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## Constantin Silvestri: Opus 1 Lieder with Heinrich Heine's Verses

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Born in 1913, Constantin Silvestri has had a great impact upon the Romanian musical scene from two points of view: both as a composer and as a conductor. Silvestri's impressive career as a conductor has had a significant influence upon the existence of some prestigious musical ensembles (such as Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra) and for this reason he is remembered accordingly; however, his name as a composer can only be found in some of the lexicons and dictionaries which concern the Romanian music. This observation is the manifestation of a display which has placed Silvestri alongside important inter- and post-war European chief conductors as well as alongside the Romanian composers whose paths came to an end before having been truly fulfilled and, as a result, acknowledged. All these considerations are possible by "reading" the life and the works of Silvestri through the lens of time.

The cycle of lieder with Heinrich Heine's verses represents, as suggested by the opus number, the starting point – which was done by the time he was fifteen of age, in 1928! – of the creation of composer Constantin Silvestri. Revised in 1934, the lieder have become what we have today through the Lito Pregler publishing house in Timișoara. The date is meant, among other things, to explain the wonderful dedication written by master Enescu – for this is how young Silvestri would call George Enescu for the rest of his live – on the back of a photo: "We still expect a lot from him".

At the age of eight, Costi, as a native German speaker, was gifted four small volumes in verse, by Heine, Schiller and Eichendorff, all in the original

language and which also contained thoughts and quotes about music by Luther, Beethoven, Shakespeare, Schubert and Wagner. These books take up their place on the bookshelf of the soon-to-be musician, alongside Dickens' *David Copperfield*, Boccaccio's *The Decameron*, Sienkiewicz's *Quo Vadis*, Dante's *Inferno*, Dostoyevsky's *The Idiot*, Flammarion's *The Last Days of the World* or *Travels in the Air* and alongside the Romanian poetry of Mihail Eminescu, Alexandru Vlahuță, George Coșbuc, Șt. O. Iosif and Panait Cerna. With such literature, with his already rich life and auditory experience and with his still basic musical knowledge, Silvestri begins to understand and to feel music not as an array of sounds in some construction, but rather as a poetic feeling, as a form of culture and reason. Seen from this perspective, the birth of Opus 1 is natural and easy.

### **1. SIE HABEN MICH GEQUÄLET**

*Sie haben mich gequälet  
Geärgert blau und blass  
Die einen mit ihrer Liebe  
Die andern mit ihrem Hass.*

*Sie haben das Brot mir vergiftet  
Sie gossen mir Gift ins Glas  
Die einen mit ihrer Liebe  
Die andern mit ihrem Hass.*

*Doch sie, die mich am meisten  
Gequält, geärgert, betrübt  
Die mich nie gehasset  
Und hat mich nie geliebt.*

The lied begins with a first music phrase with which the piano suggests entering a mood which is defined by a state of submission. The slow – *sostenuto* – ternary pulse is how the flow of music is organised, along with the lively and stable key, F major. It creates a paradoxical effect of anxious calmness. There is nothing threatening, no lamentation, it is almost a distant exposition of some accepted fate. The first section, namely A, is repeated at the end of the tripartite lied. It is built on a pedal point over which we can see the evolution of the melodic line of the voice, in a permanent juxtaposition with a progression which is either parallel or contrasting, chord-based, based almost exclusively on plagal harmonic relationships – I–IV–I or I–VI–I –, which have no tensions.

Sostenuto (♩=54)

*molto espr.*  
*mp* *p*

ha-ben mich ge-quä-let, Oe-är-ger blau und blass. Die ei-nen mit ih-rer,  
tor-tu-ra-zio-ne A-prin-se și de zor. Cu dra gos-fea lor vai.

