

INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

ProQuest Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600

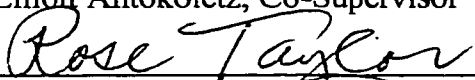
UMI[®]

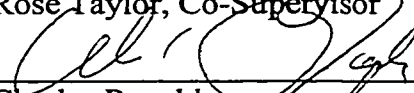
Copyright
by
Sharon Elizabeth Kenney
2001


Musical Style in Bruno Bettinelli's *Cinque liriche di Montale*

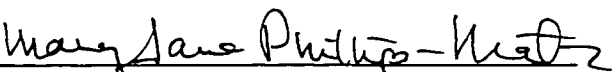
**Approved by
Dissertation Committee:**


Elliott Antokoletz, Co-Supervisor


Rose Taylor, Co-Supervisor


Charles Roeckle


Carroll Gonzo


Mary Jane Matz

Musical Style in Bruno Bettinelli's *Cinque liriche di Montale*

by

Sharon Elizabeth Kenney, BME, M.M.

Treatise

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements

For the Degree of

Doctor of Musical Arts

The University of Texas at Austin

May, 2001

UMI Number: 3008246

Copyright 2001 by
Kenney, Sharon Elizabeth

All rights reserved.

UMI[®]

UMI Microform 3008246

Copyright 2001 by Bell & Howell Information and Learning Company.

All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

Bell & Howell Information and Learning Company
300 North Zeeb Road
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

Dedication

I dedicate this treatise to Don Tarcisio Bolzoni, whose love for music and God knows no bounds, and to my family and friends, whose continuous presence in my life have given me the courage to make this work a reality.

Acknowledgements

No treatise has ever been published solely on the work of the author. Assistance comes from many sources and in as many different ways. I am grateful foremost to my professors at The University of Texas at Austin, who encouraged me to complete my research even though the task seemed insurmountable, and to Rose Taylor especially, whose friendship made possible the impossible.

To Dr. Elliott Antokolotz, who chaired my doctoral committee, I am indebted for sharing freely and without critical judgment his vast knowledge of twentieth-century music. Initially, he spent time teaching me how to approach the study of Bettinelli's vocal music and to do so with immense patience. He shared with me the skills and tools to analyze, with confidence, music which was beyond the theoretical understanding of this student. His honest criticism of my work and the many revisions were acutely insightful and gentle.

To my friend Don Tarcisio Bolzoni, who accompanied me on all my interviews with Bruno Bettinelli in Milano, and assisted me in making initial contact with Maestro Bettinelli, I will always be grateful. Without his direction through the years, the culmination of this work would never have been achieved.

More than anything, he taught me to believe in myself and to trust my instincts. I will never be able to repay his kindness.

To Martha Kenney, my mother, whose patience in typing and formatting this document went far beyond the duty of parent. The hours we spent working together made me realize how fortunate I am to be her daughter.

To Maura Mazzera who spent many afternoons teaching me the nuances of reading and understanding Eugenio Montale's poetry, and to Chiara Napolitano who assisted me in translating my interviews with Bruno Bettinelli, I am grateful.

Thanks are also given to the citizens of Busseto, who had no idea they were helping me, yet whose assistance was invaluable. The many encounters on Via Roma, at Bar Centrale or in the Church of San Bartolomeo, reinforced my ability to speak and understand the Italian language. To these anonymous people whose friendship I have enjoyed and benefited from for nearly eighteen years as of this writing, I am thankful.

Most importantly to the composer Bruno Bettinelli whose intellectual energy I will never forget and for the hours of interviews during which I learned more from listening than I ever thought possible, I am eternally grateful. To Syliva, his wife, who I admire as a musician and teacher, and for her willingness to open her Milan apartment to a stranger, I thank.

To Eleanor Ousley, my first voice teacher, who planted the desire to sing in my soul. I am grateful for thirty years of friendship, and her continued presence in my life and her belief in my abilities.

To The Nightingale-Bamford School, Trustees, Dorothy Hutcheson, Head of School and Kitty Gordon, who made it financially possible for me to finish my schooling, I am indebted.

Lastly, I thank my husband Bill, who truly is my best friend and made possible on a daily basis to confront the demands of completing this work.

May 4, 2001

Musical Style in Bruno Bettinelli's *Cinque liriche di Montale*

Publication No. _____

Sharon Elizabeth Kenney, D.M.A.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2001

Supervisors: Elliott Antokoletz and Rose Taylor

This treatise is a study of the life and music of the Italian composer, Bruno Bettinelli (b. 1913). His artistic development, which is traced from his early musical training through his conservatory education and his appointment as professor of composition at the Milan Conservatory, is examined within the context of the political climate and musical trends that influenced his approach. A prolific composer whose works include symphonies, concertos, chamber music, opera, choral works, and art songs, he is also a published author and music critic. The focus of this study is the musical style used in Bettinelli's song literature for soprano, specifically *Cinque liriche di Montale* (1948) for soprano, flute, clarinet, and string quartet. This collection includes the following settings of five poems by the twentieth-century Italian poet Eugenio Montale (1896-1981): "Sul muro grafito," "L'anima che dispensa," "Gloria del distesa mezzogiorno," "Debole sistro al vento," and "Portami il girasole." Analysis of Bettinelli's songs reveals a

harmonic style synthesizing pentatonic-diatonic modalities with whole tone, octatonic, and chromatic materials. For example, he combines tetrachords from the diatonic modes to create octatonic collections and then by continuing the process of combination arrives at the complete chromatic scale. Musical form is determined by poetic structure, often delineated by dramatic tempo changes and fermatas. His general composition style is a combination of a prominent linearly (melodic) conception in conjunction with an innovative use of syncopation and polyrhythms. Although Bettinelli uses many of the devices associated with the atonal tendencies of the twentieth century, his vocal line resonates with *bel canto* lyricism of his Italian heritage, as his harmonic language moves away from functional harmony.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|------------|
| TABLE OF CONTENTS | x |
| LIST OF EXAMPLES | xii |
| INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| CHAPTER ONE AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE | 7 |
| CHAPTER TWO BRUNO BETTINELLI'S ARTISTIC BACKGROUND | 20 |
| CHAPTER THREE EUGENIO MONTALE—POETIC SOURCE | 47 |
| Eugenio Montale (1896-1981) | 47 |
| Bettinelli's Attraction to Montale's Poetry | 54 |
| CHAPTER FOUR TEXT AND MUSICAL ANALYSIS OF <i>CINQUE LIRICHE DI MONTALE</i> | 61 |
| Sul muro graffito | 63 |
| Poetic Analysis | 64 |
| Musical Analysis | 66 |
| L'anima che dispensa (Poesie II, Le occasioni, 1928-1939)..... | 78 |
| Poetic Analysis | 79 |
| Musical Analysis | 83 |
| Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno | 96 |
| Poetic Analysis | 96 |
| Musical Analysis | 98 |
| Debole sistro al vento | 108 |
| Poetic Analysis | 108 |
| Musical Analysis | 110 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| Portami il girasole | 120 |
| Poetic Analysis | 121 |
| Musical Analysis | 123 |
| CHAPTER FIVE CONCLUSION | 136 |
| APPENDIX I AUTHOR'S FIRST INTERVIEW WITH BRUNO BETTINELLI | 143 |
| Italian Transcription—Milan, Italy July 12, 1998..... | 143 |
| APPENDIX II AUTHOR'S FIRST INTERVIEW WITH BRUNO BETTINELLI | 155 |
| English Translation of the First Interview—Milan, Italy July 12, 1998 | 155 |
| APPENDIX III AUTHOR'S SECOND INTERVIEW WITH BRUNO BETTINELLI | 164 |
| English Translation—Milan, Italy August 18, 1998 | 164 |
| APPENDIX IV AUTHOR'S THIRD INTERVIEW WITH BRUNO BETTINELLI | 169 |
| English Translation—Milan, Italy July 10, 1998 | 169 |
| APPENDIX V AUTHOR'S FOURTH INTERVIEW WITH BRUNO BETTINELLI | 177 |
| English Translation—Milan, Italy July 10, 2000 | 177 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 187 |
| VITA | 191 |

LIST OF EXAMPLES

| | |
|--|-----|
| Example 1. Bettinelli, <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , “Sul muro grafito,” clarinet solo introduction m. 1..... | 67 |
| Example 2. Bettinelli, <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , “Sul muro grafito,” flute solo introduction built on octatonic segments m. 1..... | 68 |
| Example 3. Bettinelli, <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , “Sul muro grafito,” repeated pattern in the flute m. 1..... | 69 |
| Example 4. Bettinelli, <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , “Sul muro grafito,” mm. 6-9. | 70 |
| Example 5. Bettinelli, <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , “Sul muro grafito,” Gypsy mode combines elements from octatonic-1 and -2 collections..... | 70 |
| Example 6. Bettinelli, <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , “Sul muro grafito,” ostinato pattern in the cello, mm.2-9..... | 71 |
| Example 7. Bettinelli, <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , “Sul muro grafito,” pictorial image of the sky, mm. 10-15. | 72 |
| Example 8. Bettinelli, <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , “Sul muro grafito,” strings’ articulation prepares the dramatic entrance of the soprano, mm. 15-18..... | 73 |
| Example 9. Bettinelli, <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , “Sul muro grafito,” flute solo between stanzas two and three, mm. 33-41. | 75 |
| Example 10. Bettinelli, <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , “Sul muro grafito,” mm. 53-76. | 76 |
| Example 11. Bettinelli, “L’anima che dispensa,” from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , mm. 1-2, strings parts, musical motive <i>do re la sol sol</i> | 84 |
| Example 12. Bettinelli, “L’anima che dispensa,” from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , mm. 1- 10. Syncopated accents, dance-like rhythm and articulation. | 86 |
| Example 13. Bettinelli, “L’anima che dispensa,” from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , mm. 11-20, flute part’s scalar passage in G Phrygian. | 87 |
| Example 14. Demonstrates Polymodal Chromaticism. Tetrachords from the four modes F, G, E and B are combined to create octatonic scales as shown, which are freely used as source material in the music that follows. | 88 |
| Example 15. Bettinelli, “L’anima che dispensa,” from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , mm. 56-63..... | 90 |
| Example 16. Bettinelli, “L’anima che dispensa,” from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , mm. 82-84 ascending diatonic (in soprano and flute) and octatonic scales (in clarinet). | 93 |
| Example 17. Bettinelli, “L’anima che dispensa,” from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , mm. 113-123, voice part, musical motive <i>do re la sol sol</i> | 94 |
| Example 18. Bettinelli, “Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno” from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , mm. 1-5. | 99 |
| Example 19. Bettinelli, “Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno” from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , mm. 19-24. | 100 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Example 20. Bettinelli, “Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno” from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , mm. 27-30. | 101 |
| Example 21. Bettinelli, “Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno” from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , mm. 50-61. | 103 |
| Example 22. Bettinelli, “Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno” from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , mm. 75-87. | 105 |
| Example 23. Bettinelli, “Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno” from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , mm. 128-133. | 107 |
| Example 24. Bettinelli, “Debole sistro al vento,” from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , mm. 1-13, non-directionality of the major second interval and impressionistic instrumentation. | 111 |
| Example 25. Bettinelli, “Debole sistro al vento,” from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , mm. 18-26. | 113 |
| Example 26. Bettinelli, “Debole sistro al vento,” from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , mm. 27-32. | 115 |
| Example 27. Bettinelli, “Debole sistro al vento,” from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , mm. 37-46. | 117 |
| Example 28. Bettinelli, “Debole sistro al vento,” from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , Dorian tetrachords be given octatonic significance. | 118 |
| Example 29. Bettinelli, “Portami il girasole” from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , mm. 9-11. | 124 |
| Example 30. Bettinelli, <i>Portami il girasole</i> from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , diagraph of musical structure corresponding to poetic structure. | 125 |
| Example 31. Bettinelli, “Portami il girasole” from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , mm. 6-8. | 126 |
| Example 32. Bettinelli, “Portami il girasole” from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , mm. 31-36. | 129 |
| Example 33. Bettinelli, “Portami il girasole” from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , mm. 38-42. | 130 |
| Example 34. Bettinelli, “Portami il girasole” from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , illustrates the five common tones between the G-Phrygian mode and the octatonic-2 scale in mm. 41-48. | 131 |
| Example 35. Bettinelli, “Portami il girasole” from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , mm. 41-45. | 131 |
| Example 36. Bettinelli, “Portami il girasole” from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , mm. 58-61. | 133 |
| Example 37. Bettinelli, “Portami il girasole” from <i>Cinque liriche di Montale</i> , mm. 90-94. | 134 |

INTRODUCTION

For the last twenty years, I have considered Busseto, a small village in northern Italy, my home. This small town attracts singers, conductors, agents, and opera buffs interested in the life and music of Giuseppe Verdi. What brought me to this small town (with only one main street) was an opportunity to coach *bel canto* singing with Renata Tebaldi and Carlo Bergonzi. Their encouragement was all I needed to remain in Italy for five years to seek a career as an opera singer. Personal circumstances returned me to the United States and led me to the University of Texas at Austin to begin a doctoral program in vocal performance. It seemed natural to contemplate some aspect of Verdi's life and music as a topic for the required treatise.

In the summer of 1996, a friend, Fabrizio Cassi from Busseto, Italy, suggested I look at the life and music of the twentieth-century composer, Bruno Bettinelli. From that advice, I explored the soprano vocal music of Bruno Bettinelli and discovered a source of twentieth-century Italian compositions that were relatively unknown to the American recitalist.

Bruno Bettinelli granted me the first of four interviews on July 12, 1998 in his Milan, Italy apartment situated off one of the many feeder streets leading to the center of the city. I was apprehensive that my linguistic abilities would be inadequate to match the in-depth questioning that I had in mind for our first visit. Knowing also that he had been the conservatory teacher of some of the most famous Italian conductors of our day—Riccardo Muti and Claudio Abbado—I

was nervous and slightly intimidated by his importance in the Italian classical music scene. I also feared my project to focus on his vocal literature for soprano would not interest him. Instead, within minutes of making introductions and exchanging pleasantries, Maestro Bettinelli and his wife Silvia immediately put me at ease and appeared sincerely honored that I had selected his music as the topic of my treatise.

Bettinelli's music has been described by Gianandrea Gavazzeni¹ as a continuation of traditions that stem from twentieth century European music: Bela Bartók, Gian Francesco Malipiero, Giorgio Federico Ghedini, Paul Hindemith, Igor Stravinsky and Benjamin Britten.² Perhaps in referring to these contemporary composers, Gavazzeni means that similar modernistic techniques, such as pentatonic/modal interaction with chromatic constructions, more specifically, symmetrical pitch formations such as octatonic and whole-tone collections, can be found in Bettinelli's music. Certain modernistic tendencies in which we see a break from traditional musical language can be found in Bettinelli's music, and is certainly found in his vocal music. Gentilucci summarizes his viewpoint on Bettinelli's compositional style:

While in his music each detail appears to be animated by an internal objective and is manipulated to fit in with the whole, it should be noted that this operation is not carried out by means of stylization. On the contrary, he remains sanguinely faithful to impulse. Together with the outline of the design, rhythm constitutes the soul of his impulse, its very reason for existence, corresponding to the vigorous course of the gesture in sound.

¹ Gianandrea Gavazzeni. A famous Italian orchestral conductor whose friendship with Bettinelli developed during their conservatory years of study.

² Elizabeth Gabellich, *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milano: Guido Miano Editore, 1989), p. 8.

Melody is always the principal recapitulatory element, just as faith in music as continuous linear discourse persists. For this reason Bettinelli has always been a contrapuntist, however, without adhering to the Neo-classical movement. On the contrary, he has given vigor to his music by means of harmonic restlessness caused by the continuous presence of chromatic elements, which goes as far as partial recourse to the dodecaphonic technique. To those who affirm that it is no longer possible for the individual to have an active role today, Bettinelli gives a practical reply in his structured music, which, with its harsh profile, expresses an enduring faith in constructive ability.³

By focusing on Bettinelli's constructive abilities within a collection of songs, this treatise demonstrates demonstrate how poetic language and design inspire Bettinelli's musical syntax in his song literature for soprano. The distinctive nature of his art songs, *liriche da camera*, springs from a desire to find the best possible musical solutions to communicate the meaning of the text. Bettinelli, like his musical ancestor, Monteverdi, had as his intention "to make the words the mistress of the harmony and not the servant."⁴ Bettinelli states:

My concern has always been to communicate directly, to transmit a discussion of sounds for people to listen, who know nothing or almost nothing about technicalities of music and in the end are able to say to me, 'Yes, it is difficult, however, this piece impressed me. It touched me, or I was able to follow generally your idea.' This is the best to which a composer of today could aspire.⁵

³ Bettinelli, Bruno. 4th *Concerto per orchestra*. Orchestra di Milano della Rai. Aldo Ceccato. CRMCD 1016, pp. 4-5.

⁴ Giulio Cesare Monteverdi, "Il quinto libro de'madrigali" [1605]. *Source Readings in Music History*, ed. Oliver Strunk. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., p. 406.

⁵ Elizabeth Gabellich, *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milano: Guido Miano Editore, 1989), p. 74. Bruno Bettinelli: "La mia preoccupazione di sempre è quella di poter comunicare direttamente, tramite un discorso fatto di suoni, con le persone che ascoltano, le quali, pur non sapendo nulla or quasi di tecniche musicali, siano in grado di dirmi alla fine 'Sì, è difficile, però questo brano ci ha dato delle sensazioni, ci ha preso e lo abbiamo potuto seguire nelle sue linee generali.' Questo è il miglior risultato cui possa aspirare il compositore d'oggi."

In the hands of Bettinelli, the aesthetics avowed by Monteverdi in his *seconda prattica* thus become true in his vocal music.

The vocal works by Bruno Bettinelli span the years 1933-2000 and represent a continuous presence of compositional skill in blending of words and music. This treatise focuses, however, on only one collection of songs for soprano, *Cinque liriche di Montale* [Five Poems of Montale]. The discussion of *Cinque liriche di Montale* emphasizes emphasize Bettinelli's style and structure and how the two are related. These distinguishing features in this set forms the basis for conclusions regarding the uniqueness of Bettinelli's musical language. The musicologist Francesco Degrada points out:

...the way Bettinelli constructs music reflects his roots in Central European musical tradition...he did not need to absorb these skills since, having been born in Europe, he already possessed them organically. In his relationship with music seen as a science...he is like a physicist...who has shifted his predominant interest from the study of the infinitely large to the study of the infinitely small, having realized that the 'cosmic' structure of counterpoint resembles, after all, its 'subatomic' structure.⁶

By studying the subatomic structure of form, melody, and rhythm, it becomes evident how Bettinelli's distinctly personal ways of expression are direct derivatives of the design of the poem. Form is articulated through the use of dynamics, fermati, changing meter, shifting tempi, interludes, and other devices. Melody is an expressive enhancement of the poetic text. Rhythm is the energy that gives life to his compositions. Bettinelli is conscious of his connection to

⁶ Bettinelli, Bruno. *Sinfonia Breve*. Orchestra del Teatro La Fenice. Leonard Bernstein. CRMCD 1026.

Caccini, Monteverdi, and Verdi, all of whom understood how best to express “la parola scenica.”⁷

This study provides a narrative of his life that includes an overview of his prolific output in many musical genres and a brief biographical sketch. He often speaks about how living through World Wars I and II greatly influenced him as a man and as a composer, and this is explored within a political and musical context. Finally, an analysis of *Cinque liriche di Montale* is rendered through a discussion of the text, form, tonality or departure from tonality, tone color, ostinati, and rhythmic devices, all of which make up the musical language of Bruno Bettinelli. Other materials include a chapter on the poetic source, Eugenio Montale, and an appendix of four personal interviews translated in English.

In several interviews, Bettinelli spoke of not ascribing to any specific compositional system. The evolution of his musical language stemmed from an internal fountain of ideas that were not explainable by the composer. He states:

The fact is that I don't have a system to follow. I write what comes from my soul. I never calculate. Giulio Mercati too makes these kinds of observations, but I can't explain why I write in this way or that...I do it naturally. I don't know how to explain my musicality. I am not an accountant. Music is something that boils within me and when it comes out I must put it into an order for people. But before, it is like lava that burns everything.⁸

Silvia, his wife, states:

⁷ *Parola scenica* were words first used by Giuseppe Verdi at the time of *Aida* in a request to the librettist, du Locle. “Verdi asked his librettist for irregular lines (*versi sciolti*)...‘so as to be able to say clearly and plainly what the action requires,’...” Letter to Ghislanzoni, 17.8.1870. Copialettere, pp.641-2, as quoted by Julien Budden, *The Operas of Verdi from Don Carlos to Falstaff* (New York: Oxford University Press), p. 174.

