

The Oxford Leadership Prize 2007 - Submission details

“How will the successful leaders of tomorrow address the challenge of sustainability?”

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Registration Number: 143

‘Vincer se stesso è la maggior vittoria’

Instrumentation: Tenor; Vln; Vla; Hn; 2VC

Transposing score

Approximate duration: 5’ 20”

A note on the piece:

My submission seeks to deal with questions of leadership and sustainability in an artistic sense. Therefore, while the text makes clear my conclusions on the matter, it is to be considered more moralising in an operatic sense than informative in the sense of a focussed academic essay. The principal medium I use to this end is the musical portrayal of the states of mind of a protagonist as he interprets and reinterprets his calling. Therefore, I do not claim to depict the two visions themselves but rather the way in which the protagonist experiences them. Likewise, the section preceding the first vision portrays the gradual shift from a blissful ignorance (repetitious to the point of banality and at least seemingly tonal¹) to uncomfortable disillusionment by metrical changes and the discovery of the first musical quotation within the existing pattern.

The first vision is felt to be frantic and overwhelming, resulting in a hasty call to arms whereas the second is met in a more measured way, as the protagonist reconciles himself to the true content of his calling and the musical language of voice and ensemble coalesce and extending to a mutually supportive musical texture.

Quotation is an important part of the work, indeed the title is borrowed from an Handel opera of the same name written in 1707. It can be approximately translated as ‘overcoming one’s passions is the greatest victory’: a very pertinent aphorism indeed. I think the need for self-reflection and discipline is felt at least as strongly today as it ever has been and that these are imperative qualities of successful leaders. This does not mean to suggest that Francesco Silvani² or I think passions necessarily evil, only subject to scrutiny. The two parallel textual quotes (italicised in the text given below) both come from *Fears in solitude* by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 1798. I was struck by the concision with which the poet summarised two states of mind at the relevant points in the text to conclude the sense of the musings that precede each one. My text is also designed to depict the change in attitude, though on a more obvious - that is less artistic - level. In the first vision a heavy emphasis is placed on the word ‘I’ and the visionary betrays his egotistical desire for glory. In the second, the use of first person pronouns is minimised and the subject admits to having to ‘revise’ his earlier attitude.

There are also two musical quotations of importance, and these again highlight

¹ The tonal make up of the piece is built on a mode with self-replicates at the 5th (rather than the octave as in most modes including the major and minor scales) and comprises the interval pattern [ST,T,T, T].

² The author upon whose work the libretto for Handel’s opera is based

the disparity of the protagonist's two states. The first which was derived from the initial banal pattern is 'The Unanswered Question' from Charles Ives' work of the same name.³ In Ives' piece this question is set against the aura of timelessness provided by a slow string chorale and the wind section repeatedly fail to 'answer' it in any convincing manner. Likewise it is employed here, first to present his concerns prior to the first vision and later to question the success of the protagonist's efforts. The second quotation is from the well-known hymn tune 'Channel of peace' to which a prayer of St. Francis is set. It is upon the life of St. Francis of Assisi that the plot of this short piece is based. My musical adaptations of the tune appear in the conclusion to emphasise the altruistic attitude of St. Francis (and our matured protagonist), although its intervallic content is prepared in the vocal part earlier on suggesting that the capacity was there even before the conscious decision on the basis of the second vision.

The Text:

A Vision (I):

A vision! a vision from God! a call to duty!
I will lead, I will lead men, I will know glory.

Wake up this can't go on!
What a waste, what a terrible waste of lives, of opportunities and resources.
Here are my demands:

LOVE EACH OTHER and act accordingly
LOVE THE EARTH and act accordingly

Failure to comply will not be looked on kindly.
We've no more time left to waste.
The problem's out of control.

*My God! it is a melancholy thing
For such a man, who would full fain preserve
His soul in calmness, yet perforce must feel
For all his human brethren - O my God!*

A Vision (II):

A vision, a re-vision, Amen.
I will lead, but by example, not for my own ends.