**Ex. 1.** Sie haben mich gequälet, *mm.* 1-11.

Section B, having *poco agitato* as an expression indication, innovates by repeatedly attempting to leave the initial F major, without having any success. We can only see light ascensions in tenses areas, either harmonically – through the abandonment of the pedal point in favour of several diatonic descending conjunct motions, from the bass down to the very low register –, melodically – through the ascension of the voice in the acute register –, or dynamically – by suggesting a higher intensity in *mezzo-forte* and *forte* dynamics – contrasting with *mezzo-piano* and *molto piano*, used for section A and its recapitulation. The balanced construction – A – 14 measures, B – 14 measures, and A – 13 measures – is another element which highlights the emotional state which we associate with submission, abandonment and placidity. The ending of the lied is solved through an admirable opening left to musical reasoning by halting on the tonic chord in open position, which engulfs the whole section through a pedal point: on its fifth for the voice and on its third for the piano.

## 2. MENSCH, VERSPOTTE NICHT DEN TEUFEL

*Mensch, verspottete nicht den Teufel*

*Kurz ist ja die Lebensbahn*

*Und die ewige verdammnis*

*Ist kein blosser Pöbelwahn.*

Agitato (♩. 66-76) *energico*

*f* Mensch, ver- spot- te nicht den Teu- fel,  
 Tu, sä nu-ji bajj joe de dra- cu,

*f* Kurz ist ja die Le- bens- bahn, Und die e- wi- ge ver- damm- nis ist kein blos- ser Pö- bel- wahn.  
 Scurt e val, al vie- tel drum, lar bles- te- mul- cel de yea- curl Nu- i lu- zi e niel tum.

*espr. rall.* *molto* *accel.*

*cresc.*

**Ex. 2.** Mensch, verspötte nicht den Teufel, mm. 1-9.

*Mensch, bezahle deine Schulden  
 Lang ist ja die Lebensbahn  
 Und du musst noch manchmal borgen  
 Wie du es so oft getan.*

It is meant to be in striking contrast with the first lied, as it is toned down only by the close tonal relationship between F major and D minor. The fast movement – the tempo indication is replaced by an expression one, *agitato*, but there is a metronome suggestion – and the harmonic track suggested by the always chromatically descending bass manage to make the very short musical and poetic discourse extremely tense. The whole lied is based on a triplet pulse in the medium register which constitute the harmonic completion of the phrase of the left arm, forming together an array of dissonances which only end at the end of each of the two phrases that form the lied, which is therefore monopartite this time.

This authentic accompaniment, which could hardly keep anyone from thinking of Schubert's *Erkönig* or of the second lied of Mahler's cycle *Songs of a Wayfarer*, ensures the intense effervescence on which the voice utters two similar phrases in the beginning as a melodic design, then distinct both from a melodic point of view as well as harmonically and dynamically. The first phrase remains intense up to the end, it has an ascending melodic design and it returns to the D minor tonic, the second phrase ends with a great

dynamic fall. It modulates to the minor dominant, which is A minor and it has a descending melodic progression. The whole struggle is so intense, on the verge of despair – the contrast with the first lied, which was mentioned in the beginning depends, of course, on the expression – and it gets dissolved in the composure which gets us ready for the mood of the beginning of the third lied, which has *attacca* as a note.

### 3. DURCH DEN WALD

*Durch den Wald im Monden schein  
Sah ich jüngst die Elfen reuten  
Ihre Hörner hört' ich klingen  
Ihre Glöckchen hört' ich läuten.*

*Ihre weissen Rösslein trugen  
Güldnes Hirsch geweih und flogen  
Rasch dahin wie wilde Schwäne  
Kam es durch die Luft gezogen.*

*Lächelnd nickte mir die Kön'gin  
Lächelnd im vorüber reuten  
Galt das meiner neuen Liebe  
Oder soll es Tod bedeuten?*

Allegretto (♩=80) *mp*

Durch den Wald im Mon- den schein- ne Sah ich jüngst die El- fen  
Prin- pi-du- re'n cla- sul lu- ni In- täl ni- Pam zäne- o

*mf* *mp*

reuten; Ih- re Hör- ner hört' ich klingen, Ih- re Glöckchen hört' ich läu- ten,  
da- lä; Des- lörriä- yo- los st lä-när; Fu- u-re- chea-ml dez- mier- da- lä.