⁸ Bruno Bettinelli, interview by author, Milan, Italy, 10 July 2000.

When my husband decides to write something, he begins preparing the composition in his mind a long time before writing it. I know it because he becomes silent and withdrawn. This means he is mentally working out musical ideas... The first ten measures then become twenty, because they are so condensed [at the initial stage]. Then he widens and amplifies them. It is like lava from a volcano that expands. Afterwards he must cut and amplify what he wrote.⁹

Even though he is an accomplished pianist, he never uses the piano to work out his material. Once he commits his ideas to staff paper, he works like a sculptor in carving out and refining his ideas. What follows are hours of reworking what was originally conceived mentally.

The set of songs, *Cinque liriche di Montale*, presented in this treatise represent only a glimpse of the composer's creative output. His repertoire includes thirty-six compositions for orchestra: seven symphonies; ten compositions for soloist and orchestra; seven for chorus and orchestra; three operas; twenty-nine choral works; twelve compositions for chorus, organ and piano; seventy-three instrumental chamber works; seventeen vocal collections; and five revisions and transcriptions.

⁹ Ibid.

CHAPTER ONE AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Se non scrivessi sarebbe come se mi mancasse l'aria che respiro.

—Bruno

Bettinelli¹⁰

Bruno Bettinelli, born 1913 in Milan, is known in Italy as one of the most important composers of the second half of the twentieth century. He is a complex and interesting individual who demonstrates a profound wisdom that comes from a long life of personal experiences. Not to be neglected in the long list of people whose influence greatly affected Bettinelli's outlook and intellectual capacities were his parents. As an only child, he had a close bond with his family, in a special way with his father, who was a remarkable and sophisticated painter and his mother, who encouraged his education and his acute sense of music. In speaking with this man, one remains struck by the vivacity of his intuition, and his sharp, biting, rapid and lucid capacity for dialogue. For him nothing is extraneous to his life, from his faith, to politics, to economics. He demonstrates a rare quality for a musician: he can speak knowledgeably about many topics outside his field and does not restrict his discussion to music. In conversing with him one can not distinguish the man from his thoughts, culture, artistry, or whether it is the adviser, the friend, or teacher speaking.

¹⁰ Elizabeth Gabellich, *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milano: Guido Miano Editore, 1989), p. 68. "...if I did not compose it would be like not having air to breathe."

As a teacher, he taught the music of past European masters and believed firmly enough in their importance to fight drastic changes in the Italian conservatory curriculum that would have removed such fundamentals as counterpoint. Bettinelli believed strongly that students needed a thorough foundation in theory, counterpoint, and fugue. He believed that without these rigorous studies, students would not have the multifaceted references to draw upon in synthesizing their own musical language. He fought conservatory colleagues who wanted to eliminate traditional studies based on the notion, that contemporary composers no longer use past compositional models. As a result of this controversy, many students seek out Bettinelli even today to learn from him the fundamentals of composition that are no longer being taught with the rigor of past instruction.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, young composers were faced with the challenge of following the musical giants of the nineteenth century. Bettinelli summarizes the various schools and musical trends he confronted as a young composer in the last written interview with the author:

The period from the end of the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century was extremely complex because of the political and social situation in Italy and France which exploded into World War I. In the music field it was the most important period (that tended toward exhaustion) of great German composers like Schuman, Brahms, Mendelssohn, and, of course, Chopin (who was Polish, but came from that camp). And, of course, Strauss and Mahler.

Then, there was the French reaction by Debussy and Ravel. In the interim, the Russians, who certainly were not inferior to the French, [gained prominence]. Tchaikovsky, who was the greatest musician, was esteemed by Stravinsky (something rare because he criticized everyone).

As for me (born in 1913, graduated in piano in 1937), I had to wait and see, because in the meantime everyone was victim (in manner of speaking) of the melodrama of Verdi and Puccini that prevented the development of other musical forms, such as symphonic and chamber music. This was, however, different for the French and Germans.

After Petrassi and Dallapiccola (who were nine or ten years older than myself), young composers (myself included) were left in limbo after such a marvelous century (19th) that had many more possibilities than the previous century (18th). In fact this century was in general a harmonic clichè (Mozart, Haydn, and then Beethoven, even though he crossed over into the romantic period).

In comparison with this conglomeration of wonderful, cultured French and German musicians (without including the scholars), to the unrestrained reaction at the end of the century of Debussy and Ravel—we enter into the 20th century and the Viennese school begins.

In Italy we have the 1880's generation of Respighi, Pizzetti, and Malipiero. These were more ahead of their times, headed toward a certain modernism. They were influenced, as was Schoenberg, by the Viennese school.

Then we come to Petrassi and Dallapiccola, and, then, I was born in 1913.¹¹

At the time of Bettinelli's birth, there were diverse musical, artistic and political currents flowing through Milan. The most radical was the movement known as Futurism founded in 1909 by the artist and writer

¹¹ Bruno Bettinelli, interview by author, 5 February 2001.

Filippo Tommaso Marinetti. In a series of polemical manifestos, these “Futurists” asserted a revolt against past artistic traditions in order to develop a new kind of art suitable for an age based upon technology. This took place in Milan in 1913-14, where they experimented with the possibility of organized noise as music.¹² Bettinelli was directly exposed to the thinking of the Futurists by occasionally attending meetings with his parents. Bettinelli recalls one particular evening:

I have always been interested in knowing about new artistic tendencies, so one night my parents took me to a Futuristic meeting. This evening there was a humorous situation between the fiery Futurists and those who opposed them. In addition to the polemic discussions of the argumentative Marinetti and his supporters, one could also listen to the strange whispering that came from the famous “intonarumori” [tone noise] of Luigi Russolo. This curious machinery went through successive phases of development acquired new names: hissing (sibilatore), buzzing (ronzatore), howling (ululatore), rustling (frusciatore), and so forth. At the end [of the meeting] momentary interest would be revived in Edgard Varèse, Stravinsky and others. They [these meetings] were, in some way, an instrumental precursor to the *musique concrète* of Pierre Schaeffer born with the advent of electronic music.¹³

Bettinelli was not connected artistically to the Futuristic endeavor and his music was not influenced by their drastic break from the past. Yet, he was always a curious observer of the artistic expression of others. Bettinelli

¹² *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 1980) Vol. F, 41. These demonstrations culminated in 1929 in the Parisian presentations of the final form of Russolo’s most elaborate invention, the ‘russolofono’ or ‘rumorarmonio’. All of which were a precursor to *musique concrète* and electronic music.

¹³ Elizabeth Gabellich, *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milano: Guido Miano Editore, 1989), p. 80.

opposed the iconoclastic Futurists. He composed organically whereas the Futurists synthesized collages of sound. It is safe to say the Futurists views were too extreme to bring about a significant change in the musical life in Italy.

Another musical trend in Bettinelli's formative years grew out of the intensely chromatic idiom of Wagner, Richard Strauss, and early Schoenberg. At the hands of Schoenberg and his followers, tonality was stretched to the breaking point and succumbed to the equalization of the twelve tones.

I was a student and my personal evolution was nothing more than to wait and see. I tried to evaluate what I believed to be valid, that is to say all of the 19th century, without, however, trying to imitate *I Colossi* [the giants]. I studied the new musical trends of Schoenberg and Berg that I liked very much.

Consequently, I experimented with all the various movements: twelve-tone, but not serial. I tried to compose using serial method, but it was like having a chain and ball tied to my feet. It was too restraining in certain ways that I did not like, because I wanted to write what I felt inside. I looked, however, to modernize my language based on the collective experience which surrounded me (like the French, Austrian, and German schools). My generation was like a sponge absorbing something from everyone. Like young shoots [trees] in music, we were a little uncertain.¹⁴

Composers of Bettinelli's generation grew up with fluency in serial techniques. Even though Bettinelli was not a serialist he did move toward a kind of twelve-tone tonal language through the interaction of traditional

¹⁴ Bruno Bettinelli, interview by author, 5 February 2001.

and non-traditional constructions. The pitch constructions that he used were octatonic, whole-tone, modal, and gypsy mode. While belonging to the atonal realm, he does not necessarily distinguish himself as an atonal composer. These issues connects him to other twentieth-century composers and place his musical language in the context of his style.

A third, equally vital development at this time, was an increasing interest in the music of third-world nations and in the folk music of developed nations. The World Exhibition in Paris in 1889 had a profound effect on the thinking of artists of all media. The musical impact took the form of scale structures beyond those of the tonal or dodecaphonic systems, such as pentatonic and whole-tone scales, and alternative modalities. Bettinelli studied the music of Bartók, Janáček, Smetana, Kodály, and others, at whose hands these expanded scale possibilities were explored. The first time Bettinelli heard Bartók was on a radio broadcast from the Festival in Venice.

I would say that Bartók greatly influenced me in the beginning. He was the first composer who broke from the fixed patterns and risked, without failing, a method that lends heavily on Hungarian folk music. The typical Bartók scale, I tried not to use. In my search, however, I drew upon polytonality, free twelve-tone, total chromatic, however, not serial. I have saved a few serial pieces as study pieces, which I abandoned because it wasn't congenial to my way of understanding.

These were journeys of my youth. I had at my back the wonderful nineteenth century, and in front of me all the search and experimentation in reaction to the melodrama even though Puccini's music continued. (May God have this great musician in Paradise).

I sought my way, and, I believe, that I found it: atonality, polytonality. However, what always concerned me was communicating with the public—all the things that connect in a musical discourse (*il famoso filo rosso del discorso musicale*).¹⁵

Bartók believed there was no such thing as atonality in his music. Bartók, in his essays, explains that one arrives at atonality by adding more and more dissonances. When smaller intervals are added one approaches the atonal realm.

The music of our times strives decidedly toward atonality. Yet it does not seem to be right to interpret the principles of tonality as the absolute opposites to atonality. The latter is much more the consequence of a gradual development, originating from tonality, absolutely proceeding step-by-step without any gaps or violent leaps.¹⁶

Although Bettinelli did not turn to folk sources as a means of developing a national idiom, he was able to absorb modal structures by way of his European colleagues and contemporaries. His own nationalism is a fusion of the various European tendencies. This fusion is a combination of his own native lyricism with the highly contrapuntal and dense chromatic writings of a Germanic instrumentalist. As will be seen in *Cinque liriche di Montale*, Bettinelli uses many of the same scalar possibilities of his contemporaries such as octatonic, twelve-tone, pentatonic, modal, and chromatic to organize his musical syntax.

Bettinelli's musical syntax cannot be viewed, however, as belonging to any one of these three movements, but rather was influenced

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ *Béla Bartók Essays*, Benjamin Suchoff (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1976), p. 455.

by certain elements from them. His expanded musical vocabulary grew out of the modal and dodecaphonic tendencies and accounts for the richness of his compositional output. As a young impressionable composer, he could have easily followed current trends, however, he preferred to follow his instinct to create his artistic path.

Bettinelli's artistic path, however, was not an easy one. Italian conservatories, musical organizations, composers, and performers struggled to survive through a most difficult period in Italian history. In the early 1920's, which was the initial stage of Fascist indoctrination, the arts enjoyed a certain amount of freedom of expression as long as artists outwardly demonstrated their acceptance of the regime.¹⁷ Bettinelli recalls:

We [young composers] were somewhat isolated. It was, however, not because Fascism prohibited us (to go in the direction we wanted). In fact Fascism was not interested in intellectual pursuits. Although it is true that Sarfatti, Jewish and a friend of Mussolini, was the one who founded an artistic foundation for painters alone with Carrà, Sironi, De Chirico and others.

In music there was Respighi, who minded his own business, Pizzetti, Ghedini, and, above all, Malipiero. Malipiero (the good Venetian that he was) had contacts at the festival in Venice. He was already ahead [of us younger composers]. I remember the first time I heard Bartók was from a radio broadcast from this festival.¹⁸

¹⁷ Harvey Sachs, *Music in Fascist Italy* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1987) p. 157.

¹⁸ Bruno Bettinelli, interview by author, 5 February 2001.

Many musicians, whether true believers or opportunists, perpetuated Mussolini's ideology and, in some cases, supported this regime blindly. It was not until 1939 when Mussolini enforced racial laws that many musicians became disillusioned with Fascist nationalism and took an active stand against the regime.¹⁹ In July 1939, Bettinelli experienced directly the intolerance occurring in Germany.

I still remember a brief vacation in Frankfurt, Germany in July 1939 as guest of my uncle Armando. During my visit (in my opinion a moment of arrogance and ignorance) a presentation of "degenerate art" (Entartete Kunst) was organized by the Ministry of Nazi Propaganda. People saw exhibited, with the intent to defame, beautiful paintings of Picasso, Klee, Kandinsky, Mondrian, Kokoschka, Otto Dix, Chagall, Braque, and others of the "Blue Riders" and so forth. The music of Stravinsky, Bartók, Hindemith, Schoenberg, and others considered to be degenerate art were broadcast over powerful speakers.

Unfortunately, Russian artists weren't much better off. Those who did not want to stay under the impositions of Zhdanov...were frequently forced to choose between abjuration, exile, Russian concentration camps, insane asylums, or suicide. We know what happened to Shostakovich...²⁰

This experience and many like it left Bettinelli with a disapproving bias toward the German people.

In spite of this bias, Bettinelli believed deeply in the innate goodness of man, in spite of the chaotic times in which he lived. His

¹⁹ Harvey Sachs, *Music in Fascist Italy* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1987) p. 146

²⁰ Elizabeth Gabellich, *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milano: Guido Miano Editore, 1989), p. 14.

symphonic and choral works reflect the disappointments of his times. Yet even in his most tormented works one can find his profound trust in mankind and his deep faith in his Maker. *La Cantata*, composed in 1971 for chorus and orchestra, is a complex choral setting of eleven Ungaretti poems depicting various tormented situations of one's search for God such as verse four, "Whom do I long for? God?" The tormented soul further questions in verse VI, "...soul...of terrors, why are you not gathered by the still sure hand of God?" And more poignantly, "You never look at me anymore, Lord?" These supplicating poems find hope and peace in the final words of the last verse, "I am enlightened by the immense" (*Mi illumino d'immenso*).

Another work considered by Bettinelli as one of the most important of later years is *Terza Cantata* of 1984, which is dedicated to his life-long friend Gianandrea Gavazzeni. He selected a dramatic sonnet by Tommaso Campanella.²¹ At the end of the sonnet, Bettinelli designed a "living circle" to portray visually the content of the poem and to illustrate man's earthly journey. It is best described by the composer:

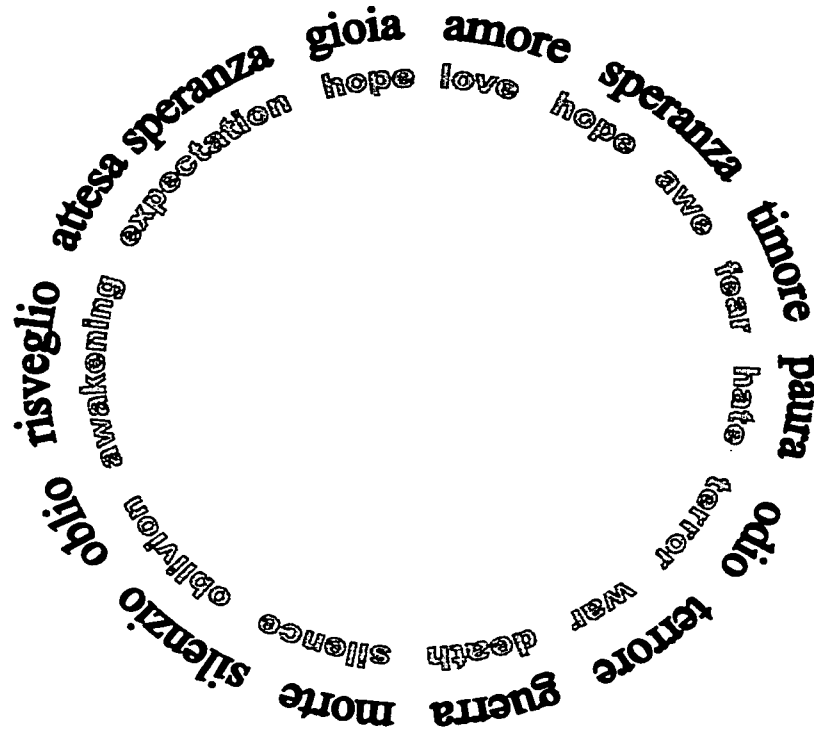
These selected words follow Campanella's texts and are articulated on words that must follow one another in progressive order. For the best emphasis they are placed in succession and read clockwise. The most important word, placed at the beginning and end, is "love" which is meant as the universal fundamental of good. This cycle is a synthesis of various phases of life's course recurring

²¹Tommaso Campanella was baptized Giovanni Domenico. He was a Dominican philosopher and writer, born September 5 1568 at Stilo in the province of Calabria; died at Paris, May 21, 1659. *Catholic Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Tommaso Campanella."

without end. It reflects the content of the sonnet. They [the words] are repeated one after the other insisting almost obsessively, again and again as in an invocation, a shriek of dismay, an abuse, imploring, and finally as hope. The final return of “love” soothes and renews Campanella’s last verses. They complete the image of the wheel in eternal movement that does not concede respite, alternating between good and evil, in man’s earthly journey.²²

²² Elizabeth Gabellich, *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milano: Guido Miano Editore, 1989), pp. 71-72. Le varianti che fanno seguito al testo di Campanella si articolano su alcune parole che dovranno susseguirsi in ordine progressivo. Per maggior evidenza sono state disposte in successione circolare e vanno lette in senso orario. Fra queste predomina, all’inizio e alla fine, il termine “amore” inteso come fondamento universale di Bene. Queste parole sintetizzano le varie fasi ricorrenti che condizionano, da sempre e senza soste, il divenire nel tempo delle vicende umane, secondo quanto suggerisce il contenuto stesso, terribilmente attuale, del sonetto. Vengono ripetute una dopo l’altra con insistenza quasi ossessiva, volta a volta come invocazione, come urlo sogomente, come invettiva, come implorazione e finalmente come speranza. Il ritorno conclusivo e rasserenante di “amore” e la rinnovata citazione degli ultimi versi di Campanella, completano l’immagine di questa “ruota” in eterno movimento che non concede tregua, nell’alternarsi del bene e del male, alla giornata terrena dell’uomo.”

Bettinelli's wheel captures the eternal battle between good and evil.



Convien al secol nostro abito negro,
 pria bianco, poscia vario, oggi moresco,
 notturno, rio, infernal, traditoresco,
 d'ignoranze e paure orrido ed egro.
 Ond'ha a vergogna ogni color allegro,
 ch  l suo fin piaghe e' l viver tirannesco,
 di catene, di lacci, piombo e vesco
 di tetri eroi, ed afflitte alme int  gro.
 Dinota ancora la stoltizia estrema
 che ci fa ciechi, tenebrosi e grami,
 onde' l pi   oscuro il manco par che prema.
 Tempo veggo io che a candidi ricami,
 dove pria fummo, la ruota suprema,
 da questa feccia,    forza ne richiami.²³

²³ Ibid. p. 72. Come in our century black dress, formerly white, then various today dark, nocturnal, river, infernal, traitor, of ignorance, fears, horrid and sick. Whence has every color of shame made merry, that it cried in the end and the living tyrannous, in chains, in lace, lead and blisters, gloomy heros hired souls entire. Denotes still extreme foolishness

Bettinelli's life journey resembles the images found in Campanella's verses. His pilgrimage has been and continues to be about living life through the chiaroscuro events of his century and remaining faithful to his beliefs. This honesty comes from the spiritual core of the man and is found in all his music.

that makes us blind, tenebrous and miserable. Whence the most overcast defect that weighs upon. Time I see that candid embroidery, where before was the supreme wheel, from this dregs, it is the power in it that recalls me.

