (forte) in measure 38, with a more active right hand in the piano part.

40

fine

Detailed description: This system contains measures 40, 41, and 42. The vocal line is silent throughout. The piano accompaniment continues with a rhythmic pattern, ending with a *fine* marking in measure 42.

Non è da re quel cor, che do - na - si al ri - gor,

p

43

Non è da re quel cor, che do - na - si - ri - gor, che in

45

sen non ha pie - tà, che in sen non ha pie - tà

47

, che in sen non ha pie - tà;

49

non è da re quel cor che do - na - si al ri - gor, che in

51

sen non ha pie - tà

53

55

che in sen non ha pie - tà.

57

da capo

Andante allegro

For Unto Us A Child Is Born

G.F. Handel
arr. Jeremy Peterman

Measures 1-3 of the piano introduction. The music is in G major and common time. Measure 1 starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The right hand features a complex rhythmic pattern with triplets and sixteenth notes, while the left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Measure numbers 1, 1, and 3 are indicated above the right-hand staff.

Measures 4-6 of the piano introduction. Measure 4 begins with a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 6 ends with a first ending bracket labeled "32" and "1 (tr)". The left hand continues with its accompaniment, including a half note chord in measure 5.

Measures 7-10 of the piano introduction, including the first vocal line. The vocal line begins in measure 7 with the lyrics "For un-to us a Child is born, un-to us a Son is gi-ven, un-to". The piano accompaniment continues with a piano (*p*) dynamic. Measure numbers 7, 8, 9, and 10 are indicated below the left-hand staff.

Measures 11-14 of the piano introduction, including the second vocal line. The vocal line continues with the lyrics "us a Son is gi-ven. For un-to us a Child is for un-to us a Child is born". The piano accompaniment continues with a piano (*p*) dynamic. Measure numbers 11, 12, 13, and 14 are indicated below the left-hand staff.

15

gi-ven. For un-to us a Child is | For un-to us a Child is born

18

21

For un-to us un-to us a Son is giv-a Son is gi-ven. And the go-vern-ment shall

24

be u-pon His shoul - - der, and the gov-ern-ment shall be u-pon His shoul - -

27

der, and the gov-ern-ment shall be u-pon His shoul-der and His name shall be call-ed

30

Won - der-ful, *r.h.* Coun - se - lor,

l.h.

33

The Might - y God, The Ev - er - last - ing Fa - ther, The

red. * *red.* *

35

Prince of Peace! Un-to us a Child is born un-to us a Child is born.

p

37

Un-to us a Child is born. Un-to us a Son is

40

gi-ven and the gov-ern-ment shall be up-on His shoul - der and the gov - ern-ment shall

43

be u - pon His shoul - - der: And His name, and His name shall be call - ed

f

46

Wond - der - ful, *r.h.* Coun - se - lor,
l.h.
 49 *Red.* * *Red.* *
 The Might - y God, The Ev - er last - ing Fa - ther,
 51
 Prince of Peace! un - to us a Child is | For un - to us a Child is | For un - to
 53 *p*
 us a Child is For un - to us a Child is born
 56

59

A Son is gi - ven. And the gov - ern - ment shall

62

be, shall be up - on _____ His shoul | And the government shall be, shall be up - on _____ His

65

shoul | And the gov - ern - ment shall be up - on His shoulder: And His name shall be call - ed

68

Won - der - ful, Coun - se - lor,

f *l.h.* *l.h.*

Red. *

Musical score for measures 70-71. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has lyrics: "The Might - y God The Ev - er - last - ing Fa - ther,". The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a simpler bass line in the left hand.

Musical score for measures 72-73. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has lyrics: "Prince of Peace! Un - to us a Child is born, un - to". The piano accompaniment continues with the eighth-note pattern in the right hand.

Musical score for measures 74-75. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has lyrics: "us a Child is born". The piano accompaniment continues with the eighth-note pattern in the right hand.