*p* *mf* *p* *p*

Ex. 3. Durch den Wald, mm. 1-9.

Taking over the silence brought by the end of the second lied, “the story” begins mildly and calmly, as if it were a stroll through some space and time lacking any tensions. The triple balance, the light of the G major key and the whole development of the first section – the lied is once again tripartite, just like the first one, this time having a stanza-based structure – both harmonically and melodically are effective in suggesting a state of candescent composure.

Except for several transient statements of the harmony of the dominant D major – the only one that asserts itself accordingly shows up at the end of the period like a perfect cadence  $V^{6/4-5/3}-I$  –, we mostly deal with a G major pedal, doubled by a *rhythmic pedal*. The second stanza – therefore, the second section – has a similar beginning. It innovates and at the same time almost shocks through abruptness by introducing a transient modulation to B major, which only briefly asserts itself, leaving the impression of wandering, because the ending of the section returns to G major as if nothing happened, brought through the same dominant D (6–5) – which is easily and perfectly resolved on the tonic. This is how the harmonic layer is set for the beginning of the final section (stanza), which leaves G major in the exact same melodic moment in which it modulated to B major in the second section. This time we see a long wandering, through an area of heavy uncertainty which is suggested by a design which is intensely chromatic, both harmonically and melodically.

The image shows a musical score for three staves. The top staff is the vocal line with lyrics: "Gall das mel-ner zeh-en Lie-be, Dra-gos-je-sa'u-sam-ne as-ta". The middle and bottom staves are the piano accompaniment. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. Dynamic markings include *mf* and *mp*. The score shows a complex harmonic structure with chromaticism in the piano part.

**Ex. 4.** Durch den Wald, *mm.* 22-24.

It is also abruptly initiated, just like in the second stanza, but much more violently this time, because the sudden chord is complex – a diminished seventh chord with a baffling major seventh in the bass – and, if that was not enough, in order for the intensity to be pushed to the limit, the dynamic indication for this moment is *subito piano*. Thus, the sound effect created is that of a heart-rending loss. And how else could it have been, as long as wandering through life – and therefore love, says the poetic text and the musical one

as well – is the announcement of death? Compositionally, Silvestri lays out this path through a gradual descent to the depths of the sonorities which the piano “picks up” from an extremely low register, which is then transfigured in a natural dominant – therefore, D – of the initial G major. It is brought back in the final comment of the piano accompaniment, which is meant in the end to hold a monologue on remembering the debut of each of the three stanzas.

#### **4. BIST DU WIRKLICH MIR SO FEINDLICH**

*Bist du wirklich mir so feindlich  
Bist du wirklich ganz verwandelt?  
Aller Welt will ich es klagen  
Dass du mich so schlecht behandelt.*

*O, ihr undankbaren Lippen  
Sagt, wie könnt ihr Schlimmes sagen  
Von dem Männe der so liebend  
Euch geküsst, in schönen Tagen?*

A bipartite lied which shifts expressively between the anxiety it seems to draw from the uncertainty of the last section of the third lied and the conjuring of a bright memory, everything being rendered on the background of a suggested romance. Section A contains two phrases. The first one is made up of two motifs which are interrogatory in nature, while the second is a lamentation between instability and acceptance. The expressive areas are once again effectively “flagged” for the performers. The writing is intensely chromatic and it pushes to the limits the harmonic equalisation. In the beginning, it is approached in a recitative manner – through the *agitato* and *rubato* indications, then *con tristezza* – through complex harmonic but patient juxtapositions, among which the voice is strange, at first, then it gradually clears up a path which is common to that of the piano accompaniment from a harmonic point of view. The second section of the lied starts with the minor relative of the key in the ending of the first section (F major – D minor) and expands through a harmonically sustained evolution of both the melody and the ambitus, in a perfectly homogenous state of the timbre individualities. From a D minor chord, “brought up” from the medium-low register of the piano, over which the voice intones a tender third – the dynamic pointed out through the gasp “O, . . .” is *pianissimo* – are the greatest of pains perhaps not silent? –, gradually and with a dynamic suggestion along the middle point of



the section, the sonority becomes more and more complex and developed at the end of the lied, up to the point where it lights up almost victoriously in a culmination on the late chord of Bb major – which proves to be the key of the lied which is now seen through the sound as well, not only through the key signature.