CHAPTER TWO BRUNO BETTINELLI'S ARTISTIC BACKGROUND

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Italians could not foresee how the leadership of the statesman and five times prime minister Giovanni Giolitti would lead their country through one of the darkest periods of mankind.²⁴ The government took a nationalist-expansionist stand toward North Africa. Bank scandals and financial speculations in which government officials were implicated permeated the central government in Rome. There was unrest throughout the country between the workers and peasants; unions were formed, and there were widespread outbreaks of strikes in 1901 in which the government took a neutral stand in labor disputes. In Italy, the leading class was a staunch, conservative bourgeoisie. At the dawn of the industrial revolution, Italy was a predominately agricultural country. Recent unification of the country in the late nineteenth century was still plagued with cultural differences between the North and South, which remains a serious problem of contemporary Italy.

The Italo-Turkish war (1911-12) culminated with Italian possession of Libya and the long desired goal of colonization achieved. Although Giolitti actively opposed intervention in World War I (1914-1918), Italy entered the war on the side of the allies in May 1915, even after having declared neutrality in

²⁴ *Giolittismo* means retaining power by using corruption and violence on election days and being concerned with personal deals rather than party loyalty.

August 1914. On the eve of this “sciagurato”²⁵ [unfortunate] era, Bruno Bettinelli was born in Milan, Italy, on June 4, 1913.²⁶ This period in which Bettinelli grew up left two indelible memories. The first was as a child of five while visiting a cousin who lived in an apartment in the Galleria across from La Scala, Bettinelli remembers:

I watched the birth of Fascism in Milan. I went often to my Uncle Angelo’s apartment in the Galleria. In 1917-1918, when communism exploded in Russia, in Italy Red Squads formed. From the window overlooking the Galleria, I saw the red squads assault Italian soldiers. The communists tormented the veterans of WW I. I remember them being dragged by the hair across the floor of the Galleria. They accused the Italian soldiers of having supported the war. I can still see it! The *Arditi* ²⁷ were like the Italian marines who wore black shirts, which became the fascist uniform. When the Italian assault soldier saw their friends being assaulted by the communists they defended their friends and fought for them. The industrialist realized the power of the assault soldier and began supporting them financially. Mussolini recognized an opportunity and left the socialist party to support the *Arditi*; what followed was the march on Rome. He was appointed President of the government by the King and then became a dictator. He was a very good speaker and writer. He put many things in order and realized many wonderful works. Then he went with Hitler and that was the end. He thought he could win the war in 5 minutes, while it had just begun. Mussolini destroyed Italy.²⁸

Another strong image that dominates his vivid memories of the past is his tearful mother throwing small packages of wool clothing to young soldiers below in the street as they marched towards Stazione Centrale (Milan train station) for

²⁵ A word used by Bettinelli to describe this moment in his life.

²⁶ Paola Petazzi, “Bruno Bettinelli,” *New Grove Dictionary of Opera* (London: Macmillan Press Limited, 1992), vol. I, p. 461.

²⁷ Ardito, an Italian assault soldier, 1915-18.

²⁸ Paraphrase of Interview with Bettinelli, Milan, July 10, 2000.

the front lines perhaps never to come home.²⁹ Bettinelli has never forgotten these experiences and many others too numerous to recount. In spite of the horrific events surrounding him, he developed an internal will to survive.

Following the war in June 1920 Giolitti, prime minister for the last time, began the difficult job of reconstruction. The weak central government of post World War I could not handle the unrest. Giolitti prepared the way for the Fascist take-over by tolerating the presence of Fascist *squadristi* [armed squads] who assisted in maintaining order. Giolitti resigned in June 1921 appearing to back the new regime, but shortly before his death in November 1924 he withdrew his support.

In 1922, Bruno Bettinelli was nine years old when a general strike was called and 40,000 Fascists threatened to march on Rome. On October 31, that same year, Benito Mussolini became the youngest prime minister in Italian history. His regime at the peak of its popularity, however, would shock what was left of the moral fiber of the country with the political murders of Giacomo Matteotti³⁰ and the Rosselli brothers.³¹ People lived under the fear that if one disagreed with the regime one was punished in humiliating ways, exiled, or

²⁹ Elisabeth Gabellich. *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milan:Guido Miano Editore, 1989), pp. 79-80.

³⁰ Giacomo Matteotti was a socialist party leader 1885-1924. Harvey Sachs, *Music in Fascist Italy* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co.), p. 126.

³¹ Carlo Rosselli (1899-1937) was an Italian anti-Fascist who founded the 'Justice and Liberty' liberal-socialist movement and fought Mussolini's regime at home and abroad until his assassination during the Spanish Civil War. Nello Rosselli, an Italian historian, was murdered alone with his brother on a country road in Normandy. Stanislao G. Pugliese, *Carlo Rosselli: Socialist Heretic and Antifascist Exile*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).

imprisoned. Political support for Fascism was obtained through demagoguery, boisterous nationalism, and thuggery.

Bettinelli recalls his father, a staunch socialist, meeting with friends at the store of the local antique dealer. In the back room, these men would boisterously voice their opposition to the regime. One day a young zealot policeman stopped at the store and belligerently stated: "It is said at police headquarters that there are those of you who undermine the [Fascists] party all day long!" The storeowner replied emphatically: "No, that isn't true! We talk badly about the regime all day, all afternoon, and all night!" The policeman was so surprised at the truthfulness of the response that he left without uttering a word. Luckily, nothing came of the incident. It was the young Bettinelli who would caution the often outspoken socialist father to remain calm and prudent.

Benito Mussolini, *Il Duce* [The Leader] controlled the flow of information and the social structure.³² The regime controlled the arts—literature was used for propaganda, painting, poetry and music for the celebration of the regime. Those artist who refused to join the party, like Bettinelli's father Mario, were prohibited from displaying, performing, or printing their works. In spite of everything, the young Bettinelli managed to maintain a positive outlook, complete his studies, and begin a career as a teacher and composer.

These events, however, and many others like them influenced the manner in which Bettinelli approached life. It affected his feelings towards the German

³² Benito Mussolini, born July 29, 1883, was the Italian Prime Minister from 1922-43 and the first of twentieth-century Europe's fascist dictators. He died April 28, 1945 near Dongo. Harvey Sachs, *Music in Fascist Italy* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co.), pp. 7-10.

people and over the years developed into a negative bias. He openly regrets that some of the most important musicians throughout the ages have been of German descent. In living through these despicable times, Bettinelli's moral convictions and beliefs were constantly being tested. It would ultimately be his faith in God that would give him the strength to surpass the difficult moments of childhood and youth. He proudly exclaims "*I am a Christian in belief and practice.*"³³ It is surprising to find a contemporary Italian composer, prolific in secular genres (for orchestra, the operatic stage, soloist and orchestra, choir and organ or piano, orchestral and vocal chamber music, and revisions and transcriptions), who takes the time to include sacred music in his compositional output. When asked why he writes sacred music, whether instrumental or vocal, he responded with great conviction, "*To be a Christian is necessary for my soul.*"³⁴

Bettinelli's resilient faith saw him through the first half of the twentieth century's most difficult moments. It pulled him toward uplifting poetry and poets and in a secondary way shaped the evolution of his musical language. He was influenced by the most important Italian poets of the twentieth century. At our last interview in Milan, on his work desk was a beautifully bound copy of a complete edition of Ungaretti's poetry. This poet was the inspiration for two important choral works *Tre liriche corali* (1940), and *Sono una creatura* (1971). Bettinelli set other important Italian poets such as Salvatore Quasimodo, Quirino Principe,

³³Bruno Bettinelli, interview by author, Milan, Italy, 10 July 2000.

³⁴ Elisabeth Gabellich. *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milan:Guido Miano Editore, 1989), pp. 79-80.

Guido Miano, Tommaso Campanella, and Eugenio Montale either in art songs or in choral works.

The importance of his family and friends, his conservatory studies, and the Milanese musical scene all contributed to Bettinelli's highly personal and intuitive approach to composing. Bettinelli's mother encouraged his piano playing more from a desire to shape her son culturally than from a hope he would become a musician.³⁵ His artistic temperament seems to stem from his father, who was a well-known Milanese painter and caricaturist. Bettinelli has an extensive collection of his father's oil paintings and caricatures in his Milan apartment. In particular Bettinelli remembers a caricature of the famous orchestral conductor Antonio Guarnieri:

...a few years ago [before I met Antonio Guarnieri in Siena at the "Corso di Composizione dell'Accademia Musicale Chigiana] my father drew in pastel a caricature from life that almost resembled a portrait [of Guarnieri]. It was beautiful for its strength of design as well as its psychological penetration [of the man]. I still have many of these "caricatural mask," as my father called them, that were often published in art magazines or newspapers, often given prizes, hence distinctive. They constructed in certain ways a live documentation of an entire era. In addition to Guarnieri...Puccini, Toscanini, Debussy, Boito, Mascagni, Ugo Ojetti, Ibsen, D'Annunzio, la Duse, Tolstoy, Dina Galli, Adami, Zandonai, Jambo, Liszt, Tostand, Gorki, Leoncavallo, Huberman, Caruso, Ricordi (Burgmein), Humperdinck, Montemezzi, Anton Rubenstein, Grieg, Turati, painters Beltrame, Carrier, stage designers from La Scala Benois, Rovescalli, Palanti, Secretary of State Sonnino, Salandra and many others. Many of these were drawn from life and others obviously from photographs.³⁶

³⁵ Elisabeth Gabellich. *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milan:Guido Miano Editore, 1989), p. 10.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

Among his father's collection is a caricature of Hitler, which Bettinelli refuses to exhibit in the collection, nor does he show it privately. Bettinelli, to this day, is repulsed by the name, Hitler.³⁷

Another influential family member was his Uncle Angelo Bettinelli, one of the most important voice teachers in Milan. His voice studio was in the Galleria just minutes from the back stage door of the important Italian opera house, La Scala. During Arturo Toscani's tenure at La Scala, singers who came to him not knowing their music were unceremoniously sent to Angelo Bettinelli. Toscani is reported to have said to the singer: "Somaro! Andate da Bettinelli e imparare la musica!" [Jackass! Go to Bettinelli and learn the music!].³⁸ Angelo Bettinelli's wide circle of friends included Puccini, Giordano, and Richard Strauss. Bruno Bettinelli recalls an incident that occurred when his uncle collaborated closely during the preparations for the debut of *Salome* at La Scala:

Many years ago my Uncle Angelo was a substitute maestro at La Scala when Richard Strauss' *Salome* was to make its Italian premiere. During a rehearsal break, my uncle was seated near Strauss in the orchestra to coordinate certain aspects of particular scenes. Taken with enthusiasm with the splendid score the young substitute maestro exclaimed: 'Maestro, how do you write these splendid pages?' Mischievously yet pleased, without losing composure, fixed his cerulean eyes through a kindhearted smile, he responded, 'Avec de la patience....'³⁹

Young Bettinelli was born into the environment of La Scala. He spent many evenings in the "loggione" [the upper balcony with the cheapest seats and

³⁷ Bruno Bettinelli, interview by author, Milan, Italy, 10 July 2000.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Elisabeth Gabellich. *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milan:Guido Miano Editore, 1989), pp. 79-80.

many believe the best acoustics] of La Scala, where he heard the greatest singers, musicians, and conductors perform at the beginning of the twentieth century.

At thirteen Bettinelli began his formal music studies at the Conservatory in Milan. It was during this ten-year course of study that he would develop important and long-lasting friendships with professors and students, who would later become interpreters of his works. He studied harmony and counterpoint with Giulio Cesare Paribeni (1881-1964),⁴⁰ orchestration with Renzo Bossi (1883-1965),⁴¹ and piano with Santo Spinelli.⁴² According to Giulio Mercati, the influence of Bossi was in Bettinelli's mastery of traditional compositional forms, in particular the contrapuntal style of Brahms. Mercati further submits that these years of artistic formation permitted the young composer to freely develop his own style.⁴³ In 1931, Bettinelli received a diploma in piano from the Milan Conservatory.⁴⁴ That same year he competed and won the Jounk Garbagnati scholarship, which enabled him to continue his music studies.⁴⁵ During these years, Bettinelli studied as a composer, orchestral conductor, and choral

⁴⁰ Paribeni was an Italian composer and musicologist. He taught harmony, counterpoint, and fugue at the Conservatory in Milan. He published many historical writings, critiques, and music theories. Delfino Nava, *Dizionario Musicale* II (Milan, 1961) p. 539.

⁴¹ Renzo Bossi was the son of the famous organist Marco Enrico Bossi. Renzo Bossi, a composer, took part in a short-lived initiative by the "Cinque italiani" (Pizzetti, Malipiero, Respighi and Bastianelli) to renew a nationalist musical language. He greatly influenced Bettinelli's style of orchestration and encouraged contrapuntal writing. Giulio Mercati, *Bruno Bettinelli Il cammino di un musicista* (Milan: Rugginenti, 1998), p. 19.

⁴² Santo Spinelli was an Italian composer and organist. He taught Gregorian Chant at the Milan Conservatory, and also taught at the Scuola superiore di musica sacra in Milan, and other colleges and institutions. In 1924, he won the position as organist of the Cathedral of Milan and remained in that position till his death. Delfino Nava, *Dizionario Musicale* III (Milan: Paoline, 1961) p.139.

⁴³ Giulio Mercati, *Bruno Bettinelli Il cammino di un musicista* (Milan: Rugginenti, 1998), p. 19.

⁴⁴ Elisabeth Gabellich. *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milan: Guido Miano Editore, 1989), p. 10.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

conductor. He accompanied vocal and instrumental ensembles and participated in all the “i saggi” [student recitals] of the institute.⁴⁶ These years were spent accumulating various disciplines, which would prove to be of great importance to him later as a composer and teacher. Bettinelli conducted his first orchestral work, *Ascesa*, at the final concert of the scholastic year 1933-34.⁴⁷ It was Luigi Orsini, professor at the conservatory, who wrote the poem that inspired the student Bettinelli to write his first symphonic poem.⁴⁸ His conservatory studies concluded in 1937 with a diploma in composition and orchestral conducting.⁴⁹

After completing his Conservatory studies, Bettinelli took part in a summer course at the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena.⁵⁰ This experience allowed him to work closely with his professors and make important contacts with

⁴⁶ “I saggi” are end of the year recitals given by the most talented students of the Conservatory. The entire faculty observes the improvement of the performers.

⁴⁷ Elisabeth Gabellich. *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milan: Guido Miano Editore, 1989), p. 11.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁴⁹ Guido M. Gatti, “Bruno Bettinelli,” *La Musica Dizionario* (Torino: Unione Tipografica, 1968), p. 209.

⁵⁰ The June 1932 issue of *Musica d'oggi* announced a new undertaking that proved to be of major importance: ‘On the initiative of Count [Guido] Chigi-Saracini, and with the Government’s approval, an Advanced School of Music will be founded in Siena under the auspices of the Italian Inter-University Institute, with its headquarters at Count Chigi’s palace.’ Courses ran from July to September, and the original faculty included Vito Frazzi (composition), Arrigo Serato (violin), Arturo Bonucci (cello), Ada Sassoli (harp), Gemma Bellinicioni (dramatic arts), Giulia Boccabati and Adolfo Barutidella (voice), Fernando Germani (organ) and Claudio Gonvierre (piano). The Count, a generous music-lover, was the last of a family that had been in the forefront of Italian finance and culture since the Renaissance. He continued to support the school until his death in 1965, and he left his palace – one of the most beautiful buildings in Sienna – to the organization. Many of the finest musicians in the world have received part of their training in master courses at the Accademia Musicale Chigiana during the past half-century. Harvey Sachs, *Music in Fascist Italy* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co.), p. 43.

other promising and talented students, who became excellent interpreters of his works.⁵¹

Two major occurrences—his first teaching position and his first symphonic work—would change his life. Immediately following his graduation from the Milan Conservatory he was asked to assume the teaching position of his retiring theory professor Ettore Pozzoli.⁵²

That same year his first symphony, *Sinfonia da camera* began to give Bettinelli important recognition. According to Armando Gentilucci, basic characteristics of his musical language, i.e., contrapuntal manner of composing, began to emerge in this early work. He further stated this symphony had some elements resembling neoclassic influence of Hindemith.⁵³ Elisabetta Gabellich describes this work as being 'based on a rigorous contrapuntal texture, in four movements and further remarks that it evades any influence of post Romanticism.⁵⁴

When Bettinelli was twenty-five years old, his friend Gino Marinuzzi, Jr. invited him to his house so that his father, an important Italian orchestral director, could review Bettinelli's first symphonic work. Bettinelli remembers being

⁵¹ Delfino Nava, "Bruno Bettinelli", *Dizionario Musicale Larousse* (Torino: Paoline, 1961), p. 198.

⁵² The director of the Milan Conservatory Riccardo Pick Mangiagalli selected Bettinelli to teach beginning theory and solfeggio. This appointment lasted until the beginning of the Second World War (1940), at which time Bettinelli was enlisted into military service. Luckily, he was not assigned to the front lines, but to a regiment at Ufficio Comando (Headquarters) in Milan. Elisabeth Gabellich. *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milan: Guido Miano Editore, 1989), p. 11.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 23. Armando Gentilucci was a classmate of Bruno Bettinelli and became an important Italian conductor.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 29.

anxious and worried about this first meeting. He recalls, however, being put immediately at ease by the famous conductor.

I will never forget the fascinating personality of this man. [He was] tall, abrupt, a mass of white hair surrounding a pale face, a sharp gentleman from another era. He wanted to immediately see my score (my friend Gino had advised me to bring an additional copy). After he had studied it for a while, which seemed to me an eternity, he instructed me to take a seat at one of the two pianos in the room. He sat at the other piano and said, 'Now we will play it together. When you hear a part missing—you supply it and I will do the same.'...At the end of the score he immediately said to me, 'Good, I am interested, and I will direct it soon.' I was breathless...and even today I ask myself how he could have understood with such immediate perception my work that was anything but simple. It had to have come from an exceptional musical ability.⁵⁵

Marinuzzi maintained his promise to the young Bettinelli and performed the symphony in Florence.

The last movement of the *Sinfonia da camera* entitled *Corale ostinato* was separated from the original work and reworked for large orchestra. Above the rhythmic ostinato of a single note in the timpani, the theme is developed by means of contrapuntal techniques such as augmentation, diminution, contrary motion and retrograde. What results is a musical expression that grows in intensity to powerful sonority. It was this kind of contrapuntal working out of musical ideas that became a Bettinellian trademark. In its new version, the most important orchestras have played it. The *Corale ostinato* has been inserted in the programs of important conductors such as Gino Marinuzzi, Carlo Maria Giulini, Riccardo Muti, and others.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 81.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 30.

The *Due Invenzioni per archi*, written in 1939, had its first hearing under the baton of Carlo Maria Giulini. Guido Cantelli followed with a performance at Carnegie Hall in New York, and Wolfgang Fortner conducted it in Germany.⁵⁷ The first *Invenzione* is calm and intensely lyrical. The second *Invenzione* contrasts the lyricism of the first with an aggressive rhythmic motion. As per Mercati these two inventions seem to recall Bartók's *Deux Portraits* which perhaps influenced the young composer's style and form.⁵⁸

In 1941 Bettinelli won a composition competition, "Angelicum 1942,"⁵⁹ at the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome with his *Concerto per Orchestra*. Among the judges were Alfredo Casella, Vincenzo Tommasini, Alessandro Bustini, and Bernardino Molinari. During rehearsals conducted by Molinari, Goffredo Petrassi was present.⁶⁰ It was at this first meeting with Petrassi that a life-long friendship began. It continues today with phone calls to wish one another a restful night's sleep.⁶¹

In 1941 Bettinelli was nominated for a permanent professorship in harmony at the Milan Conservatory. Months later, he was discharged from the military, which meant he could finally dedicate himself, uninterrupted by the war, to his Conservatory teaching and composing. This teaching appointment lasted

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 30.

⁵⁸ Giulio Mercati, *Bruno Bettinelli Il cammino di un musicista* (Milan: Rugginenti, 1998), p. 23.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 26.