The principles are good, but I must live with them myself,
And [be] grateful, that by nature's quietness
And solitary musings, all my heart
Is soften'd, and made worthy to indulge
Love, and the thoughts that yearn for human kind.

³ The pitch content is most clearly represented in the second 'and act accordingly' to show how the question has not been answered by the protagonist's zeal although the original compound-time rhythm is most faithfully present in the initial motivic work bb. 41-44.

'Vincer se stesso è la maggior vittoria'

Mark Gotham

$\text{♩} = 56$; Nobly

Violin

Viola

Horn in F

Tenor

Violoncello

Violoncello

7

Vln.

Vla.

Hn.

T.

Vc.

Vc.

11

Vln.

Vla.

Hn.

T.

Vc.

Vc.

mf

mf

mf

mp

f

mp

f

mp

f

pizz.

arco

arco

16

Vln. *mp*

Vla. *f*

Hn.

T.

Vc. *mp*

Vc. *subito mp*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 16, 17, and 18. The Violin I part has rests in measures 16 and 17, then enters in measure 18 with a half note G4, marked *mp*. The Viola part has a half note G3 in measure 16, a half note A3 in measure 17, and a half note B3 in measure 18, marked *f*. The Horn part has a half note G2 in measure 16, a half note A2 in measure 17, and a half note B2 in measure 18. The Trumpet part has rests. The Violoncello I part has a half note G2 in measure 16, a half note A2 in measure 17, and a half note B2 in measure 18, marked *mp*. The Violoncello II part has a half note G2 in measure 16, a half note A2 in measure 17, and a half note B2 in measure 18, marked *subito mp*. There are hairpins for crescendo and decrescendo under the Horn part.

19

Vln.

Vla. *mf*

Hn.

T.

Vc. *pizz.*

Vc. *mf*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 19, 20, and 21. The Violin I part has a half note G4 in measure 19, a half note A4 in measure 20, and a half note B4 in measure 21. The Viola part has a half note G3 in measure 19, a half note A3 in measure 20, and a half note B3 in measure 21, marked *mf*. The Horn part has rests. The Trumpet part has rests. The Violoncello I part has a half note G2 in measure 19, a half note A2 in measure 20, and a half note B2 in measure 21. The Violoncello II part has a half note G2 in measure 19, a half note A2 in measure 20, and a half note B2 in measure 21, marked *pizz.* and *mf*.

A Expansively

22

Vln. *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Hn. *mf*

T.

Vc. *mf*

Vc. *arco* *mf*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 22, 23, 24, and 25. The Violin I part has a half note G4 in measure 22, a half note A4 in measure 23, and a half note B4 in measure 24, marked *mf*. The Viola part has a half note G3 in measure 22, a half note A3 in measure 23, and a half note B3 in measure 24, marked *mf*. The Horn part has a half note G2 in measure 22, a half note A2 in measure 23, and a half note B2 in measure 24, marked *mf*. The Trumpet part has rests. The Violoncello I part has a half note G2 in measure 22, a half note A2 in measure 23, and a half note B2 in measure 24, marked *mf*. The Violoncello II part has a half note G2 in measure 22, a half note A2 in measure 23, and a half note B2 in measure 24, marked *arco* and *mf*. The time signature changes to 4/2 at the end of measure 25.

27

Vln. *p* *mf*

Vla. *p* *f*

Hn. *mf*

T.

Vc. *p* *mf*

Vc. *p* *mf*

32

Vln. *cresc.* *p* (*subito*)

Vla. *cresc.*

Hn. *cresc.*

T.

Vc. *cresc.* *ff* *p* (*subito*)

Vc. *cresc.* *ff* *pizz.* *p* (*subito*)

B

38

Vln. *mp cresc.*

Vla. *mf*

Hn.

T.