**Ex. 5.** Bist du wirklich mir so feindlich, mm. 9-17.

Regret and abandonment do manage to make their appearance through a suggested percolation in the last two measures. There is an interesting aspect which is not seen anywhere else in the lied cycle, and that is the liberty of melodic choice for a vocal variant during some of the lines. It seems obvious that Silvestri shows extra consideration towards the possible performers of the literary text, suggesting two versions of intoning the line *wie könnt ihr Schlimmes sagen von dem Manne* (“how can you breathe an evil word of scorning, of the very man . . . ?”) One highlights the “evil” – *Schlimmes* – and the other highlights “you” – *ihr*.

**Ex. 6.** Bist du wirklich mir so feindlich, mm. 11-13.

What is it that hurts more? The fact that the evil words are *yours* or that you breathe *evil* words? I would personally choose the first option, since evil words exist nevertheless.

### 5. STERNE MIT DEN GOLDNEN FÜSSCHEN

*Sterne mit den goldnen Füßchen  
Wandeln droben bang und sacht  
Dass sie nicht die Erde wecken  
Die da schläft im Schoss der Nacht.*

*Horchend stehn die stummen Wälder  
Jedes Blatt eine grünes ohr!  
Und der Berg, wie träumend streckt er  
Seinen Schattenarm hervor.*

*Doch was rief dort?  
In mein Herze dringt der Töne widerhall  
War es der Geliebten Stimme  
Oder nur die Nachtigall?*

Adagio molto (♩=56)  
*espres.* *poco*

Ster-ne mit den gold-nen Füßchen, Wan-deln dro-ben bang und sacht, Dass sie nicht die  
Ste-le'n pan-to-foi-de a-ur, Tre-c sil-oa-se căl-măi-sus, Pen-tru-ănu tre-

*pp sempre*

Er-de we-cken, Die da schläft im Schoss der Nacht.  
zi pân-tul, Că-re'n-noap-te doar-me dus.

*poco rit.* *poco rit.*

Ex. 7. Sterne mit den goldnen Füßchen, mm. 1-8.

The development of the former four lieder seems to have been, musically speaking, a preparation for this fifth moment of the first workbook of the first opus signed by Silvestri. The statement is explained simply by going through the musical text, which is an oscillation between two sound structures of almost opposite types, each rigorously coinciding with two worlds to which the poetic text alludes. The first structure is the expression of the bizarre, of a space which the human presence only observes, of a cosmic coldness.

The suggestion comes from the juxtaposition of a chromatic progression, which brings into focus the lack of direction through a very low piano dynamic, with a musical “utterance” for which only the word alone matters. The first eight measures seem to wish to break off any contact between the voice and the piano, each of the two entities evolving not only independently, but also indifferently. A warm, coagulated structure follows through some pedals – once again – on the fundamental and on the fifth of the E minor chord, around which the right hand of the piano links arrays of other harmonies gravitating more or less towards the areas of the tonic and of the dominant. Meanwhile, the voice – which now talks about the earth – comes forth with a simple melody and in striking contrast with the contortions of the design in the first section. Four sound signals open the path to the return to the first type of structure, which is now enriched with a background of very low notes, long and with no tonal functionality. This third section ends with an utter perplexity, which is solved by a coda that is simply a reminder exclusively of the piano accompaniment of the second section. The grave highlight given by the straightforward progression – *senza ritenuto* – explains the *attacca* indication at the end of the lied. The last lied of the first workbook begins on a funereal note.