⁶⁰ Elisabeth Gabellich. *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milan: Guido Miano Editore, 1989), p. 12.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 12.

from 1941 to 1956.⁶² Bettinelli recalls, “When I think on this period, I don’t know how I could have found either the desire or the strength to compose.”⁶³

Yet, in spite of the dark times, he did find the strength and the inspiration to write *Messa di Requiem* (1942) for a cappella choir. He dedicated this *Requiem* to the victims of this “sciagurata guerra” [wretched war]. This period clearly reflects in his music the human tragedy of disharmony, political contradictions, and incomprehensible cruelty toward humanity. Bettinelli was keenly aware of how the time in which he lived would form his artistic expression. His friend Gavazzeni relates:

In living the tragic human experience of these last years, Bettinelli sensed the close similarity between the nature of an artist and his reactions to the events of the world in tumult around him....and was aware of how much, at least in the sadness and suffering, a true artist is bound to the happenings of his time.⁶⁴

In 1947 Bettinelli again won another composition prize, “The Angelicum” for his *Messa di Requiem*.⁶⁵

From 1938 to 1943, he wrote numerous art songs [*liriche da camera*] for voice and piano. His interest turned toward poetry and vocal music, because he considered this form “equally important for the expressive possibilities that the human voice offers.”⁶⁶ In addition he continued writing choral works such as *Tre*

⁶² Ibid., p. 13.

⁶³ “Quando penso a quel periodo - dice- ancora oggi non mi so rendere conto di come potessi trovare la voglia e la forza di comporre.” Ibid., p. 13.

⁶⁴ “Trovandosi a vivere le tragiche esperienze umane degli ultimi anni, Bettinelli ha avvertito quanta stretta rispondenza esistesse fra la sua natura di artista e le sue reazioni a gli eventi del mondo in tumulto; quella stessa rispondenza che rende consci di quanto, al meno nella tristezza e nella sofferenza angosciosa, un vero artista sia legato alle vicende del suo tempo.” Ibid, p. 34.

⁶⁵ Elisabeth Gabellich. *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milan:Guido Miano Editore, 1989), p. 31.

⁶⁶ Bruno Bettinelli, interview by author, Milan, Italy, 10 July 2000.

espressioni madrigalistiche and *Tre liriche di Ungaretti*. Ungaretti was a poet especially important to Bettinelli. Bettinelli's choral works, according to Claudio Martino:

...represent a way of composing choral music that is able to reread tradition and history not like a stiff copy, but rather like an endless source of materials that can be bent to his expressive requirements. These characteristics are confirmed by his later works from a careful contrapuntal handling, which constantly takes care of writing always singable parts, especially in his sacred music works, to the extremely hard vertical expressionistic-style aggregates of more complex works like "*Convien al secol nostro*" [It is Worth it to our Age], to a miniaturist's delicacy in verbal utterance, to an always lucid control of the correspondence between the articulation of music and the structure of a text.⁶⁷

Bettinelli continuously and consistently searches for sounds that make resonating sense of the text he is setting. His ability to analyze words and create their most significant meaning in vocal or instrumental sounds gives the listener a more profound understanding of the text.

In the same period, 1943, Bettinelli wrote *Sinfonia n. 2* for full orchestra and *Divertimento* for chamber ensemble. "I do not know how I named this piece 'divertimento' while outside it was raining bombs. Perhaps it was my attempt to smile in the middle of a tragedy."⁶⁸ Gavazzeni wrote about *Sinfonia n. 2*:

...In this work the expressive world of the musical man appears with a vigorous eloquence. The incisive way in which the sonorous material flows in the structure, the nervousness of the treatment, and the dramatization sets on fire each page of this new orchestration. In regards to structure, the two extreme movements of this symphony offer important documentation [of his musical

⁶⁷ Bettinelli, Bruno. *Opere corali*. SARX Records, Milan, Italy. SX027-2, p. 5.

⁶⁸ Elisabeth Gabellich. *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milan:Guido Miano Editore, 1989), p. 32.

language]. If the language is not yet completely personal, it is instead the individual's expressive need that moves the musician and provokes the formal birth of this genre. Therefore, it is the unity of his moral and musical life.⁶⁹

There is nearly a thirty year span between *Sinfonia n. 3* (1946) and his next four symphonies: *Studio per orchestra* (1974), *Sinfonia n. 5* (1975), *Sinfonia n. 6* (1976) and *Sinfonia n. 7* (1978). Bettinelli explains why he waited so many years before attempting to write his fourth symphony:

...Because, you know, it is not easy to write symphonies in series. I wrote my first symphony in 1938: it had a "finale corale con basso ostinato." I orchestrated it for a large orchestra. Since then the symphony has been performed all over the world even at La Scala Theater with Maestro Muti. It makes an impression! I realized that writing a symphony is no joke, especially if you think of your predecessors: Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. It is enough to turn your hair white! So I thought I had better take a break. In any case, my first symphony really turned out all right. Then I wrote another during the war.⁷⁰

The public, however, was not always ready to accept his innovative music. *Movimento Sinfonico n. 2* (1946) was performed by the Turin's radio station's orchestra under the direction of Roberto Lupi. The piece ended with a chilling silence from the public.⁷¹ "They say that silence is golden," responded a

⁶⁹ "...è la prova maggiore offerta dal musicista fino ad oggi. Qui il mondo espressivo dell'uomo musicale si affaccia con una sua gagliarda eloquenza. Il modo icastico come la materia sonora cola nelle sue strutture, la nervosità del tratto, il drammatismo affocato che ne fa una pagina vissuta del nuovo sinfonismo: ecco i caratteri positivi di questa importante prova. Anche per ciò che riguarda la struttura, i due tempi estremi di questa Sinfonia offrono un documento singolare: poichè se personale del tutto ancora non può dirsi il linguaggio, personale è invece l'esigenza espressiva che muove il musicista e che provoca nascite formali di tal genere. Unità di vita morale e di vita musicale, dunque." Ibid., pp. 31-32.

⁷⁰ Bruno Bettinelli, interview by author, Milan, Italy, 18 August 1998.

⁷¹ Elisabeth Gabellich. *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milan:Guido Miano Editore, 1989), pp. 32-33.

disappointed Bettinelli.⁷² Courageously he never let the cold reception of his work impede his judgment. One of Bettinelli's greatest strengths as a young composer was his ability to trust his own instincts.

A year later a second version of *Movimento Sinfonico n. 2* was performed by John Barbirolli conducting the orchestra of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia. The composer placed the original version under the category of "pezzo di studio" [study piece], useful for refining his orchestral technique.⁷³

At the close of the war, Bettinelli wrote *Tre Canti per coro e orchestra* (1945) based on his own text. Alongside these songs are some chamber works: *Sonatina da concerto* (1945) for violin (or flute) and piano (performed often today), *Improviso* (1944) for piano, a few songs and transcriptions for mixed choir and male choir. His friend, Gavazzeni comments about Bettinelli's need to write less demanding works:

...From time to time Bettinelli needed to escape from the strong and severe moral demand of a complex structure. He abandons himself for a brief vacation where his hands are allowed to do what they want. His fantasy is loosened in natural sounds.⁷⁴

These compositional practices are apparent when comparing the thick contrapuntalism in his orchestral music to the lyricism found in his music for soprano. *Cinque liriche di Montale* (1948) for soprano, flute, clarinet, and strings published by Carisch is a lyrical setting of four poems from the *Ossia di seppi* and

⁷² Ibid., p. 33.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 33.

⁷⁴ "Giovane notare - scrive ancora Gavazzeni - la necessità che di tanto in tanto preme in Bettinelli di uscire dalle forti e severe istanze morali, dalle strutture complesse, per abbandonarsi a 'breve vacanze' dove la mano si sbizzarrisce e la fantasia si scioglie in una sorta di naturalismo sonoro." Ibid., p. 33.

one from *Le occasioni* of Montale. This work won him the “Premio Borgonuovo” in 1948 and is the focus of this treatise.⁷⁵ Eugenio Montale was, by all accounts, a difficult person. Consequently, Bettinelli only spoke with him long enough to ask permission to set his verses to music.

During the same year, Bettinelli composed *Due liriche lunari* for soprano and piano on a text by Salvatore Quasimodo and Laura Giuliani. The first of the two selections, “Finita è la notte” is based upon the poem “Ora che sale il giorno,” from Quasimodo’s collection *Nuove poesie* (1936). In essence Bettinelli’s setting captures the atmosphere associated with that special moment of the day when all things wait, as if immobile, for the sun to rise. This ethereal moment is suggested by a simple piano part that plays one chord per measure, sustaining the equally pensive lyricism of the soprano. The second strophe moves to a two part ostinato in the piano. Bettinelli associates the original atmosphere of the opening with the last strophe, which ends in a downhearted state associated with unattainable love.

Two years later Bettinelli wrote two important works for soloist and orchestra based upon King David’s text from the book of Psalms. *Salmo IV* (1950) for soprano and orchestra, and *Salmo I* (1951) are examples of complex compositions in which Bettinelli is able to move from dramatic gestures to tender lyricism.⁷⁶ The intent of Bettinelli in these two works seems to be to model his musical discourse through the endless suggestions that the text offers through its rich contrast.

⁷⁵ Ibid, p. 34.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 35.

When I choose a text, I take care to choose one rich in contrasts, otherwise it becomes a bore. Psalm IV gave me the possibility to create musical chiaroscuro effects. There is the moment of prayer, but there is also God's anger toward men who never pray. Men must fear God's wrath and must not sin. This creates the contrast.

In Psalm I the two characters are the righteous and the unrighteous man. The former prays to God, the latter is against God. I wanted to point out the contrast between good and evil...But after praying to God, everything seems brighter. In my music there is always the aspiration, the desire for good. It is a circle—war, terror, silence then back to love, which is the main characteristic of man, even if he is also a scoundrel. I am sure that in each person the desire for peace is very strong. The vocal music I composed is always marked by contrasts—by a quest for something.⁷⁷

Bettinelli uses the twelve-tone as scale for the first time in the fourth movement "Ostinato" of *Divertimento* (1951) for flute, violoncello, and piano.⁷⁸ According to Gentilucci, the title reflects Bettinelli's state of being which is more serene and peaceful. He further states that his musical language is more lyrical and light, and introduces a variety of expressive sounds.⁷⁹ Franco Abbiati notes that "Bettinelli's individualism in his approach to structure, tones (timbers) and chromatic atonality is more solidified in this work."⁸⁰

Between 1949 and 1953, he composed a group of orchestral and chamber works. *Fantasia concertante* (1949) for a quartet of strings and orchestra was performed at the International Festival in Venice in 1950 and Paul Klecki conducted it at the Theater La Fenice. *Concerto da camera* for chamber orchestra

⁷⁷ Bruno Bettinelli, interview by author, Milan, Italy, 18 August 1998.

⁷⁸ Elisabeth Gabellich. *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milan:Guido Miano Editore, 1989), p. 36.

⁷⁹ Armando Gentilucci, "Presenza di Bruno Bettinelli," *Il Convegno Musicale* (Torino: Giacomo Caula, 1965), p. 53.

⁸⁰ Elisabeth Gabellich. *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milan:Guido Miano Editore, 1989), p. 36

(1951), *Ricercari* for orchestra (1952), *Sonata* for violoncello and piano, and *Tre invenzioni* for six instruments are added to Bettinelli's instrumental output.⁸¹

Concerto n. 1 (1953) for piano and orchestra had its world premiere at Theater La Scala when Paul Klecki conducted the La Scala orchestra and the soloist was Ornella Puliti Santoliquido. Bettinelli, a gifted pianist, exploits all the resources of the piano in the dialogue between orchestra and soloist.⁸² Quirino Principe described the piano concerto in the following terms:

The *Concerto n. 1* for piano and orchestra bears the direction "per timpano obbligato." In fact this instrument (the kettledrum) has a leading role in the whole composition and is the antagonist of the piano... The orchestral texture thickens, first with pizzicato strings, then with the contrast between strings and the drums, until the entrance of the piano which is mainly treated in the first part by means of compositional blocks, often with accentuated rhythm and extended harmonies. However, the second part, *Tranquillo*, the solo instrument produces liquid sound that are almost impressionistic and take part in a dialogue with the woodwinds, seeking to imitate their sounds. In the third movement, *Mosso*, the sharp contrast between piano and kettledrums returns until the strings burst in, insistently and even obsessively.⁸³

When Leonard Bernstein selected *Sinfonia breve* from among many submitted compositions for the Festival of Venice in 1954, the influential conductor validated Bettinelli's importance in the Italian musical scene. Bettinelli recounts how it was selected:

Bernstein at the International Festival of Venice conducted it for the first time in 1954. He chose my symphony from 20 scores sent to him by the general manager of the Festival (Mr. Labrocce). He

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 38.

⁸² Ibid., p. 38.

⁸³ Bruno Bettinelli, *Sinfonia breve*. Orchestra del Teatro La Fenice, Leonard Bernstein, CRMCD 1026.

had to choose one piece that would represent Italian music at this festival. Originally, I had written my symphony for Sergiu Celibidake. Scarcely had I completed work on this symphony when I received a phone call from Labrocca who urgently told me he needed an unpublished work of mine that had never been performed for his festival in autumn. Since I had not heard from Celibidake, I decided to give Labrocca my symphony. At the end of the concert, Celibidake was in the audience and he asked me: "You have chosen Bernstein instead of me?" "That is life, Maestro!" I answered. "I did not think you would choose my symphony, so I sent it to Mr. Labrocca."⁸⁴

"This *Sinfonia breve*," writes Gentilucci, "develops symphonic dimension as outlined in *Divertimento* for trio. One needs to observe this composition for Bettinelli's method of selecting interval relationships and the irregular distribution of the rhythm as used in various instruments."⁸⁵

A year later Bettinelli won the international composition contest "Feruccio Busoni" in Bolzano with *Fantasia* (1955).⁸⁶ The musical language of this five-movement work for piano alternates between refined moments that are thoughtful, intimate, and lyrical with hard and percussive sonorities (reminiscent of Stravinsky), and rhythmically pronounced *marcati*.⁸⁷ Contrapuntal themes show up as reassumed citations at the opening of last movement.⁸⁸

At forty-four years of age, Bettinelli believed he had the musical maturity to confront the challenges of composing for the theater, but in a different form

⁸⁴ Bruno Bettinelli, interview by author, Milan, Italy, 18 August 1998.

⁸⁵ Elisabeth Gabellich. *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milan: Guido Miano Editore, 1989), p. 38.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

⁸⁷ Bettinelli subtitles the second movement "Ritmico" as "Omaggio a Stravinsky" [in honor of Stravinsky]. Giulio Mercati, *Bruno Bettinelli Il cammino di un musicista* (Milan: Rugginenti, 1998), p. 92.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

than the traditional idea of theater (i.e., lyric opera). In 1957 he wrote a dramatic one act *Il Pozzo e il pendolo* [The Pit and the Pendulum], which was a liberal interpretation of Edgar Allan Poe's short story, by the same title (1842). The libretto called for two solo voices, one mime, chorus, ballet, and orchestra. Bettinelli allowed the first performance ten years later at the Donizetti Theater in Bergamo. His doubts about the validity of his work and his own self-criticism would never permit him to be satisfied with this work. The director was Armando Gatto, stage director Antonello Madau Diaz, and the librettists were Clemente Crispolti and Bettinelli. The opera then was presented in many Italian theaters: L'Opera of Rome, La Fenice of Venice, Il Comunale of Bologna, Reggio Emilia, Modena, Ferrara, and Treviso.⁸⁹

In this same period the RAI (Radio Televisione Italiana) asked Maestro Bettinelli to write musical comments for Friedrich Hebbel's tragedy *Giuditta e Oloferne*. The most celebrated Italian actors of the day were involved in this television production. After the success of this project, he was asked to contribute to others, but he always refused, saying:

This type of musical work one can earn much, too much money, of which, one is never rendered happy.... But the real reason, even if I wanted to dedicate myself to this type of musical activity, would never have allowed me the time, space, nor the concentration to be occupied with the kind of music that is necessary for me, like the air that I breathe. It was not a path for me to follow. Given the mentality of the stage directors and Artistic Directors (except for Fallini, Nino Rota and Vaccare), in Italy, a collaboration was not

⁸⁹ Elisabeth Gabellich. *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milan:Guido Miano Editore, 1989), p. 40.

possible with musicians and directors who could be as fulfilled and happy as Eisenstein and Prokofiev.⁹⁰

When Giorgio Federico Ghedini became the director of the Milan Conservatory, he appointed Bettinelli as provisional professor of Composition in 1957.⁹¹ He urged Bettinelli to compete for the permanent position. After completing the exams successfully, Maestro Bettinelli was appointed permanent Chair of Composition at the Conservatory in 1959, where he remained until his retirement in 1979.⁹²

In 1958, Bettinelli composed *Musica* for string orchestra, and according to Gentilucci, a further refinement of his chromatic language. *Toccata fantasia* for organ, which is modeled after the Italian organ school (Frescobaldi, Merula, Rossi, Trabacci, and others), displays a rigorous contrapuntal, articulated style of writing.⁹³

Between 1962 and 1971 Bettinelli wrote: *Concerto* for two pianos and chamber orchestra, *Concerto* for two pianos and orchestra, *La terra* for soprano, piano and clarinet⁹⁴ and *Sono una creatura*, cantata for choir and orchestra.⁹⁵

During this same period the composer continued to dedicate himself to chamber music (piano, strings, guitar, various combination of instruments), and for chorus (Mass, motets, madrigals, transcriptions of popular songs), and they

⁹⁰ Bruno Bettinelli, interview by author, Milan, Italy, 12 July 1998.

⁹¹ Elisabeth Gabellich. *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milan: Guido Miano Editore, 1989), p. 16.

⁹² Ibid., p. 16.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 42.

⁹⁴ *La terra* (1968) was the only art song composed between 1961-1975. This was the first time Bettinelli considered composing for soprano, clarinet and piano.

⁹⁵ Giulio Mercati, *Bruno Bettinelli Il cammino di un musicista* (Milan: Rugginenti, 1998), p. 130.

reflect the evolution of his technique and language.⁹⁶ In 1970 the virtuoso guitarist Angelo Gilardino encourages Bettinelli to write for his instrument. From that request, thirteen pieces were conceived between 1970 and 1994. In particular *Due liriche* (1977) and *Due nuove liriche* (1978) for soprano and guitar.⁹⁷

In 1976 Bettinelli dedicated his *Sinfonia n. 6* to his wife Silvia Bianchera. In October 1976 Aldo Ceccato directed its debut in Rome by the Santa Cecilia orchestra. The next performance was by the RAI orchestra of Milan; Adam Fischer conducted. Then in 1983 it was heard at the Teatro alla Scala.⁹⁸

A year before his retirement as a conservatory professor, he wrote his last symphony, *Sinfonia n. 7* (1978).⁹⁹ The first performance was in Napoli with the Orchestra Scarlatti directed by Mario Gusella, who was Bettinelli's friend and conservatory classmate. Bettinelli dedicated this symphony to Gusella who had conducted many of Bettinelli's works, including the opera *Il pozzo e il pendolo*. Giuseppe Lozza described this symphony as "a terse, prominent design, thin themes but not lean, on the contrary, articulate."

Other important works for orchestra followed: *Contrasti* for orchestra (1979), *Quadruplum* for chamber orchestra (1981), *Omaggio a Stravinskij* (1984), *Strutture* for chamber orchestra (1985) and *Quarto Concerto* for orchestra (1988).¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ Elisabeth Gabellich. *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milan:Guido Miano Editore, 1989), p. 47.

⁹⁷ Giulio Mercati, *Bruno Bettinelli Il cammino di un musicista* (Milan: Rugginenti, 1998), p. 174.

⁹⁸ Ibid., p.188.

⁹⁹ Elisabeth Gabellich. *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milan:Guido Miano Editore, 1989), p. 57.

¹⁰⁰ Giulio Mercati, *Bruno Bettinelli Il cammino di un musicista* (Milan:Rugginenti, 1998), pp. 188-212.

Bettinelli turned his attention once again to compositions for soloist and orchestra. *Il Divertimento* (1979) for harpsichord and orchestra, *Concerto* for guitar, string orchestra and vibraphone (1981), *In Nativitate Domini* for soprano and orchestra (1982), *Concerto* for violin and orchestra (1983), and *La Terza Cantata* for chorus and orchestra (1983). This last work took ten years to complete.¹⁰¹

The last orchestra work by Bettinelli, *Psalm IV* (1992) for choir and orchestra had its world premiere at the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome. This large choral work interrupted Bettinelli's symphonic writing.¹⁰² What followed was a flourishing of choral writing. From 1995, Bettinelli dedicated his attention to choral writing. "You will see from examining my compositions [vocal] my preference for the human voice. It is the best and most practical musical instrument that in a sublime way expresses every gradation of the soul."¹⁰³ In his later years, it seemed natural Bettinelli would concentrate on choral writing. It was the perfect vehicle for communicating his artistry.