Vc. *arco* *mf* *f* *pizz.*

Vc. *mf* *f*

C

rit. ----- A tempo (♩ = 112)

43

Vln. *tr* *ff* *3*

Vla. *ff*

Hn. *ff* (b)

T. *ff*

Vc. *arco* *ff*

Vc. *ff*

48

Vln. *tr*

Vla. *pizz.* *arco*

Hn. *ff* *strident*

T. *ff* *3*

Vc. *pizz.* *arco*

Vc. *3*

A vi-sion! A vi-sion from God! A call to

52

Vln. *tr* *tr* *3* *tr*

Vla. (b)

Hn.

T. (b) Du-ty! I will lead, I will lead men, I will know Glo-ry

Vc.

Vc.

D Sempre l'istesso tempo (♩ = 112); agitato

56

Vln. *sfz* *mf*

Vla. *mf* *sfz* *mf*

Hn.

T. *f* *Hysterical*
Wake up this can't go on!

Vc. *mf* *sfz*

Vc. *mf*

60

Vln. *f*

Vla. *f*

Hn.

T. what a waste, what a ter-ri-ble waste,

Vc. *fp*

Vc. *fp*

64

Vln.

Vla.

Hn.

T. waste of lives, of op-por-tun-i-ties and re -

Vc.

Vc.

67

Vln. *sfz* *p*
arco

Vla. *pizz.* *sfz* *p*

Hn.

T. *sour - ces.*

Vc. *sfz*

Vc. *sfz*

71

Vln.

Vla.

Hn. *3*

T. *f sempre*
Here are my de - mands:

Vc. *p* *pizz.* *p* *arco* *f*

Vc.

75

Vln. *f*

Vla. *f*

Hn. *f*

T. *mp*
LOVE EACH O - THER and act ac - cor - ding - ly;

Vc. *f*

Vc.

79

Vln. Vla. Hn. T. Vc. Vc.

LOVE THE Earth and act ac - cor-ding-ly.

mp

83 **F**

Vln. Vla. Hn. T. Vc. Vc.

Fai-lure to com-ply will not be looked on kind - ly

mf *sfz* *mf*

87

Vln. Vla. Hn. T. Vc. Vc.

We've no more time left to

f *fp*

91

Vln.

Vla.

Hn.

T.

Vc.

Vc.

waste. The prob-lem's out of con - trol.

95

Vln.

Vla.

Hn.

T.

Vc.

Vc.

G

sfz *p*

pizz. *arco*

sfz *p*

mp

My God! It is a me - lan - cho - ly thing

99

Vln.

Vla.

Hn.

T.

Vc.

Vc.

pizz. *arco*

p

Meno mosso ♩ = 84

For such a man who would full fain pre - serve his soul in calm - ness yet

102 **molto accel.** **Subito ancora** **H** **meno mosso** **A tempo** (♩=84) **pizz.**

Vln. *p*

Vla. *p* **pizz.**

Hn.

T. *subito p* **pizz.**

Vc. *p* **pizz.**

Vc. *p* **pizz.**

must per force feel for all his hu-man breth-ren O my God! A vi-sion A re-vi-sion A -

107 **arco** **pizz.**

Vln. *arco* **pizz.**

Vla. *arco* **pizz.**

Hn.

T. *arco* **pizz.**

Vc. *arco* **pizz.**

Vc. *arco* **pizz.**

- men. I will lead, but by ex ample not for my own ends. The prin-ci-ples are

112 **arco** **mf**

Vln. *arco* **mf**

Vla. *arco* **mf**

Hn.

T. **mf**

Vc. *arco* **mf**

Vc. *arco* **mf**

good but I must live with them my-self, and be grate-ful

117

Vln. *p*

Vla. *p*

Hn.

T. *p*

Vc. *p*

Vc. *p*

grate ful that by na - ture's still ness and so - li - ta - ry mu - sings, all my heart is soft - ened and made

3 + 2

123

Vln.

Vla.

Hn.

T. *mf*

Vc.

Vc.

wor - thy to in dulge Love, and the thoughts that yearn for hu - man

gliss.

126

Vln. *dim.*

Vla. *dim.*

Hn.

T. *kind.*

Vc. *dim.*

Vc. *pizz.*

pp