## **6. WIE KANNST DU RUHIG SCHLAFEN**

*Wie kannst du ruhig schlafen  
Und weisst, ich lebe noch?  
Der alte Zorn kommt wieder  
Und dann zer brech' ich mein Joch.*

*Kennst du das alte Liedchen  
Wie einst ein toter Knab'  
Um Mitternacht die Geliebte  
Zu sich geholt ins Grab?*

*Glaub' mir du wunderschönes  
Du wunderholdes Kind  
Ich lebe und bin noch stärker  
Als alle Toten sind!*

The beginning of this lied is threatening and fierce. This is the mood of the first section, which is suggested by dotted rhythms and gloomy-coloured harmonies. This is the first of the lieder in which the piano has an introduction – an utterance which is by itself dramatic to the point where the voice has to make an effort in order to join it.

The image shows a musical score for the piano introduction of the lied 'Wie kannst du ruhig schlafen'. The score is in 3/4 time, marked 'Adagio (♩=60)'. It features a piano introduction with a dotted pulse and gloomy harmonies. The score includes dynamic markings such as 'mf', 'p', 'cresc. e string.', and 'sf'. The tempo is marked 'Temp' and the string section is marked 'string.'. The score is in C major and consists of 6 measures.

**Ex. 8.** Wie kannst du ruhig schlafen, mm. 1-6.

The very slow tempo, the uniform progression which is structured on a binary dotted pulse and a very restricted ambitus in the melody of the voice are the elements that make up the background of the first half of the lied. The second half belongs to a whole other area of expression. Bright, clear harmonies, major chords, the ternary pulse which organises the musical discourse, all these prepare an ending which is comparable to a victory. The last two measures are a perfect, Picardian cadence in C major – the parallel key of the key with which the lied begins – created with the aid of a complex development of ascending chords which covers an ever larger ambitus. The dynamic indications – the

*crescendo* from *piano* to *fortissimo* – and the *grandioso* indication are the auxiliary “ingredients” which help show the performers as clearly as possible the expressive path they need to work on.

The image displays three systems of a musical score for the song "Wie kannst du ruhig schlafen" (How can you sleep peacefully). The score is written for voice and piano. The first system includes the tempo marking "Poco più mosso. ('66-72)" and dynamic markings "p" and "sempre espr." with a "rit." marking. The second system features "molto espr." and "rit." markings, along with an "accel." marking. The third system includes "sempre p", "mf", and "rit." markings, and a prominent "grandioso" marking. The piano part includes markings like "mp", "p", "poco", "ben. f", and "sifs". The vocal line contains lyrics in German and Romanian. Performance instructions such as "(a tempo)", "(con Ped.)", and "copr." are also present.

**Ex. 9.** Wie kannst du ruhig schlafen, mm. 13-21.

## 7. BERG UND BURGEN

*Berg und Burgen schau herunte  
In den spiegelhellen Rhein  
Und mein Schiffchen segelt munter  
Rings umglänzt von Sonnenschein.*

Ruhig seh' ich zu dem Spiele  
 Goldner Wellen, Kraus bewegt  
 Still erwachen die Gefühle  
 Die ich tief in Busen hegt'.

Freundlich grüssend und verheissend  
 Lockt hinab des Stromes Pracht;  
 Doch ich kenn' ihn, obengleissend,  
 Birgt sein Innres Tod und Nacht.

Oben Lust, im Busen Tücken  
 Strom, du bist der Liebsten Bild?  
 Die kann auch so freundlich nicken  
 Lächelt auch so fromm und mild.

This first lied of the second workbook leads an array of musical pieces which have formally evolved from simple to complex. In the first workbook, each

Allegretto ( $\text{♩} = 100 \text{ circa}$ )

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system shows the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked 'Allegretto' with a metronome marking of quarter note = 100 circa. The score includes various performance instructions such as 'sempre molto leggiero', 'dolce e leggiero', 'poco rit.', 'sim. leg.', '(a tempo)', and 'rit.'. The piano part has dynamics markings 'p' and 'f'.

Ex. 10. Berg und Burgen, mm. 1-10.