For a while, Bettinelli worked as a music critic, an activity, which required him (a man with strong moral convictions), to criticize and censure the music of others. The job also demanded that he produce material hurriedly without much time for reflection.¹⁰⁴ Consequently, he ended his short-lived career as music critic.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., pp. 213-232.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 235.

¹⁰³ Bruno Bettinelli, Interview by author, Milan, Italy, 12 July 1998.

¹⁰⁴ Elisabeth Gabellich. *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milan:Guido Miano Editore, 1989), p.14.

The unpleasant experience as a music critic was nevertheless beneficial to Bettinelli the teacher. As a professor, he would often caution his students to be slow to formulate judgments about music from other periods:

Mind you—he'd say—from year to year many opinions as far as taste and evaluation go can be looked over again, revised, and changed. Every ten years, if one considers the time which has passed in retrospect and all the relative accumulated experiences, a strange and embarrassing sensation ascertains in us. An interior voice seems to whisper, in spite of us: '...you see, you weren't mature enough to understand certain things...' And thus, throughout life, because in reality one never stops discovering, advancing and assimilating the accumulation of endless and complex problems which make the very essence of music. This type of reasoning doesn't have the pretense of being original, since it can refer, as we all know well, to every aspect of our existence; but youngsters need to hear it repeated often to curb a certain iconoclast instinct, which sometimes can be healthy but which is usually negative. I've always told this to my daughter, Cristina, and my son, Ricardo, who both deal, quite successfully with figurative arts.¹⁰⁵

In addition to composing and teaching, Bettinelli collaborated with Guglielmo Barblan and Federico Mompellino on many articles for the *Enciclopedia della Musica* published by Ricordi and later by Rizzoli.¹⁰⁶ He also transcribed works by Corelli, Nardini, Sammartini, Bonporti, some Laude from

¹⁰⁵ "Badate - diceva - che di anno in anno si possono cambiare e rivedere molte opinioni in fatto di gusto e di valutazione. Ogni dieci anni, poi, considerando in prospettiva il tempo trascorso e le relative esperienze accumulate, si verifica in noi, immancabilmente, una strana e imbarazzante sensazione: una voce interiore, nostro malgrado, sembra susurrarci: '...si vede che allora non eri ancora abbastanza maturo per capire certe cose...'. E così per tutta la vita, perché in realtà non si finisce mai di scoprire, di progredire e di assimilare il coacervo di problemi inesauribili e complessi che costituiscono l'essenza stessa della musica. Questo ragionamento - continua Bettinelli - non ha certo la pretesa di essere originale dato che può riferirsi, come ben sappiamo, a tutti gli aspetti della nostra esistenza; ma i giovani hanno bisogno di sentirselo ripetere di frequente per mettere freno a un certo istinto iconoclasta, che qualche volta può essere salutare, ma troppo spesso è controproducente. Il medesimo discorso l'ho sempre fatto ai miei due figli, Cristina e Riccardo, che si occupano con esiti assai soddisfacenti di arti figurative." Ibid., p. 15.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 15.

the 12th century, and partially reconstructed an incomplete piece by the young Chopin. He is a member of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia and the Accademia “Luigi Cherubini” of Florence.¹⁰⁷

Throughout his career, Bettinelli won numerous national and international contests in composition with symphonic, choral, and chamber works. In 1965, he was the winner of two important international contests: Città di Trieste and Città di Bologna.¹⁰⁸ Both of these competitions brought renewed interest in the music of the Milanese composer.

At the end of our last interview, Bettinelli handed me an original handwritten copy of two choral pieces for mixed choir completed in September 1999. To my surprise, he had set two of the poems from *Cinque liriche di Montale* for soprano and orchestra: *Sul muro grafito* and *L'anima che dispensa*. Fifty years from the original setting for soprano and orchestra he recast them for mixed choir. As he explained, “You will see, these will make a big impression.”

In examining Bettinelli’s prolific compositional output, one can sense this composer’s need to communicate spiritual, emotional, and musical ideas through his music. These ideas, whether simple or complex, unfold through a language that seems to be natural and effortless. Those who know him well, however, understand his artistry comes from intuition restrained by severe discipline. His rigorous training permitted him to be grounded in the compositional forms of the past, and in searching for his unique expression claim the freedom, not to adhere to any set procedure. Musical colors, whether instrumental or vocal, are insightful

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 16.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 23.

and range from subtle to intricate. His use of harmonic clusters is far from being random and he is innately sensitive to the effects of sound on the human soul. Above all Bettinelli seeks to communicate. He composes with the intent to be understood, received, followed, and appreciated by the public. Whether listening or performing Bettinelli's music, one can be grateful for the many profound moments one experiences having known his music.

CHAPTER THREE EUGENIO MONTALE—POETIC SOURCE

Eugenio Montale (1896-1981)

“I do not go in search of poetry. I wait for poetry to visit me.”
—*Eugenio Montale (1946)*¹⁰⁹

In Genoa on October 12, 1896, Eugenio Montale, one of the most important Italian poets of the twentieth century was born. He grew up in his native city and in Monterosso, a small village located on the southeastern part of the Ligurian Riviera, where his family owned a villa. The family villa and its household members and acquaintances, including a young girl named Arletta, inspired many characters in the poet's work. Aspects of the Ligurian region permeate Montale's poetry. He loved the Mediterranean landscape—the red terracotta roofed villas, colorful Bougainvillea vines draping front doors, and winding roads connecting small villages nestled between the mountains and the sea. Daily scenes and smells associated with life of the sea—fishermen bringing in their catch, cleaning and drying their nets—find their way into Montale's

¹⁰⁹ From Montale's "Intenzioni (Intervista immaginaria)," 1946 which was an important document and statement of his cultural and poetic creed. He states further, "A poet needs to pursue a specific truth, not a general truth. The poet-subject truth must not deny that of the man-subject, who writes what binds him to other men without denying what is distinctive and unique to him alone." Lorenzo Matteoli, "The Life and Works of Eugenio Montale within the Context of Italian History from 1896-1981," three public lectures at The University of Western Australia to mark the birth of the Italian poet Eugenio Montale, August 1996; available in Italian and English from www.iinet.net.au/matteoli/Montale_e_i_suoi_tempi.html.

poetry. The region of Liguria encompasses some of the most beautiful cities and villages between Genoa and Monterosso, and includes the well-known area called “Cinque Terre.” The five villages, Monterosso, Vernazza, Manarola, Corniglia, and Riomaggiore are in the province of La Spezia. Montale’s father, Domenico Montale who ran an import business, could offer the youngest son, Montale, the freedom to pursue activities he loved most—reading, painting and singing. All three would remain life-long interests of the poet.

Montale was open to all sorts of cultural stimuli and aware of all that was occurring in the literary, artistic, and musical circles of his day. His earliest artistic training began with his aspiration to become an opera singer (a career not taken that he would regret for the rest of his life). Interestingly, he offered another explanation, “and I had other interests, and maybe I was not too dumb: to be a singer one has both to be a bit of a genius and stupid at the same time.” He studied with maestro Ernesto Sivori, who trained him for roles such as Valentin in Gounod’s *Faust* and Alfonso in Donizetti’s *La Favorita*. His dream of becoming an opera singer was cut short after the sudden death of his teacher in 1923. Also, the lack of his father’s emotional support led to his abandoning the profession of singing.

The poet’s musical zeal is found in many of his early works as musical references: “Falsetto,” “Violini,” “Flauti-Fagotti,” “Contrabasso,” and “Corno inglese.” Montale characterized his writings as originating

essentially from a musical impulse.¹¹⁰ In March 1917, Montale heard Debussy's "Minstrels." The poet detailed his impressions in a diary entry:

Concert. Last night concert at the Carlo Felice Theatre. André Hekking cellist, and Luigi La Volpe pianist. I was there with Bonzi. Beautiful. Here is a resume....Debussy, "Les collines d'Anacapri" and "Minstrels": descriptive and impressionistic music, filled with disconnectedness, colors, and meters. First it leaves you almost indifferent, if not hostile; but then it remains imprinted, as if in a nightmare; and you would like to hear it over and over. "Les collines" ends with a white key, dissonant and jarring like the cry of a lost bird. "Minstrels" is, or is taken to be, ironic music. Excellent performance. Why didn't I study music too? I have been asking myself for a long time. Who knows whether pure music wouldn't be my life! How many ideas flash in my mind, which might mislead the public!¹¹¹

This diary entry shows the impact that Debussy's music had on the young Montale. The transformation of music into poetry is already present in the phrase "...ends with a white key, dissonant and jarring like the cry of a lost bird." In the "Imaginary Interview" of 1946, Montale further comments, "I had heard Debussy's 'Minstrels,' and in the first edition of my book there was a little thing that tried to remake it, '*Musica sognata*' [Dreamed Music]."¹¹² This was Montale's early attempt at capturing a musical experience in his poetry.

Montale was a persistent, self-taught man. He did attend a technical school in Genoa, but because of poor health he never finished his studies. He never enrolled in a university. However, he was a

¹¹⁰ Jared Becker, *Eugenio Montale* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1986), p. 1.

¹¹¹ Eugenio Montale, *Quaderno di traduzioni* (Milan: Mondadori, 1976), pp. 33-34.

¹¹² Gian-Paolo Biasin, *Montale, Debussy, and Modernism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), p. 3.

voracious reader and furthered his knowledge by reading the French novelists, English poets, and philosophers such as Arthur Schopenhauer, Henri Bergson, and Benedetto Croce in addition to the Italian classicists. As a young man living in Liguria, he knew and developed influential relationships with important contemporary poets of his day, such as Camillo Sbarbaro, Giovanni Boine, and Angelo Barile.

In 1916, with the outbreak of World War I, Montale attended Officers' Training School. In the fall of 1917, he fought as an infantry officer on the Trentino front lines against the Austrians. As with so many men of his time, the experience left an indelible image and is reflected in his writings by his philosophy of "il male di vivere" [the pain of living]. Unlike Giuseppe Ungaretti and other Italian poets of this period, Montale recorded only a few wartime verses.

Following the war, Montale returned to Genoa and began writing. This material would form the basis of his first collection of poetry. He frequented the postwar literary circles, but soon became disillusioned when he realized that literature was caught up in politics. Montale resisted the powerful influence of the renowned Italian poet Gabriele D'Annunzio [1863-1938], who was exhilarated by the events of war. Montale's first major essay, "Style and Tradition," published in 1925 was a denunciation of the politicized art that D'Annunzio and others like him espoused. Montale criticized D'Annunzio's manipulation of the public, his self-promotion, his love affairs, his grandiose rhetoric and his military and

political exploits. According to Montale, in his “Style and Tradition,” poetry’s involvement with politics could only be harmful and an artist should maintain a circumspect relationship with his audience.¹¹³

When he returned to civilian life, a wide circle of literary friendships would sustain him through the worst of times. One such friendship was with the literary publisher Piero Gobetti of Turin. In fact, it was under the patronage of Gobetti that Montale’s first book of verse, *Ossi di seppia* [Cuttlefish bones] was published in 1925. His bitter pessimism of the postwar period is evident in this collection. Ligurian images come alive with colorful recurring poetic descriptions—*l’arsura del meriggio* [burning heat of the noon], *la salesedine* [the salt of the sea], *un secco greto* [a dry bed of the river], and *l’agave* [the agave]. Montale captures his youthful memories in short concise phrases—*ancorate come barche in rada* [anchored like boats in a slip], *rivedrò domani le banchine* [I will see tomorrow the benches], *un martin pescatore volteggia s’una reliquia di vita* [a kingfisher that whirls above for a remnant of life], and *nel mio terreno bruciato dal salino* [on my land burned by the salt].

Although his first book of poetry was revised and expanded in subsequent editions [1926, 1928], Montale could not make a living as a poet. He moved from Genoa to Florence in 1927 to work for a publisher. Two years later he took a more prestigious position as curator of the Vieusseux Library. After ten years of service, he was fired because he

¹¹³ “Stile e tradizione,” in *Il Baretto*, January 15, 1925; rpt. In Montale’s *Auto da fé: Cronache in due tempi*. (Milan: Il Saggiatore, 1966), 15-19.

refused to apply for membership in the Fascist party. The intolerance of the times increased and Montale internalized antifascist sentiments. While in Florence Montale met his future wife, Drusilla Tanzi ["Mosca"], and Irma Brandeis ["Clizia"], an American scholar of Dante. In the intervening time he frequented the Giubbe Rosse, a popular coffeehouse for writers and intellectuals. The literary gang befriended him and provided the liberal magazine *Solaria* to use as a forum for his ideas.

As a result of his Florentine experiences and associations, his second collection of poetry, *Le occasioni* [The Occasions], was published in 1939. His critics found it to be progressively more introverted and obscure. Because of the work's ambiguity and compressed style, Montale was accused of writing in hermetic verse.¹¹⁴ Montale replied, "no poet is hermetic or cryptic on purpose. However, no one would write poetry if his overriding aim were merely to be understandable."¹¹⁵ *Le occasioni* contains a group of twenty poems called "Motteti." They were written for an unnamed lady (Clizia) who became Montale's private symbol for salvation. These poems reflect a time when he felt his world crumbling.

Montale translated works of T. S. Eliot, William Shakespeare, Miguel de Cervantes, Herman Melville, Eugene O'Neil and others. Later,

¹¹⁴ Benét's *Readers Encyclopaedia*, 3rd ed., s.v. "hermeticism." Hermeticism was a popular poetic movement in Italy during 1930-40. Italian *ermetismo*, was a modernist poetic movement originating in Italy in the early 20th century, whose works were characterized by unorthodox structure, illogical sequences, and highly subjective language. The term was particularly applied to the 20th-century Italian poets whose forerunner was Arturo Onofri and whose primary leader was Giuseppe Ungaretti.

¹¹⁵ *Columbia Dictionary of Modern European Literature*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Montale, Eugenio."

in 1948, these translations were collected in *Quaderno di traduzioni* [Notebook of Translations]. After World War II, he became a full-time contributor at *Corriere della Sera* in Milan as an editor and music critic which resulted in little time for creative poetic writing. It was alleged he never missed an opening at La Scala for the twelve years he held his post. He traveled frequently as a journalist, especially in Western Europe.

Montale's third major collection of poems, *La Bufera e altro* (The Storm and Other Poems), was published in 1956. Montale married Drusilla Tanzi shortly before her death in the 1950; he had known her since the 1930. Following the death of his life-long companion, he resumed his poetic activity.¹¹⁶ Uncharacteristically explicit love poems and memories of Drusilla dominate the verses in *Xenia* [1966] and in *Satura* [1971], Montale's fourth major collection of poetry.¹¹⁷ From 1975, when he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, his name and work became better known outside of Italy and Europe. His literary output continued to reflect his pessimistic attitude that life experiences are "il male di vivere."

A large part of his substantial journalistic output was collected in *Auto da fé* [1966, a selection of critical essays], *Cronache in due tempi* [1966], *Fuori di casa* [1969, a selection of articles written as a roving reporter], *Trentadue variazioni* [1973] and *Prima alla Scala* [1981]. His

¹¹⁶ They had married shortly before her death.

¹¹⁷ *Columbia Dictionary of Modern European Literature*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Montale, Eugenio."

autobiographic work and journals were represented in *Diario del '71*, enlarged in *Diario del '71 e '72*, and published in 1973 as *Quaderno di quattro anni* [The Notebook of Four Years, 1977]. His critical writings on his own poetry and that of others are preserved in *Dante ieri e oggi*, which was read at the International Congress Studies of Dante in 1965.

In 1967 Montale became member-for-life of the Italian Senate. He died in Milan on September 12, 1981. Lorenzo Matteoli rightly sums up Eugenio Montale live in the context of Italian history:

...He lived through two world wars, the birth of Fascism and its twenty years in power, the high expectations and disillusionments of the aftermath of World War II, fifty years of Christian Democrat government and its countless declared or undeclared associations with the Communist Party, their final failure, the aborted revolution of the seventies, terrorism and restoration. He was a poet and he died a decent man.¹¹⁸

Montale entrusted Annakusa Cima, a poet and friend, with eleven closed envelopes containing 66 poems to be published periodically after his death. The poet is still alive.

Bettinelli's Attraction to Montale's Poetry

"I was first attracted to Montale's first collection of poems, *Ossi di seppia*, (not his later works) because of his expressive manner and his strange vision of life."—*Bruno Bettinelli*¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ Lorenzo Matteoli, "The Life and Works of Eugenio Montale within the Context of Italian History from 1896-1981," three public lectures at The University of Western Australia to mark the birth of the Italian poet Eugenio Montale, August 1996; available in Italian and English <www.iinet.net.au/matteoli/Montale_e_i_suoi_tempi.html>.

¹¹⁹ Bruno Bettinelli, interview by author, Milan, Italy, 5 February 2001.

Bettinelli's initial response to Montale's poetry was a spiritual connection; he found it to be expressive and intimate. There are many reasons for Bettinelli's setting Montale's poetry, but the most important is the dramatic—at times even melodramatic—contrast between stanzas. As will be seen throughout *Cinque liriche di Montale*, these sharp contrasts will form the basis of Bettinelli's musical structure.

Bettinelli has maintained a life-long respect and love for great Italian literature and poetry. Throughout his career he has collaborated with many important Italian poets such as Giuseppe Ungaretti and Salvatore Quasimodo. Consequently, it seems natural that Bettinelli would turn to Montale as a poetic source, since he is considered one of Italy's most important poets of the twentieth century.¹²⁰

In fact, there are many musical references in Montale's poetry.¹²¹ He explained with regard to his musical inclinations as...

obeying a need for musical expression. I wanted my words to come closer than those of the other poets I had read. Closer to what? I seemed to be living under a bell jar, and yet I was close to something essential. A subtle veil, a thread, barely separated me from the definitive *quid*. Absolute expression would have meant breaking that veil, that thread: an explosion, the end of the illusion of the world as representation. But this remained an unreachable

¹²⁰ Montale's poetry and writings earned him an honorary degree from the University of Rome in 1961 and shortly afterwards at the universities in Milan, Cambridge and Basel. In 1967, President Saragat appointed him senator for life "in recognition of his distinguished achievements in the literary and artistic fields." Montale's stature as a major European poet of the twentieth century won him the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1975. *Columbia Dictionary of Modern European Literature*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Montale, Eugenio."

¹²¹ See a more detailed explanation on p. 51.

goal. And my wish to come close remained musical,
instinctive, unprogrammatic.¹²²

Montale's writings are filled with tone, nuance, and timbre, which are essential elements to musical expression. These elements, whether direct or indirect, stimulated Bettinelli's imagination as he made musical choices for each song. The most noticeable musical reference is found in Montale's poem "L'anima che dispensa." Montale ends the poem with the solfeggio syllables "do, re, la, sol, sol." These syllables immediately become Bettinelli's motive, which unifies his musical setting. Another musical reference is in the second stanza of "Portami il girasole." The musical citation is "dark things are drawn to brighter, bodies languish in a flowing of colors, colors of music." As we shall see in the next chapter, Bettinelli's tonal selections will be motivated by Montale's words.

In Montale's writings, there are many musical instruments mentioned. Specific to *Cinque liriche di Montale* is the poem "Debole sistro al vento" in which the Egyptian sistrum opens the poem. The adjective *debole* [weak] before the noun *sistro* [sistrum] sets a tone, which Bettinelli shapes by muting the strings in the highest part of their range. Bettinelli's musical rendering again reflects the poetic setting.

Even the presence of the human voice in Montale's poetry would attract Bettinelli to this poet. Two poems immediately come to mind. The first example is found in "Debole sistro al vento" where the voice is silenced "*tace ogni voce*" [silenced every voice]. Bettinelli illustrates this

¹²² Montale, Eugenio. *The Occasions*, p. xv.

musically by withdrawing the instrumental support of the soprano. A more detailed explanation of the emotional dynamics associated with this gesture will be found in the next chapter. The voice is the subject of the second stanza in the poem “L’anima che dispensa.” Montale describes the voice as diffuse—*la tua voce è quest’anima diffusa* [your voice is this diffused soul]. Bettinelli assigns upward scalar segments to the woodwinds to pictorially express this phrase. A more thorough analysis of this example will be given in the next chapter.