Musical score for measures 76-77. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is silent. The piano accompaniment continues with the eighth-note pattern in the right hand.

un - to us, a Son is giv-en, and the gov-ernment, the gov-ernment shall

78

be up - on His shoul | and the gov - ern - ment, the gov - ern - ment shall

81

be - up - on His shoul-der, and His name shall be call - ed

83

Won - der-ful, Coun - se - lor,

85

Ped. * Ped. *

Musical score for measures 87-88. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has lyrics: "The Might-y God, The Ev - er - last - ing Fa - ther, The". The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a simpler bass line in the left hand.

Musical score for measures 89-91. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has lyrics: "Prince of Peace, The Ev - er - last - ing Fa - ther, The Prince of Peace!". The piano accompaniment continues with the eighth-note pattern in the right hand.

Musical score for measures 92-94. This system shows the piano accompaniment for measures 92-94. The right hand continues with the eighth-note pattern, while the left hand has a more active bass line.

Musical score for measures 95-96. This system shows the piano accompaniment for measures 95-96. The right hand continues with the eighth-note pattern, and the left hand has a more active bass line.

Musical score for measures 97-99. This system shows the piano accompaniment for measures 97-99. The right hand continues with the eighth-note pattern, and the left hand has a more active bass line.

Du bist der Lenz

Richard Wagner
arr. Jeremy Peterman

1

p *cresc.*

3 Du bist der Lenz nach

f *p* *r.h.*

5 1 1 3

6 dem ich ver - lang - - - te in fro - - - sti - gen

cresc. *r.h.* *f* *dim.*

6 5 2 1 5 3

9 Win - ters Frist. Dich

p *p* *p*

grüss - - - te mein Herz mit hei - li - gem

12

Grau'n als dein Blick zu - erst mir er -

15

blüh - - - te. Frem-des nur sah ich Von

18

je freund-los war mir das Na - he, als hätt' ich nie es ge-

21

grüss - - - te mein Herz mit hei - - li - gem

12

Grau'n als dein Blick zu - erst mir er -

15

blüh - - - te. Frem-des nur sah ich von

18

je freund-los war mir das Na - he, als hätt' ich nie es ge-

21

bin, hell wie der Tag taucht' es mir

39

auf, wie Tö - - nen - der Schall schlug's an mein

43

Ohr, als in fro - stig ö - der Frem - de zu erst ich den

47

Freund er sah!

51

APPENDIX B
LETTER OF PERMISSION

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FROM: Malecki, Katharina

Tuesday, October 2, 2012 6:31 AM

TO: Jeremmy Peterman

Sehr geehrter Herr Peterman,
vielen Dank für die freundliche Anfrage.
Wir sind gerne bereit, Ihnen eine kostenlose Genehmigung für den Abdruck der von Ihnen angefragten Takte aus den bei uns geschützten Ausgaben

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Wir wünschen Ihnen viel Erfolg und verbleiben

mit freundlichen Grüßen

Katharina Malecki

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Von: Jeremy Peterman [mailto:schwungmann@yahoo.com]
Gesendet: Dienstag, 2. Oktober 2012 05:39
An: Malecki, Katharina
Betreff: Application for a Bärenreiter Reprint License

Sehr geehrte Frau Malecki,

Ich heiße Jeremy Peterman und bin Student im Termin des Doktoratprogramms in "Collaborative Piano" hier bei Arizona State University in den U.S.A. Ich schreibe Ihnen wegen meiner letzte Dokument. Das Thema ist der Kunst des Klavierauszugs und wie der Oper/Chorrepititor diesen Klavierauszugs echt einfach und zuversichtlich spielen kann. Manchmal muß der Pianist "Facilitations" machen; In meinemDokument schreibe ich wo und warum ich einige kunstvolle Facilitations gemacht habe.

Als Beispiele, ich beschreibe die Arie aus Händels *Giulio Cesare* "Empio, dirò, tu sei" und den berühmte Chor "For Unto Us a Child is Born" aus *Messias* und wie man diesen zwei Stücke einfach spielen kann, wegen kleine Facilitations. Weil ich diesen zwei Werke nur von der Bärenreiter Edition spiele, ich bitte Erlaubnis einige Takte in meinemDokument zu zeigen. Ich habe diesen Takte im Formular geschrieben.

Vielen Dank für Ihre Aufmerksamkeit,

Jeremy Peterman

Reply to Malecki, Katharina

Send