“jewel” was made up of several musical phrases and in each of them we saw one or two musical ideas. In this second workbook, we find pieces which have the length and the musical content of the genre of musical poem.

The piano has a much more independent role than in the first workbook. We are almost left to think that there is a roll switch between the two actors who lay out the musical image.

The lied begins with ten introductory measures in which the piano lays out the background of the story that follows.

A stable E major, an even movement of the crotchet notes, a melodic design lacking tensions and a harmonic development which is not at all complicated – all of these allow the voice to sing the first two stanzas of Heine without betraying the expressive suggestion brought by the instrumental introduction. Another eight measures ensue, during which the piano exposes a structure similar from a constructional point of view, this time through a harmonic succession which gravitates around the subdominant on a contrary motion to the one in the beginning. The voice sings the third stanza of the poem on a dominant – B – pedal, as the piano is left to create a new interlude which would once again identically bring the accompaniment of the second stanza. On top of that, the voice reads the last stanza on a melodic development which is simply a variation of its first apparition in the lied. We therefore have a bipartite form with a small reprise, created with the aid of the tonal-harmonic plan, the writing being the same from the first to the last measure of the lied.

## **8. DER SCHEIDENDE SOMMER**

*Das gelbe Laub erzittert  
Es fallen die Blätter herab  
Ach, alles was hold und lieblich  
Verwelkt und sinkt ins Grab.*

*Die Gipfel des Waldes umflimmert  
Ein schmerzlicher Sonnenschein  
Das mögen die letzten Küsse  
Des scheidenden Sommers sein.*

*Mir ist, als müsst' ich weinen  
Aus tiefstem Herzens grund  
Dies Bild erinnert mich wieder*

*An unsre Abschieds Stund!  
 Ich musste von dir scheiden  
 Und wusste, du stärbest bald  
 Ich war der scheidende Sommer  
 Du warst der kranke Wald.*

The complex-natured evolution materialises in several directions during this second lied. Formally speaking, it is a composed tripartite lied. Section A is made up of two phrases. The second modulates, leaving the initial A major – which actually asserts itself through a pedal on the E dominant – in favour of F major. A reference can be made to the Brahmsian preference of modulating down or up a third – the melodic composition of the lied also makes us think of Brahms. A short piano interlude brings forth section B, while establishing a new tonal centre, which is A minor – back up a third. Even if from a tonal point of view it is a minimal change, the totally different accompaniment – in semiquavers – and a pedal on the A tonic are elements which formally underline the affiliation to another section. This section also contains two phrases – the first one uses the melodic material of the voice in section A, and the second one is a long chromatic descent, through progressions of diminished chords with diminished or minor sevenths. This brings the whole design of the construction to a very low register, suggesting the depths of an

**Ex. 11.** Der scheidende Sommer, mm. 28-44.



extreme pain, both twisted and submissive.

Once again, the pain is almost silent: we find dynamic indications such as *mezzo piano*, *piano* and *pianissimo*. The evolution of the voice takes place in a register which is not at all sonorous. Its presence is almost sporadic, leaving the piano to handle almost entirely the expressive charge, with the indications *calando* and *perdendosi*. The return of the monopartite section A is almost identical to the second phrase of the initial bipartite, on the same pedal on the dominant – E – which the author only gives up with the last measure. The indication *attacca* makes this lied the beginning of a succession which only stops at the end of the cycle.

## 9. HELENA

*Du hast mich beschworen aus dem Grab  
Durch deinen Zauberswillen  
Belebtes mich mit Wollustglut  
Jetzt kannst du die Glut nicht stillen.*

*Press deinen Mund an meinen Mund  
Der Menschen Odem ist göttlich  
Ich trinke deine Seele aus,  
Die Toten sind unersättlich.*

This lied is truly a sonorous cavalcade. The monopartite form and the *vivace* tempo transform it into a torrent which crashes, cluttered with outcries, over the listener who is in no way prepared during the cycle of lieder for these gusts of insurgence.