Both Montale and Bettinelli have roots in their regions, hence, a “geographical soul” in their oeuvre. The Ligurian coast just west of La Spezia, where Montale’s family built a summer villa at Monterosso, provided the poet with his own “geographical soul.” This would be crucial to the poetry of *Cuttlefish Bones*, the source of four songs in Bettinelli’s *Cinque liriche di Montale*.

It’s odd to think, Montale wrote of his Liguria, that each of us has a countryside like this, however different, which must always remain *his* landscape, unchanging; it’s odd that the natural flow of things is so slow to seep into us and then so impossible to eradicate.¹²³

Bettinelli’s roots are in the Lombardia region. His “geographical soul,” however, is a synthesis of modern European traditions. Although he is truly Italian, he reflects a more cosmopolitan language in his music.

Before the war Bettinelli and Montale were studying to become musicians—Bettinelli as a pianist and Montale as a singer. The First

¹²³ William Arrowsmith. “*Cuttlefish Bones* (1920-1927) (W. W. Norton and Co., New York, 1948), XV.

World War, however, interrupted their studies. Montale's career ended with the death of his voice teacher Ernesto Sivori in 1923; the added pressure of his father's opposition was not helpful. Bettinelli continued his studies in composition and became a Conservatory professor and composer.

Both men experienced the stifling intellectual climate under Fascism. What developed after the fall of Fascism was an important revival in Italian poetry and music. There was an urgency to find a poetic and musical language capable of responding to the human condition of their day: "My poetry in those days had no choice," Montale explained, "except to become more closed, more concentrated."

Montale and Bettinelli responded similarly to Fascism. Both were politically nonconformist, refusing to associate with or join the Nazi party. As a result, Montale would lose his directorship at the Gabinetto Vieusseux in Florence. The agony over the human condition in which their countrymen were living, however, produced different dispositions: Montale saw the worst in situations whereas Bettinelli saw light at the end of the tunnel. Montale spoke often of "il male di vivere" [the pain of living], while, on the contrary, Bettinelli concerned himself with "la speranza"[hope]. These two opposing views of life would directly influence the literary and musical output of these men.

Both men are non-traditional in their artistic approach. They dislike literary and musical embellishment and poetic or musical

posturing. Author William Arrowsmith notes the following about Montale's poetry:

The 'poet-musician' is always, above all in his disdain for mere showman's virtuosity, in evidence. Not only in the dazzling metrical variety and mercurial shifting of tone between aulic and conversational, Tuscan and dialect, but in the overall musical structure, and the poet's uncanny skill of thematic variation and advance.¹²⁴

As a reaction, there was a deliberate economy of poetic and musical response. Montale even speaks of his own struggle with his native language:

...in the new book [*The Occasions* from which "L'anima che dispensa" is taken] too, I've continued my struggle to unearth another dimension in our weighty polysyllabic language, which seemed to me to reject an experience like mine. I've often cursed our language, but in it and through it I've come to recognize myself as incurably Italian and without regret.¹²⁵

Montale's tough, concise language gave way to hard words and sounds; Bettinelli followed suit by matching the word setting with the most fitting musical expression.

Both Montale and Bettinelli managed to live through life-changing moments and were spiritually transformed, influenced, and inspired by them. They grew up highly educated men (Montale was self-taught), rich in cultural experiences, inspired by their predecessors and individually motivated to find their unique voice. All poets and musicians who were to

¹²⁴ Eugenio Montale. *The Occasions*, Translated, with preface and commentary, by William Arrowsmith. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., (1987), p. xviii.

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. xvi.

follow would be inspired by their stories and enriched by their artistic output.

CHAPTER FOUR TEXT AND MUSICAL ANALYSIS OF *CINQUE LIRICHE DI MONTALE*

Bettinelli has said that he considers the genre of vocal music [*la musica vocale da camera*] an opportunity to go deeper into his own culture and to stimulate his own artistic sensibilities. In 1948 he won the Premio Borgonuovo for *Cinque liriche di Montale* for soprano, flute, clarinet, and string quartet. These musical settings are taken from two poetic sources of Eugenio Montale: *Ossia di seppia*, his first poetry collection, published in Torino in 1925 by Piero Gobetti, and from *Le occasioni* published in 1939. These poems by Montale are extremely complex, both conceptually and philosophically.

It is, in fact, the complexity and dramatic contrast between strophes which attracted Bettinelli to these poems. Jonathan Galassi, author of *Eugenio Montale Collected Poems 1920-1954*, offers what he believes Italians hear in Montale's poetry.

"First, I believe they hear a nervous, astringent music, one that asserts its individuality in sharp contradiction to the prevailing norms of its era. Instead of orotund mellifluousness they encounter harshness and abruptness, enclosed in predominantly short forms tending to the paratactic, which are often in themselves self-conscious ironic reprises of traditional stanzas. They encounter a large, often arcane vocabulary which, in its restless search for expressive authenticity, employs rare words from sources ranging from the highly artificial and archaic to local dialect, frequently deployed in surprising conjunctions calculated to "strike sparks." They find, as a rule, compressed expression and thematic reiteration to the point of obsession, along with prodigious inventiveness in handling the inevitable, even oppressive riches of Italian rhyme, and great variation in the use of the Italian version of iambic pentameter? the hendecasyllable? which Montale

alternates freely with *settenari*, *ottonari*, and *novenari*, or seven-, eight-, and nine-syllable lines in his search for constant rhythmic variety, occasionally resorting to longer forms as he experiments with his own kind of Hopkinsesque “sprung rhythm.” In sum, Italian readers of Montale experience a restless will to reinvent, to renew the time-honored materials of their poetry by submitting them to arduous contemporary challenges.”¹²⁸

These contemporary challenges of Montale’s poetic language and design inspire similar contemporary challenges in Bettinelli’s musical syntax. The poetic and musical analysis which follow, are intended to support the assumption that Bettinelli’s rhythmic choices are most often connected to the accentuated word of the poetry. His natural rhythmic approach and the mid-range tessitura for the singer give a vitality to the musical expression.

None of the *Cinque liriche di Montale* contains functional harmony. Consequently, it is best to seek other harmonic principles in analyzing his music. Harmonic design seems to be the expressive goal of the text. Montale’s expressive vocabulary motivates drives Bettinelli’s individual choice of sounds and rhythmic figures. His mastery of counterpoint and his non-traditional harmonic idiom permits him to create strong emotional ties to the text. Though he states frankly that he does not have a compositional method, combinations of octatonic, twelve-tone, pentatonic, modal, and chromatic scales are interwoven in his musical syntax.

Although this is conceived as a set with unifying features, the composer has said that each song may stand on its own. The composer further indicated that

¹²⁸ Jonathan Galassi, *Eugenio Montale Collected Poems 1920-1954* [New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999], p. 417-418.

the song order did not matter to him as long as there remained contrast between the selections. It was the soprano Fernanda Ciani who first sang this set in the spring of 1948 at the Angelicum in Milan. The orchestral version of this set was sung by the tenor Peter Montehanu with the RAI orchestra of Milan.

Unfortunately, Bettinelli and Montale never became intimate friends. Bettinelli is known for his deep friendships with poets and musicians with whom he works. Montale's closed character and cantankerous nature, however, only permitted a brief encounter to give Bettinelli permission to set his poetry. Montale actually attended the premiere of this work, but left before its completion, seemingly because he really did not appreciate the musical setting. This was expressed to me in one of my interviews with Bettinelli.

Sul muro grafito

"Sul muro grafito" belongs to Montale's first book of poems entitled *Ossi di seppia* [Cuttlefish bones]. Many images from this collection are derived from Montale's memories and experiences of life in the region of Liguria where he grew up. Recurring themes of marine life are present in many of the poems of his first book of poetry.

He uses every means available to him to put into words what seems to be impossible to convey. He uses irregular meter and is inconsistent in rhyming. The deliberate choice to use more nouns than verbs creates an ambiguous form of verbiage. This permits him, on the other hand, a type of expression that uses only

essential words to convey his thoughts. He has said, what he was essentially doing was obeying "a need for musical expression."¹²⁶

POETIC ANALYSIS

The stanzas of "Sul muro graffito" [Above the Scribbled Wall] describe familiar scenes found in his village of Monterosso. One can almost hear the rhythmical lapping of the waves against a Ligurian beach as the poetry unfolds images such as "...the mornings are moored like boats."

Sul muro graffito

Sul muro graffito
che adombra i sedili rari
l'arco del cielo appare
finito.

Above the scribbled wall
that shades a seat
or two, the arc of the sky
appears complete.

Chi si ricorda più del fuoco ch'arse
impetuoso
nelle vene del mondo; - in un riposo
freddo le forme, opache, sono sparse.

Who remembers the fire that ran
impetuous in the world veins;
? opaque, the shapes are scattered
in a cold rest.

Rivedrò domani le banchine
e la muraglia e l'usata strada.
Nel futuro che s'apre le mattine
sono ancorate come barche in rada.

Tomorrow I'll see the wharves again,
and the usual road.
In the future opening ahead
the mornings are moored like boats.¹²⁷

The title "Sul muro graffito" [Above the scribbled wall] evokes images of a weather-beaten wall filled with inscriptions. The wall acts as a barrier that protects one from the ocean currents. In Montalian poetry, however, it has a deeper psychological meaning. It represents an intellectual and spiritual obstacle

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 420.

¹²⁷ Poetic rendering of Jonathan Galassi. See Jonathan Galassi, *Eugenio Montale Collected Poems 1920-1954* [New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999], p.62.

prohibiting one from understanding or seeing past the barrier—the wall—to the other side. Philosophically the wall represents an even greater obstacle to the poet? separation from the Infinite [God]. Montale represents this in the words *arco del cielo appare finito* [the arc of the sky appears complete]. The sky which is by its nature infinite, appears to be finite. These words articulate the poet's pessimism and his demoralized perception of life. Through powerful concise imagery, Montale sets a lonely scene to which Bettinelli responds with sparse yet colorful orchestration.

The calm first stanza is dramatically contrasted by the poet's description of the "fire that burns impetuously in the veins of the world." This personification suggests that man's impulsive temperament is like lava which has the potential to destroy all it touches. The word *impetuoso* [impetuous] suggests a flaw in man's character. A *caesura* in the middle of line seven shifts the poem's mood, and here, Montale describes the devastation following an "impetuous fire." What remains "in a cold repose" are objects [wall, bench, sky, fire, all forms] left without warmth and color. Perhaps Montale is defining the moral dilemma of his day. It certainly is characteristic of Montale's continuous belief in "il mal di vivere" [the pain of living].

Conversely, stanza three offers a glimmer of hope. Montale uses the future tense, which suggests he believes there will be a tomorrow. "I will see again" [*rivedrò*] and "in the future" [*nel futuro*] frame the tenth and twelfth lines. He thinks about his familiar surroundings that anchor him to the past — the docks, the wall, the street. There is a shift toward a more lucid acceptance of the future as

he reflects on the possibility that a tomorrow exists. Montale suggests this possibility in the phrase *nel futuro che s'apre le mattine* [In the future opening ahead the mornings]. It is the starting point to begin one's future. Yet what prevents Montale from moving emotionally into a hopeful future, is his tendency to hold to his belief in "il male di vivere." The symbol of this conviction corresponds to the anchor that holds boats stationary. His future is "anchored immobile like boats in a slip."

The poet Montale and the musician Bettinelli each search for truth within their own artistic way. In Montale's search through poetry one senses that he doubts whether man is capable of finding truth. At the same time he shows an availability, a willingness, and a desire to hope and believe that beyond the "obstacles" in life there is salvation. It is to this, however small, sense of hope and salvation that Bettinelli responds to musically.

MUSICAL ANALYSIS

Bettinelli captures the mood and feeling of Montale's first stanza by using the instrumental timbre of the solo clarinet to foreshadow the sense of aloneness in the poetry. In the instrumental introduction, even before the words have an opportunity to convey their idea, the clarinet in the lowest part of its range evokes the mood of "loneliness." The clarinet begins its recitative-like solo passage on E, pauses, then starts again on the same E for four phrases, establishing E as a musical anchor. This musical expression correlates to the last phrase of the poem? "the mornings are moored like boats." During this solo, the clarinet unfolds a meandering succession of pitches that only hint at the octatonic scale

by using it in small segments (3 or 4 notes). There is not a key signature, but E appears to be the tonal center. Sparseness of instrumentation is thus used throughout this section to heighten the mood of loneliness, which is further reflected by ambiguity inherent in the elimination of barlines, time signature, key signature, and especially the tonal indeterminacy of the octatonic scale.

Example 1. Bettinelli, *Cinque liriche di Montale*, “Sul muro grafito,” clarinet solo introduction m. 1.

The solo clarinet completes its last *pp* phrase and relinquishes its expressive role to the flute, which creates yet another metaphor for loneliness. Bettinelli further seems to tie the instrumental introduction to the text with the solo entrance of the flute. The flute perhaps musically portrays the visual arch of the sky through shape. The opening scalar segment sweeps rapidly through almost the entire range of the instrument, and here the segments of octatonic material (associated with ambiguity and loneliness) expand to include complete scales. Through range, dynamics and tonality, Bettinelli contrasts the clarinet’s opening statement to that of the flute’s. The clarinet’s dynamics are *p* and *pp*, and its range

is limited to its lower register. The flute, however, begins playing in its lower, less intense register, rises, and arrives at its peak with a sforzando on its high F.

Example 2. Bettinelli, *Cinque liriche di Montale*, “Sul muro grafito,” flute solo introduction built on octatonic segments m. 1.¹²⁸

The descending figure that follows the climax uses all twelve pitches more freely and ends with a swirling repeated pattern [F—E^b—D] which brings the

¹²⁸ “Octatonic” refers to an eight-note symmetrical scale based on alternating half- and whole-steps. Elliott Antokoletz, *Twentieth-Century Music* [New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1992], p. 98.

instrumental introduction to a close. This musical impasse represents the poetic idea of the wall that prohibits man from seeing his destiny.

Example 3. Bettinelli, *Cinque liriche di Montale*, “Sul muro grafito,” repeated pattern in the flute m. 1.

The soprano voice and cello add to the layering at rehearsal #1 on page two. Since the introduction is without barlines, we will call it measure one. In the highly chromatic instrumental introduction, Bettinelli used octatonic segments as the basic reference for departures and returns. The soprano melody, however, presents a new set of colors that is introduced by the clarinet beginning at measure 2. Its exotic sound comes from a scale known as the gypsy mode because of its two augmented seconds [E—F[#]—G—A[#]—B—C—D[#]—E]. Within this exotic mode, the augmented seconds [G—A[#] and C—D[#]] together symmetrically encompass the fifth degree B in measures 6-8. The adjacent A[#] and C result in two half-steps that encircle the fifth degree, B. In measure 6, the C serves as an upper neighbor creating a great deal of gravitation toward the fifth degree, B, whereas the A[#] in measure 7 serves as a lower-neighbor leading tone and longs for release by moving upward toward B.

Example 4. Bettinelli, *Cinque liriche di Montale*, “Sul muro grafito,” mm. 6-9.



These dissonant elements surrounding the fifth degree prolong the intensity on an important word of the first stanza, *grafito* [scribbled], playing on the traditional dominant-tonic relationship. The gypsy mode appears to be a hybrid scale that combines elements from two contrasting octatonic collections: octatonic-1 and octatonic-2. In the octatonic-1 collection all the pitches to form the gypsy mode are present, except one, **B**, which could be taken from the octatonic-2 collection.

Example 5. Bettinelli, *Cinque liriche di Montale*, “Sul muro grafito,” Gypsy mode combines elements from octatonic-1 and -2 collections.

Octatonic-1 scale: C# D# E F# G A A# C C# D#

Gypsy mode: E F# G A# B C D# E

Octatonic-2 scale: D E F G G# A# B C# D

Another technique to support the mood of loneliness is found in the *ostinato* figure that Bettinelli gives to the cello at rehearsal #1. Bettinelli creates a sense of ambiguity by avoiding strong beats and by shifting the five-note pattern across barlines, suggesting metaphorically a reflection of the motion of the waves along a Ligurian beach or an empty boat rocking quietly in a slip. Both images seem to give a musical portrayal of the profound loneliness found in Montale’s

poetry. Also adding to the ambiguity of the pattern is the varying lengths of rests between the *ostinato* figures.

Example 6. Bettinelli, *Cinque liriche di Montale*, “Sul muro grafito,” *ostinato* pattern in the cello, mm.2-9.



Bettinelli’s musical language stems from his stated desire to enhance the text, for even the rhythm follows the flow of the spoken word. He never tries to impose his musical ideas upon the poetry, but rather searches until he finds the best musical solution to strengthen the message of the poetry. Longer note values are assigned to the strong syllables of important words within the phrase.

He further enhances the meaning of the text by shaping the melodic phrases and dynamics to mirror the text *L’arco del cielo* [The arc of the sky] pictorially. Both the soprano line and the flute/clarinet line create a long melodic arch in mm. 9-14. The flute and clarinet end logically on the tonic E, but the voice only descends to F#, leaving its arch incomplete. This reflects the poetic idea of the vast sky that does not quite descend to the horizon because of the imposing wall.

Example 7. Bettinelli, *Cinque liriche di Montale*, “Sul muro grafito,” pictorial image of the sky, mm. 10-15.

10 *quasi f* 11

Canto l'ar.co del cie - - - - - lo ap - pa - - re

12 13 14 15

Canto fi - - ni - - - - - to .

Oddly, the violins are absent in the first stanza except their entrance at mm. 9-11. Their two note *pizzicato* gesture seems to help punctuate the octave motion in the woodwinds. The woodwinds outline a four note segment of the A harmonic minor scale, which adds additional color to the gypsy mode sung by the soprano. At measure 14, the cello re-enters with the identical five-note rocking motive first played at rehearsal #1. The motion slows in the next bar and ends with a *fermata* on D.

In stanza two, Bettinelli's musical rendering also corresponds to the dramatic images Montale employs. Bettinelli changes the tempo markings, meter, rhythm, and dynamics to reflect the poetry.¹²⁹ The first suggestion that Bettinelli follows Montale's break from the calm first stanza is the tempo marking at measure 16, *Mosso e deciso* [agitated and resolute] in 2/4 meter. He captures the

¹²⁹ **Stanza II:**

Chi si ricorda più del fuoco ch'arse
impetuoso
nelle vene del mondo; - in un riposo
freddo le forme, opache, sono sparse.

Who remembers the fire that ran
impetuous in the world veins;
—opaque, the shapes are scattered
in a cold rest.

mood of impetuosity by insisting on *ff* dynamics in all the instrumental parts from measure 15 until measure 32 where the strings suddenly drop to a *mp* dynamic. The impetuous character of the poetry is also mirrored in the music through a more complex rhythmic motion and articulation in the string parts. In particular, the dotted rhythms, *staccati*, repeated notes, down-bow markings on weak beats, and tremolo in the viola contribute to the overall effect of agitation and resoluteness of this stanza. Bettinelli precisely indicates the effects he wants by marking all the articulations in the strings. Furthermore in measures 25-26, Bettinelli writes in the upper ranges of the flute and first violin, which further delineates the impetuous mood of the poetry.

Example 8. Bettinelli, *Cinque liriche di Montale*, “Sul muro grafito,” strings’ articulation prepares the dramatic entrance of the soprano, mm. 15-18.

15

The musical score for measures 15-18 of "Sul muro grafito" by Bettinelli. The score is for a string quartet. Measures 15-18 are shown. The music is in 4/4 time. The dynamics are marked 'ff' (fortissimo) and 'arco' (arco). The notation includes various articulations such as staccato, dotted rhythms, and repeated notes.

The vocal part adds a more lyrical layer at measure 18 to the already complicated rhythmic urgency in the instrumental parts. Stanza two begins with the voice part on the pitch B. In stanza one, the tone B acted as the fifth degree of

the gypsy mode. But in this stanza, where F is tonicized by its repetition in the bass, the B becomes an important Lydian fourth, emphasized by its reiteration in the vocal part and by its unison arrival in the instruments in measure 23. From measure 26 to the end of this section, the pitch content in the instrumental parts dissolves into a more free use of the notes, which does not fit any particular mode or scale. This seems to correspond to the poetic idea of “scattering,” and the eventual loss of motion as the flute dies away at the end represents “un riposo freddo” [in a cold repose] soon to be mentioned in the poetry.