The lied burns out like a blaze, very quickly and ends the same way it begins – very abruptly. Silvestri contrasts the lengthy phrases intoned by the voice with a frenetic accompaniment in besetting eights. In order for the conflict to be enhanced, towards the tonal instability of the melodic line of the voice, the piano expresses an obstinate G tonic – a G minor according to the key signature – and which he only drops in the middle of the lied. In this area, the C note is the beginning, the end and the obsession of the melodic paths described by the voice. We must highlight the fact that this lied is, from the point of view of the piano, the most difficult of all. The end of the lied is at the same time the beginning of the following piece.

♩ = 84 (vivace)

8

*f* (*agitato*)

*f* Du hast mich beschworen aus dem Grab

*pf*

*mf*

*f marc.*

**Ex. 12.** Helena, mm. 1-8.

## 10. INTERMEZZO

This piece makes up the most interesting construction element of the whole opus. It is about a short piano interlude which has a triple function: it is a conclusion, a transition and a beginning. It is a conclusion because, from a compositional point of view, using the cyclic device which late romanticism in particular used to imbue with meaning, this short instrumental fragment features the melodic lines of the first and of the third lied.

Tranquillo (♩ = 48 cca.)

*dolce*

*p*

*p*

*espr.*

♩ = 44

*dolce*

*b<sup>7</sup>*

*espr.*

**Ex. 13.** Intermezzo, mm. 2-6 and 8-10.

It is a transition because starting from the cavalcade of *Helena* in the last lied, this intermezzo assures us that a huge expressive distance is covered. It is a beginning because without the  $A\flat$  major on which the whole second half of the piece is built, without the given indications *con calore* and *espressivo molto e cantando*, without the harmonically rich sonority, which is dynamically low, we cannot imagine the complex and generous debut of the last lied in this opus.

**1.1. SIE FLOH VOR MIR**

Sie floh vor mir wie'n Reh so scheu  
 Und wie ein Reh geschwinde!  
 Sie kletterte von Klipp' zu Klipp'  
 Ihr Haar das flog im Winde.

Wo sich zum Meer der Felsen senkt  
 Da hab' ich sie erreicht  
 Da hab' ich sanft mit sanften Wort  
 Ihr Sprödes Herz erweicht.

Hier sassen wir so Himmelhoch  
 Und auch so Himmelselig  
 Tief unter uns, ins dunkle Meer  
 Die Sonne sank allmählich.

Tief unter uns, ins dunkle Meer  
 Versank die schöne Sonne  
 Die Wogen rauschten drüber hin  
 Mit ungestümer Wonne.

O weine nicht, o weine nicht  
 Die Sonne liegt nicht tot in jenen Fluten  
 Sie hat sich in mein Herz versteckt  
 Mit allen ihren Gluten.

**Ex. 14.** Sie floh vor mir, mm. 1-12.

This lied ends in a Mahlerian manner the lieder cycle based on Heine's texts. We cannot ignore the fact that this longest of the "songs" of the first opus is from all points of view aligned with a stylistic flow of German post-romantic influence. Prepared with patience and with an elaborate piano construction, it begins with a long – the longest – introduction, an utterance in which the piano intones two phrases similar in form and construction, one in D $\flat$  major and the second in D major, modulating to the end back to D $\flat$  major. The modulations come suddenly.

The voice also intones the two phrases which we have heard from the piano, as it is the only set melodic structure of the whole lied. The first phrase will be repeated two more times along the piece, each time ending with modulations to distant keys: D $\flat$  major – A minor, D $\flat$  major – A major. Aside from the broken chord progression of eights, the lied is built upon the colour elements which are brought in by the diverse, surprising and complex harmonies, from which the progression of the voice is extracted. All events related to the melody, to the dynamics and to the evolution of the sound register develop on the very wide surfaces of the musical discourse. This offers the listener enough time to enjoy the harmonic development. The ending of the lied is a repetition of the first vocal phrase, which ends in the only moment of dynamic-harmonic coincidence – the sudden modulation from D $\flat$  major to A major is juxtaposed with a sudden dynamic descent to *piano*).