Another technique that suggests agitation is the manner in which the voice part begins each phrase. The vocal part never begins on a strong beat. For example, at measure 18, the soprano enters on the weak second half of the first beat. More urgency is felt as Bettinelli repeats “chi si ricorda più” [who remembers] — a repetition not in Montale’s original poem. By delaying the arrival of the word fire [*fuoco*], Bettinelli dramatizes its importance. He further extends its note value by tying a quarter note to a dotted quarter note and by placing it on the note F, the highest note in the vocal part to this point.

The climax of “Sul muro grafito” occurs at measure 26 where the soprano arrives on a held G on the word *mondo* [world]. The voice part sometimes moves in sixteenth-notes through the poetry portraying the impetuous quality of the words. The overall construction of the melodic line is basically step-wise motion except when important words need to be set apart by means of a leap.

What follows is a twelve-measure instrumental interlude analogous to the shift in the mood of the poem, foreshadowing the return to *tranquillo*. Bettinelli

suddenly calms the rhythm at measure 30 by substituting the rhythmic motion of the previous section with sustained tremolos in the strings. More dramatically, he drops the *ff* dynamics to *mp* at measure 32, where he introduces a lyrical flute solo, which continues through measure 40. The *fermata* at measure 41 closes stanza two.

Example 9. Bettinelli, *Cinque liriche di Montale*, “Sul muro grafito,” flute solo between stanzas two and three, mm. 33-41.



The tempo marking *tranquillo* at measure 42 acts as a transition to the calmer mood of stanza three, which begins at measure 53. The sparse instrumentation mirrors the poetry, which states that everything has lost its color. The cold, opaque quality of Montale’s words is reflected in the music by the strings playing alone, *con sordino*, the cello and viola playing open strings (*senza vibrato*). The strings play held notes that communicate the static feeling of the last phrase of the second stanza. The ascending octave Db in violins I and II tie into measure 53 where they become a pedal point, which sustains during the vocal part in stanza three.

The poetic and musical contrast between stanzas two and three is moving. Bettinelli thins out the instrumentation and allows the voice to express the idea of

“*speranza*” [hope]. Here again, Bettinelli alternates between octatonic-0 (mm. 53-60) and diatonic (mm.61-69) using common tones as a pivot, one of which is the important note E. E remains the tonal center till the very end, where the voice, clarinet, and cello in turn end on a sustained E.

Example 10. Bettinelli, *Cinque liriche di Montale*, “Sul muro grafito,” mm. 53-76.

5 Calmo 53

53
 Ri-ve-dro' do-ma-ni le ban-chi - - - ne e la mu - - ra - - -
 58
 -glia e l'u - sa - - ta stra - - - da. Nel fu - tu - - ro che
 66
 , *p* liberamente più calmo
 s'a - - - pre le mat-ti - ne so-no an-co-ra - - - le co-me bar - - - che in
 73
 ra - - - da.

muro grafito,” as well as the caesura occurring between lines six and seven. Bettinelli’s through composed rendering of “Sul muro grafito” is structurally delineated in two musical ways: through *fermati* and instrumental introduction and interludes. There are seven *fermati* used by Bettinelli to indicate beginnings and endings of stanzas. The instrumental opening establishes the mood and

atmosphere of loneliness that is seems to be the poet's general theme. Each of the three interludes performs the same function as the introduction—establish or shift poetic emotion and mood. One cannot read much more into the musical structure in this particular song, given the abstract (non-programmatic) nature of his approach. The music of which is expression in its own general terms rather than. Thus, the connections to the poetry are subtle

L'anima che dispensa (Poesie II, Le occasioni, 1928-1939)

Montale wrote just after the publication of his second collection of poetry, *Le occasioni* [*The Occasions*],

“the so-called obscure poet is one who works on his own poem as though it were an object, accumulating in it instinctively sensory and supersensory things, there reconciling the irreconcilable, until he makes of it the firm and definite correlative of his own interior experience.”¹³⁰

It was T. S. Eliot who used the term “objective correlative.” He worked the poetry as though it were an object, refining it into an austere and taut personal expression. Similarly, Montale’s poetry is dense and complex; as an aggregate of his life’s experience is difficult to understand. The resulting poetry was modern to the reader and similar to the intricate, deliberately obscure prosody of T. S. Eliot.

“L’anima che dispensa” comes from Montale’s second book of poetry, *Le occasioni* (The Occasions), published in 1939, fourteen years following his first collection. These new poems, written between 1928 and 1939, continue the themes of disharmony and the pain of existence, which permeated the first collection. Yet there is a stronger and more insistent desire for salvation. *Le occasioni* was met with immediate approval by some readers. There was another faction, however, which perceived this collection to be deliberately ambiguous, vague and extremely difficult to interpret. Consequently, it was labeled as “hermetic,” a rather ill-defined Italian phenomenon of its day.¹³¹ Given the worsening political climate and the pressure on the poet to modernize his verse,

¹³⁰ William Arrowsmith, *The Occasions* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1987), xiv.

¹³¹ See footnote 123, p. 58 for definition.

Montale turned inward and insulated himself from a world he perceived as going out of control.

The lyrical voice heard in *Cuttlefish Bones*, became harsher, yet richer in *The Occasions*. Throughout this collection there are juxtapositions of themes of disharmony, pessimism, and existential struggle despite “il male di vivere” (the pain of life). These poems exhibit a strong desire for salvation. Various poetic images, which search for resolution through salvation, are entrusted to “Clizia,” an important female companion of Montale’s. During World War I, Montale met and fell in love with Irma Brandeis, an American Jew, whom he called Clizia in his writings.¹³² The poet turns to her as the object of his redemption. As the central figure of his second collection, Clizia symbolizes the possibility for his redemption. Although she was forced to return to the United States, she remained present in the heart and words of the poet. Perhaps his love for her was so intense that it accentuated his loneliness, resulting in a continual search for her through his poetic writings. Whatever was his motivation, Montale entrusted Clizia with the task of healing his pain of living. She represents the mystery of redemptive love that lives beyond the reach of language.¹³³

POETIC ANALYSIS

The collection of poetry *Le occasioni* is divided into four sections. Only section II is given a title: “Motetti” [Motets] which includes twenty short poems

¹³² Jonathan Galassi, *Eugenio Montale Collected Poems 1920-1954* [New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999], p. 423.

¹³³ One of the major themes in Wagner’s work is the search for a woman who will be perfect enough for him to receive redemptive love. Wagner was a strong influence on French writers such as Baudelaire and Mallarmé. D’Annunzio’s *Trionfo della morte* (Triumph of Death) reflects *Tristan*. T. S. Elliot’s *The Waste Land* is also filled with Wagnerian allusions.

addressed to an unnamed woman. “This lady or woman-angel? Montale’s personal emblem of salvation in what he saw as a rapidly decaying world? reappears, under the mythical names of Clytie and Iris, in his third verse collection, *La bufera e altro* (1956; *The Storm and Other Poems*).”¹³⁴ The two-stanza poem “L’anima che dispensa” (1938) is number eleven in section two.

“L’anima che dispensa” consists of varying syllables, scansion and line lengths. Strophe one has five lines; strophe two has six. Line one and five frame the first strophe in seven-syllable count, whereas lines two through four are in hendecasyllabic structure resulting in the pattern: 7, 11, 11, 11, 7. Stanza two is predominately hendecasyllabic.

L’anima che dispensa

L’anima che dispensa
furlana e rigodone ad ogni nuova
stagione della strada, s’alimenta
della chiusa passione, la ritrova
a ogni angolo più intensa.

La tua voce è quest’anima diffusa.
Su fili, su ali, al vento, a caso, col
favore della musa or d’un ordegno,
ritorna lieta or triste. Parlo d’altro,
ad altri che t’ignora e il suo disegno
e là che insiste *do re la sol sol...*

The spirit that dispenses
forlana and rigadoon at each new
season of the street
feeds on secret passion, finds it
more intense at every turn.

Your voice is this irradiated essence.
By wire, by wing, by wind or chance,
favored by muse or instrument, it echoes,
joyous or sad. I speak of something else
to one who doesn’t know you, but its
theme is there insisting, *do re la sol sol...*¹³⁵

¹³⁴ *Columbia Dictionary of Modern European Literature*, 2nd ed., s.v. “Eugenio Montale.”

¹³⁵ Poetic rendering of Jonathan Galassi. See Jonathan Galassi, *Eugenio Montale Collected Poems 1920-1954* [New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999], p.202.

Both stanzas have external and internal rhyme schemes:

| Stanza 1 | | | | | | Stanza 2 | | | | | |
|----------|---|----|----|----|---|----------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Line | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| Rhyme | A | B | C | B | A | A | D | E | F | E | D |
| Scansion | 7 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 7 | 11 | 10 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 10 |

The end rhymes in stanza one tend to be strong verbs that demand an action (dispensa, s'alimenta, ritrova), whereas the end rhymes in stanza two are passive nouns or prepositions (col, ordeigno, d'altro, disegno, sol). Other rhyming devices include internal alliteration and assonance: in lines two through four, the internal rhyme (rigodone, stagione, passione); in line three, alliteration with the fricative "s" (stagione, strada, s'alimenta, chiusa, passione). The vocalic echo "oh" foreshadows its importance in the last line of the first stanza. The subject of the second stanza is "la voce" and the stressed vowel sound is "oh." The voice of Clizia is heard through the sound of "oh" in every line of the second stanza, as many as three times per line.

In stanza one, the soul nurtures itself on a secret passion, which is rediscovered "at every turn" with increasing intensity. Perhaps these images in the first stanza are meant to liberate him from his pain. Whatever his intent, the poem "L'anima che dispensa" captures the spirit of a woman (Clizia) who dances a lively forlana (reel) and rigadoon every spring. From her dance, images emerge

of how one dances through life. As the tempo in a dance varies, so does the tempo of life vary through the changing seasons. Each spring brings a hope for the renewal of life and the continuation of the dance. These dances seem to represent a joyful soul whose presence grows more intense with each step. In contrast, the poet's soul remains lonely and closed.

The idea of a *chiusa passione* (secret passion) in line four reveals a poet who is unwilling to share his feelings. This is in sharp contrast to the opening image of a lively, dancing woman. The mind of the poet is flooded with animated memories of her at every turn, which causes his secret passion to be even more intense. These memories are accentuated by the distance that separates them. It is through the poetry we understand his obsession for her.

Line six, *La tua voce é quest'anima diffusa* [your voice is this irradiated essence] is a transition point that connects the two stanzas through rhyme and by identifying *anima diffusa* [irradiated essence] as *la tua voce* [your voice]. Montale, "the musician," equates the soul with Clizia's voice. It is *her* voice resonating on the wire, on wings, on the wind, even by chance; her voice carrying the message of the soul throughout the universe and gaining momentum with each recollection of her. The echoing of her voice, nonetheless, is a negative experience for the poet? given that it reminds him of their separation. Her voice from the distance calls him and speaks of mundane occurrences, and about other people who really mean nothing to him. It is through the returning images of Clizia that Montale feels he is in communion with her spirit and soul.

Montale concludes the poem in a musical solfeggio: “*do re la sol sol*.” Lucian Rebay suggests that “*do re la sol sol*” are the notes of a popular prewar song, “Amore amor portami tante rose.”¹³⁶ As for Bettinelli, this song was never a source for the working out of his musical ideas.¹³⁷ The following musical analysis will seek to illustrate the strong connect between Bettinelli’s musical syntax and Montale’s poetic language. More specifically, it will be evident how the poetic construct of “*do re la sol sol*” becomes a unifying device in Bettinelli’s setting of “L’anima che dispensa.”

MUSICAL ANALYSIS

“*Do re la sol sol*” in C major, is the opening diatonic motive in the instrumental introduction. The first and second violins play this motive in unison while the viola doubles at the octave. In the poetic analysis, this motive was identified as Clizia’s voice, which constantly haunts the poet. Consequently, it is this motive and its return that unify Bettinelli’s musical realization of “L’anima che dispensa.” “*Do re la sol sol*” returns at measure 71 transposed up a half-step on C# and again at measure 98 reinterpreted as an *ostinato* in the strings. The two returns of the motive resemble the ritornello technique, in that it is a recognizable interlude between vocal sections. Its reiteration will integrate the musical fabric throughout the song. In this instance, Bettinelli’s musical language corresponds to poetic expression.

¹³⁶Luciano Rebay, “Montale, Clizia e l’America,” *Forum Italicum* 16, no. 13, (1982): 199.

¹³⁷ Last written interview June 7, 2000.

Example 11. Bettinelli, “L’anima che dispensa,” from *Cinque liriche di Montale*, mm. 1-2, strings parts, musical motive *do re la sol sol*.

The image shows a musical score for strings from Example 11. The score is in 3/4 time and consists of two measures. The parts are: FLAUTO, CLARINETTO in Sib, VIOLINO I, VIOLINO II, VIOLA, and VIOLONCELLO. The Flauto and Clarinetto parts are marked 'Come un Rigaudon'. The string parts (Violino I, Violino II, Viola, and Violoncello) are marked 'f molto ritmato' and play a rhythmic motive. The score is in 3/4 time and consists of two measures.

There are two basic poetic themes that form the basis of Bettinelli’s two-part musical layering: the soul (vocal part) and the dance (instrumental accompaniment). The soul rises above the highly rhythmical scoring of the instrumental accompaniment in lyric modal simplicity. The motivic idea, “*do re la sol sol*” is based on the arrangement of whole-steps, fourths, and fifths, which emerge from the solfeggio syllables. Thus, the polarity concept as manifested on different poetic levels finds its corollary in the musical structure.

The strings’ begin the introduction with a motive resembling a dance, as reflected in the tempo marking *Come un Rigaudon*. Several elements throughout the first stanza in the orchestral part suggest a *rigaudon*.¹³⁸ The music is written in

¹³⁸ “Rigadoon.” A lively French folk dance, which probably came from Provence or Languedoc, was popular during the time of Louis XIII. It was remarkable for its peculiar jumping step (which is described at length in Compan’s ‘Dictionnaire de la danse’, Paris, 1802). The music of the Rigadoon is in 2/4 or 4/4 time and consists of three or four parts, of which the third part is quite short. The number of bars is unequal, and the music generally begins on the third or fourth beat of the bar. Stanley Sadie, ed., *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 16, (London: Macmillan Publishers, 1980), 15.

2/4 and the melody has a jumping quality. Some of the flute phrases begin on off beats and repeated figures are rhythmically displaced (indicated in Example 12). The unequal phrasing is the result of accents placed on the first beat and the “and” of beat two. These accents create departures from the barline and imply an irregular rhythm of 3 + 5 + 4 + 3 + 3 in eighth notes. The restlessness of the implied irregular meter further imitates a rigaudon. Bettinelli also emphasizes a more dance-like rhythm through detailed articulations in the instrumental parts and well-placed *staccati*. These purely musical devices foreshadow the upcoming text and work together to realize word painting.

Example 12. Bettinelli, “L’anima che dispensa,” from *Cinque liriche di Montale*, mm. 1- 10. Syncopated accents, dance-like rhythm and articulation.

The musical score is for measures 1 through 10. The instruments are Flute (FLAUTO), Clarinet in Bb (CLARINETTO in Sib), Violin I (VIOLINO I.), Violin II (VIOLINO II.), Viola, and Violoncello. The time signature is 3/4. The key signature has one flat (Bb).
 - Measure 1: Flute part begins with a circled note (F4). The strings play a rhythmic pattern marked *f molto ritmato*.
 - Measure 2: Continuation of the string pattern.
 - Measure 3: Continuation of the string pattern.
 - Measure 4: Continuation of the string pattern.
 - Measure 5: Flute enters with a circled note (F4) and the instruction *f brillante e incisivo*. The strings continue their pattern.
 - Measure 6: Flute continues with a circled note (F4). The strings continue their pattern.
 - Measure 7: Flute continues with a circled note (F4). The strings continue their pattern.
 - Measure 8: Continuation of the string pattern.
 - Measure 9: Continuation of the string pattern.
 - Measure 10: Continuation of the string pattern.

The introduction continues with the flute’s entrance at measure 5 which takes over the leaping quality of the dance, but no longer in the diatonic mode of the original motive begun by the strings. In measure 3 Bettinelli hints at the new mode by introducing Ab—Bb—Eb in the strings. The flute’s entrance establishes a strong *do-sol* relationship within the F Dorian mode by emphasizing the notes F

and C throughout measures 5-12. Meanwhile, the cello emphasizes G, which implies the G Phrygian mode (a reordering of the same pitch collection of the F Dorian). At measure 13 the flute, likewise, articulates the G Phrygian mode by playing an ascending scalar passage beginning on G and by ending its dance at measure 19 on G. The rhythmic instrumental parts continue on in the accompaniment.

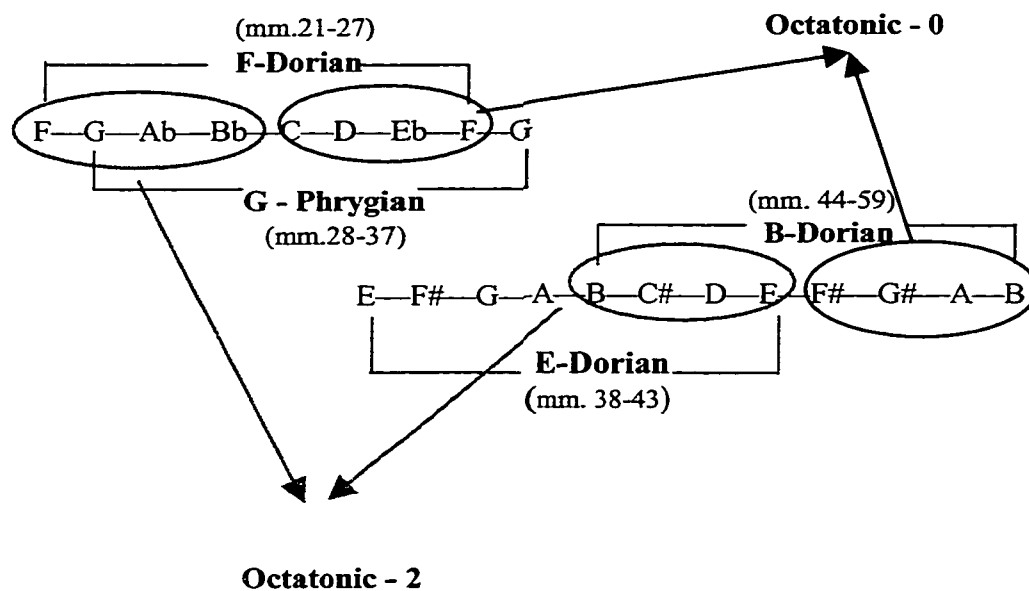
Example 13. Bettinelli, “L’anima che dispensa,” from *Cinque liriche di Montale*, mm. 11-20, flute part’s scalar passage in G Phrygian.



The soprano’s first entrance occurs at measure 21 whose lyric line contrasts with the strongly rhythmic accompaniment . She continues in the F Dorian tonality established by the flute [F—G—Ab—Bb—C—D—Eb—F]. This tonal center is barely established when Bettinelli shifts the tonic from F to G at measure 26 to articulate the G Phrygian mode [G—Ab—Bb—C—D—Eb—F—G] for the next twelve measures. At measures 38-40, A natural, F#, and E (and B in the instrumental parts) are introduced to modulate to yet another mode, E Dorian [E—F#—G—A—B—C#—D—E]. The notes that are not common to these two collections are systematically raised to create this modulation: F pushes

up to F#, the Ab pushes up A, the Bb to B, C to C#, and Eb to E. The soprano uses yet another mode at measures 44-51 constructed on B-Dorian [B—C#—D—E—F#—G#—A—B]. The first tetrachord from Dorian, when combined with the first tetrachord of B Dorian, creates octatonic-2 collection. The latter tetrachords from the two modes form an octatonic-0 collection.

Example 14. Demonstrates Polymodal Chromaticism. Tetrachords from the four modes F, G, E and B are combined to create octatonic scales as shown, which are freely used as source material in the music that follows.



These pitches are replaced in succession, and gradually all the pitches of the chromatic scale are employed. In this circumstance the composer uses modal rotation, shifting tonics, and pushing up by degree to create other modes. In fact, combining the F Dorian and B Dorian scales alone (a tritone apart) results in the

complete chromatic scale. The melodic line draws upon polymodal materials, resulting in more chromatic interplay in the harmonic palette. Bettinelli's rapid shifting between modes represents the poet's obsessive thoughts as expressed in the text: "life's journey feeds on secret passion, finds it again at every turn more intense."