The musical score for 'Sie floh vor mir' (Ex. 15) is presented in a three-staff format. The top staff is the vocal line, the middle staff is the right-hand piano accompaniment, and the bottom staff is the left-hand piano accompaniment. The key signature is D $\flat$  major (two flats) and the time signature is 3/4. The score includes dynamic markings such as *bP* (bristly piano) and *dolcissimo*. The lyrics are written below the vocal line: 'Sie hat sich in mein Herz ver-steckt Mit al-len ih-ren Glü-ten. / El s'a as-cuns în piep-tul meu cu fla-că-ra lui toa-tă.' The piece concludes with a sudden modulation and a dynamic descent to *piano*.

**Ex. 15.** Sie floh vor mir, *mm.* 131-136.

This way, the expressive force of the last spoken word is augmented, once again through a drop. *Glüten* – it means “embers”, but with the figurative meaning of passion and ardour. The ending, in the purest tradition of romantic lieder cycles, belongs to the piano which does not disturb the mood in which the construction of this final lied has set us.

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From the musical analysis of the lieder which make up the first opus of Silvestri's work, we must draw several conclusions. The order in which they shall be written is personal and does not aim to make anything more than a respectful suggestion of a means to approach an exceptional musical text.

At the usual age of accumulations, Constantin Silvestri unusually brings together parts of a whole and then the whole itself, naturally portraying to the world a lieder cycle in which, just like with all wholesome artistic creations, one cannot draw any borderlines to establish the lands of talent and science – with the meaning of knowledge –, of substance and form or of rationality and emotion.

There are several elements which ensure the integrity and the diversity of the Opus 1 lieder cycle with Heine's verses. The stylistically seamless poetic text which Silvestri uses with the subtlety of the fact that he is a native German speaker and with profound sensibility is an alternation of poems which are predominantly philosophic or surreal in nature and lyrically confessional. Their juxtaposition is either contrasting or progressive and is done through compositional means which must be admired keeping in mind the age of the composer – fifteen years when he composed the first draft.

The two workbooks, different in terms of form – the first contains small lieder, while the second one contains complex ones – but not in terms of substance, display an evolution from simple to complex. They simultaneously denote a double filiation, both aesthetic and musical: the German lied which began its evolution with Schubert and, going through Schumann, Brahms and Wolf, has become the poem which can be seen with Mahler. This whole evolution is done in a tonal framework, even when we cannot dissemble the remarkable extemporiser in Silvestri and when the quests suggested by the melodic-harmonic progressions, either contemplative or frenetic, push the actual base of the musical discourse beyond the tonal barrier.

The writing abounds in very precise dynamic and expressive indications, in sometimes very strict notes regarding the tempo or the phrasings, therefore wishing to "guide" in the most effective way the path of the performers on the track which the author had imagined.

The voice is used with extraordinary craftsmanship, playing upon its possibilities to the utmost maximum limits and, at the same time, offering it the comfort needed to maintain the technical and expressive availabilities, from one end of the work to the other. The piano, which is a partner, be it a companion, a commentator or a means of development, naturally ensures – since it stems from the extraordinary pianist Constantin Silvestri – the opposite pole, which is essential in the completion of the poetic and musical structure.

I shall end these considerations with a piece of advice which is related to the honesty of the interpretive endeavour which could be undertaken by an artistic couple regarding the Opus 1 lieder cycle: I believe that the German version is the *only* one that should be sung, not only for fear of “betraying” – which is expected of any translation, therefore the German-Romanian one as well – but also for fear of the possible musical betrayal which the lack of coinciding word-to-musical-sound ratio might cause. This deficiency seems inevitable to me – such is the case with any sung text – when it comes to the creation of music from a poetic text. All the more so, this is how things are when it comes to an exceptional work, such as it is with the two lieder workbooks with which Constantin Silvestri took his first steps on a too short path – he died on the 23rd of February 1969 in England – through the landscape of the Romanian musical creation.

**English version by Andrei-Radu Birsan**