Further characterizing the poem's obsessive character is the repetition of text "furlana e rigodone." Most often, Bettinelli follows verbatim the poet's original text. In this case, however, he repeats the phrase three times extending the fanatical build up of emotion in the music.

Various rhythmic and metric reinterpretations in the instrumental accompaniment point to the pain of the poet's obsession. Similar to Poulenc and Stravinsky, Bettinelli takes the rhythmic components (of eighths, sixteenths, and triplets) and joins them to form rhythmic patterns which are displaced with regard to the barline. Starting in measure 21, violin I, with its displacement of the rhythmic pattern, is in contrast with the other instruments, which remain constant in defining the 4/8 meter. It is the reinterpretation of patterns in violin I that produces confusion and makes the meter ambiguous. This misaccentuation and the different implications reflect the first line of text, "the soul dispensing." The dance dissipates, as if spun out of energy, coming to a complete stop at measure 58.

The dance momentarily pauses to allow the text to be expressed by the soprano. Bettinelli contrasts this section, marked *calmo*, with the previous by slowing the tempo and ending the rhythmic drive. It is the dissonant layering of

whole-steps between the instruments, however, that articulates the pain associated with the poet's phrase "s'alimenta della chiusa passione."

At measure 59, marked *fortissimo*, Bettinelli strongly establishes a D#

Example 15. Bettinelli, "L'anima che dispensa," from *Cinque liriche di Montale*, mm. 56-63.

56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63

Calmò ($\text{♩} = 66$)

mp *ff* *p*

s' a - li - men - - - - ta del - - -

64 65 66 67 68 69 70

rall. *Tempo I. (Allegro)*

mf

- - la chiu - sa pas - sio - ne, - - - - la ri - tro - va a o - gni an - go - lo più in -

pizz. *arco* *V* *mp* *ff* *p*

rall. *rall.* *mf* *v*

pentatonic scale. The clarinet is paired with violin II sustaining C# and D#, respectively. Another whole-step clash happens between violin I and viola, alternating between the pitches G#—F#. At measure 63 the flute continues to alternate between C#—D# of the D# pentatonic collection, while the strings establish another pentatonic collection on E. By moving all the pitches of the D# pentatonic scale up by a half-step and including the remaining C# and D#, Bettinelli arrives at E melodic minor.

The vocal part in measures 60-67 uses both of the above pentatonic collections. It is, however, not a blending of the two, but rather two distinct tonal areas. The first tonal area is measures 60-64 in which all the members of the D# pentatonic are present except A# (also missing in the orchestral parts). Then the voice part in measures 65-67 utilizes pitches of the E pentatonic scale (with the exception of D). These pitches are actually established two measures earlier in the strings and strongly at measure 63 where the strings sustain the chord E—G—A—B (all pitches of E pentatonic except D). In measure 60, the soprano enters on G# which is one of the axes of symmetry of the D# pentatonic collection. Notice how the flute part alternates between the pitches C# and D# in measures 63-67; D natural, the other axis of symmetry for the collection, although not present in these measures, is implied just by the alternating C# and D#. To close this section, the fermata at measure 67, a common Bettinellian structural device, delineates a dramatic shift in the text.

With the return of the *Allegro* at measure 68 another pentatonic collection is established [E—F#—A—B—C#]. Then at measure 71, the opening solfeggio

pattern “*do re la sol sol*” returns in the strings. This restatement, however, is transposed up a half-step beginning on C# (yet another pentatonic collection: C#—D#—F#—G#—A#), adding urgency to the poetic statement. The *sforzando* in measure 72 and *crescendo* also make the musical expression “more intense at every turn.” Stanza one closes with only the clarinet playing a *forte* Gb tied into the next bar, bridging stanzas one and two. Stanza one ends its frenetic momentum at measure 75 and the structure is once again defined by a fermata.

Stanza two identifies “la tua voce” [your voice] as the “diffusing soul.” The poetic images that follow in line 7 of the text — on wires, on wings, on the wind, or by chance — are ideas that pull our imagination upward. In fact, Bettinelli shifts the soprano’s tessitura upward and assigns an ascending sweeping motion to the flute and clarinet at measures 82-85. The flute basically moves through an F major mode and interacts with the clarinet, which moves through complete octatonic scales.

Example 16. Bettinelli, “L’anima che dispensa,” from *Cinque liriche di Montale*, mm. 82-84 ascending diatonic (in soprano and flute) and octatonic scales (in clarinet).



The musical material associated with the polarized voice and dance of the first stanza seems to be blending in measures 77-95, since all the chromatic tones are systematically added until the scale is complete. This can be shown by combining tetrachords from the F [F—G—Ab—Bb + C—D—Eb—F] and B [B—C#—D—E + F#—G#—A—B] Dorian modes to create octatonic scales –0 and –2 (as shown in Example 14). These two octatonic scales are then also combined to include all twelve tones. The orchestral material beginning at measure 82 is a fusion of the modes and octatonic collections used in the previous material.

At measure 96 the motive *do, re, la, sol, sol* returns in equal note values resulting in an asymmetric time signature of 5/4. Octave displacement has been used to make the motive more compact. Used as an *ostinato* from measure 98, it

alternates between violin I and II before the two instruments begin playing it together at the octave in measure 109. The notes from the motive occur rearranged in the voice part in measure 102 and then in the original order at 111-112, but the second *sol* missing. Not until near the end of the song (at m. 116) does the vocal part complete the “*do re la sol sol*” motive.

Example 17. Bettinelli, “L’anima che dispensa,” from *Cinque liriche di Montale*, mm. 113-123, voice part, musical motive *do re la sol sol*.

113

che in - si - ste do re la sol sol do re la

rall.

sol sol re la sol sol

As seen above, Bettinelli lengthens the note values on “re” and “sol.” This serves to elongate the motive and brings the song to a close. So, once again, reiterations articulate the stylistic and poetic meaning while serving both structural and textual roles.

Throughout “L’anima che dispensa,” Bettinelli’s use of the symmetric form of the pentatonic scale serves as a common five-note nucleus for larger scales and modes. Thus, the symmetrical structure of both pentatonic and octatonic scales is a point of departure for Bettinelli’s progressive combining of smaller collections to produce larger ones. This evolution takes him away from

traditional harmony based on the major/minor system and toward an increasingly chromatic vocabulary.

Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno

In a letter to Angelo Barile dated August 12, 1924, Montale describes his first poetic collection, and also refers to “Gloria del disteso mezzo giorno” (from *Ossia di seppia*, 1924) as the “one that truly pleases me.”

“Beyond the twenty *ossi di seppia* the book will contain more than fifteen lyrics, not all of them brief---on the contrary!---and very different; some of them are more ‘singing’ and consoled, from the period of RIVIERE; the image of me that will emerge from the book will perhaps seem to you less coherent but broader and more complex; and the undersigned will come to light more like a ‘troubadour’ than a sophist or a laboratory poet....The 1st of September [*Le Opere e I Giorni*] will publish: a ‘Vasca,’ which will seem new and perhaps not unwelcome; an *osso*---the best to me, in fact the only one that truly pleases me: ‘Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno,’ which I’ve provisionally baptized ‘Meriggio’ [Midday]; and ‘Fine dell’infanzia,’ in which I have glimpsed---with the help of memory---the first arising of doubt in children’s souls: I don’t know with what results.”¹³⁹

POETIC ANALYSIS

Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno

Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno
quand’ombra non rendono gli alberi
e più e più si mostrano d’attorno
per troppo luce, le parvenze falbe.

Il sole, in alto, e un seco greto
il mio giorno non è dunque passato:
l’ora più bella è di là dal muretto
che rinchiede in un occaso scialbato.

Glory of expanded noon
when the trees give up no shade,
and more and more the look of things
is turning bronze, from excess light.

Above, the sun—and a dry shore;
so my day is not yet done:
over the low wal is the finest hour,
ending in a pale setting sun.

¹³⁹ Jonathan Galassi, *Eugenio Montale Collected Poems 1920-1954* [New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999], p. 417-418.

Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno

In a letter to Angelo Barile dated August 12, 1924, Montale describes his first poetic collection, and also refers to “Gloria del disteso mezzo giorno” (from *Ossia di seppia*, 1924) as the “one that truly pleases me.”

“Beyond the twenty *ossi di seppia* the book will contain more than fifteen lyrics, not all of them brief---on the contrary!--and very different; some of them are more ‘singing’ and consoled, from the period of RIVIERE; the image of me that will emerge from the book will perhaps seem to you less coherent but broader and more complex; and the undersigned will come to light more like a ‘troubadour’ than a sophist or a laboratory poet....The 1st of September [*Le Opere e I Giorni*] will publish: a ‘Vasca,’ which will seem new and perhaps not unwelcome; an *osso*---the best to me, in fact the only one that truly pleases me: ‘Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno,’ which I’ve provisionally baptized ‘Meriggio’ [Midday]; and ‘Fine dell’infanzia,’ in which I have glimpsed---with the help of memory---the first arising of doubt in children’s souls: I don’t know with what results.”¹³⁹

POETIC ANALYSIS

Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno

Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno
quand’ombra non rendono gli alberi
e più e più si mostrano d’attorno
per troppo luce, le parvenze falbe.

Il sole, in alto, e un seco greto
il mio giorno non è dunque passato:
l’ora più bella è di là dal muretto
che rinchiude in un occaso scialbato.

Glory of expanded noon
when the trees give up no shade,
and more and more the look of things
is turning bronze, from excess light.

Above, the sun? and a dry shore;
so my day is not yet done:
over the low wal is the finest hour,
ending in a pale setting sun.

¹³⁹ Jonathan Galassi, *Eugenio Montale Collected Poems 1920-1954* [New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999], p. 417-418.

L'arsura, in giro; un martin pescatore
volteggia s'una reliquia di vita.
La buona pioggia è di là dallo squallore,
ma in attendere è gioia più compita.

Drought all around: kingfisher hovers
over something life has left.
The good rain is beyond the
barrenness,
but there's greater joy in waiting.¹⁴⁰

“Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno” seems to represent the theme of waiting—more specifically waiting for a miracle. The verb *attendere* in the last line of the poem expresses the potential inherent in waiting. There is joy in waiting for the better part of the day to arrive, which is a metaphorical representation of waiting for salvation. Although there is joy in waiting there is also an understated discomfort, which is organically expressed in the deliberate disturbance [in line four] of an otherwise symmetrical rhyme scheme: ABAC—DEDE—FGFG. Even the scansion, although making use of standard meter, mixes hendecasyllabic and decasyllabic lines.

In stanza one the landscape is flooded with direct sunlight, so much so that the trees cannot give shade. With so much light, every object has turned a hazy yellowish-brown. The heat of the sun and the summer air serve to create the aridity of the poetic landscape. These words evoke a sense of bareness and dryness that symbolize, yet again, the “male di vivere” that is woven throughout Montale’s poetry.

Stanza two continues the theme of dryness: “the sun is high and the stones along the shore are parched.” In waiting, however, there is hope. The poet states

¹⁴⁰ Poetic rendering by Jonathan Galassi. See Jonathan Galassi, *Eugenio Montale Collected Poems 1920-1954* [New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999], p. 52.

that the day is not yet over, and that which promises to be the most beautiful hour of the day [sunset] is yet to come.

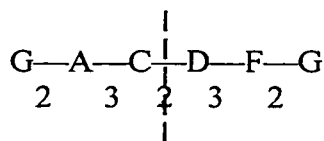
The arid theme persists in stanza three. Yet there is the hopeful expectation of a cleansing rain. The themes of waiting and redemption come full circle as the kingfisher hovers above his anticipated prey. The discards of the sea become his sustenance. Montale ends his verse with the optimistic belief that joy is found in waiting.

MUSICAL ANALYSIS

“Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno” is perhaps the most difficult among the five poems in question, with its philosophical theme and Bettinelli’s devotion to model his work on the slightest metric nuance of the poetic text. Of the five songs in this collection, this is the only one to exclude the flute from its orchestration. The predominance of the strings emphasizes the static quality of the poem; the brilliance, clarity, and motion associated with the flute would be at odds with this sultry atmosphere. The piece begins with sustained strings in open chords spanning four octaves. The outer strings move in octaves emphasizing D while the inner strings have a ascending scalar line, also at the octave. These extremes of ranges and sense of pull between the parts represent “the expanded mid-day.” To further illustrate the sustained quality of the text, Bettinelli uses long note values at a slow tempo. The transparent quality of the first stanza comes from the vertical voicing of the strings in open fifths and octaves. The musical representation supports the textual image of an expansive mid-day.

Example 18. Bettinelli, “Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno” from *Cinque liriche di Montale*, mm. 1-5.

The musical material of the voice line of the first seven measures uses the pitches C D F G A which recall the motive used in “L’anima che dispensa”: *do re la sol sol*. This pentatonic collection is symmetrical around an axis between C and D:



This melody is also found, in order, in the aggregate of the instrumental parts. The fortissimo dynamic and the sturdiness of the chords render the poetic idea of hope.

Imitation permeates this impressionistic instrumental underscoring of the vocal line throughout the first stanza. This first occurs in measure 3 when the entrance of the voice echoes the opening two measures played by the violins, and again at measure 9 when the voice echoes violin I.

The descent of a fifth on the word *luce* [light] in measure 13 is imitated in the instruments (measure 13 violin I, measure 14-15 cello). It flows seamlessly into faster moving, more dissonant lines at measure 16, where the addition of more chromatic coloring in the orchestration intensifies the transition into stanza two. This is a deliberate obscuring of tonality.

Following the suggestions of the text, “the sun high above and the stones are parched,” Bettinelli draws the violin I and viola into the high extremes of their ranges, and they sustain a long note, reflecting the noon position of the sun (mm. 19-22). What follows in the accompaniment is a musical rendering of the text in line 5 “and the dry beach,” with a “drying up” of the instrumental sounds in measures 23-24. The voice part is marked *quasi parlato* and for a moment speaks completely alone, and it is echoed with dry pizzicato gestures in the strings.

Example 19. Bettinelli, “Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno” from *Cinque liriche di Montale*, mm. 19-24.

[2] Più calmo
19 *p*

quasi parlato

Il so - le in al - - to e un sec. en gre - to .

p *pizz.* *p* *pizz.* *mp* *pizz.*

In stanza two, line 6, [at measures 25-26], the poet writes, “my day is not finished.” The poet is waiting and hopeful. Bettinelli responds by changing the movement of the strings at the *più mosso* (at measure 25) to give a radiant, excited quality. By using open-sounding intervals like fourths, fifths, and tritones, the sonorities acquire even greater brilliance. The musical climax at measure 29 is a combination of accelerated motion in the strings; the pungent quality of seconds, fourths, and tritones; the high registration in all the instruments; and the highest, longest, and loudest sung note thus far in the piece.

Example 20. Bettinelli, “Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno” from *Cinque liriche di Montale*, mm. 27-30.

27

- sa - - - - - to : - - - - - l' o - ra più

accel.

mf

mf

accel.

3 *f*
bel - - - - - la c di
molto mosso
f
f
f
f *molto mosso*

Bettinelli's restrained use of woodwinds in this song is unique within this set. As mentioned earlier, the flute is totally absent and the clarinet only appears during the interlude before the third stanza, thereby adding motion to an otherwise more sustained instrumental interlude. This stagnation expresses the theme of waiting. The clarinet's lazy entrance and ascent at measures 44 - 60 suggest the sporadic wing motion of the kingfisher as he glides above the water waiting to snatch a remnant which will sustain his life. There are sustaining qualities in the musical texture during this interlude, such as the pedal point in the cello from measure 44 and the viola joining at measure 51. Beginning at measure 53 and ending at measure 66 in violin II, the pulsating repeated low notes add rhythmic interest.

Example 21. Bettinelli, “Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno” from *Cinque liriche di Montale*, mm. 50-61.

50

56

poco tratt. a tempo

L'ar-

Stanza three is the literal portrayal of what has been suggested in the first two stanzas—waiting. On an obvious level, the first two stanzas require only forty-three measures, whereas Bettinelli devotes eighty-nine measures to stanza three alone. This musical expansion is achieved in two ways: [1] the insertion of instrumental interludes, and [2] the repetition of text. The latter is outside Bettinelli's normal pattern. In this case, however, it underlines the actual theme of the poem.

Bettinelli suggests an imitative texture starting at measure 75. The piling up of layers begins with the viola's entrance on D, followed by the cello on A, followed by the violin II on A, and lastly the violin I on D. The alternating use of notes D/A foreshadows the prominence of the perfect fourths and fifths at the varied recapitulation at measure 88. The independent lines become increasingly chromatic, and the intervals between them transform from mostly fifths to more dissonant seconds. The accumulation of sonorities, the upward motion of the violin I and II, the increased chromaticism, and the gradual dynamic change from *pp* to *ff* of this passage lead to the joyous return of the opening motive [at measure 88]. In addition, the thirteen-measure segment also functions to reintroduce D Dorian, which reappears with clarity at measure 88 in intense contrast to the previous chromatic middle section.

Example 23. Bettinelli, “Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno” from *Cinque liriche di Montale*, mm. 75-87.

75

[6] Più mosso (♩ = 72)

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system, measures 75-87, begins with a piano introduction marked 'Più mosso (♩ = 72)'. It features a half-note pulse in the piano part, with the vocal line entering in measure 76. The second system, measures 88-99, shows the vocal line re-entering with the instruction 'un poco accel.' and a tempo change to 112 bpm. The piano part provides a sustained accompaniment. The score includes staves for piano, voice, and a lower instrumental part.

The return of the opening [at measure 88] is musically similar, but the poetic intent is vastly different. The slow, sustained metronome marking of the half-note, equaling 56 at the beginning, is doubled [at measure 88] with the half-note equaling 112. In the score Bettinelli writes *con festosa insistenza lasciando emergere il canto* [with festive insistence allowing the voice to emerge]. This

indicates that he wants the soloist and the accompaniment to be free and expansive in their musical expression. The *ff* dynamic marking of this section is similar to the opening. However, this dynamic continues to the end reflecting the optimistic ending of the poem, whereas the opening statement gradually returns to *mp*. The sustained and expansive opening of stanza one differs from stanza three in that the recap fuses more contrapuntal techniques with the homophonic textures in the instrument parts. This permits the voice and ensemble to complete the poetic and musical renderings.

In spite of the uniqueness of this setting, Bettinelli employs a classical tripartite song form, with a truncated return of A. The A section utilizes open fifths and octaves, which outline a D-Dorian modality. The middle section, which encompasses stanza two as well as the first two lines of stanza three, is highly chromatic. After all the instability of the chromatic B section, hope is represented by the stable return of the firmly diatonic Dorian mode at measure 88.

Bettinelli concludes “Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno” with an intervallic cell [at measures 132-33], whose intent may not be immediately understood. Careful examination, however, reveals a deliberate musical and poetic connection with the motive used in the previous poem, “L’anima che dispensa.” The notes from the original motive do-re-la-sol-sol are rearranged to form do-so-la-do-re in the violin I and II. The initial verb *attendere* [to wait] in stanza one finds joyous fulfillment and completion in finally understanding that “there is greater joy in waiting” for good things to happen.

Example 23. Bettinelli, “Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno” from *Cinque liriche di Montale*, mm. 128-133.

128

rall.

- pi - - - - - la

rall. *stent.* *a tempo*

ff *ff*

stent. *a tempo*

(Durata min. 5 circa)

The musical score is presented on three staves. The top staff is a single melodic line for the voice, starting with a 'rall.' marking and a dotted line indicating a long note. The middle and bottom staves are grouped by a brace, representing the piano accompaniment. The piano part begins with a 'rall.' marking and includes two instances of 'ff' (fortissimo). The score is divided into two main sections by a double bar line. The first section concludes with a 'stent.' (staccato) marking, and the second section begins with an 'a tempo' marking. A note at the bottom right specifies a duration of approximately 5 minutes.

Debole sistro al vento

"This is one of the bleakest poems Montale ever wrote."

—William Arrowsmith¹⁴¹

Montale's message in "Debole sistro al vento" [The Weak Sistrum in the Wind] is cynical. The poet grieves for the inability of life to defeat "the void" and conveys the fragile nature of man's world. Life's ephemeral nature—as seen through man's words, actions, and gestures—is expressed as "il male di vivere."

Poetic Analysis

Debole sistro al vento

Debole sistro al vento¹⁴²
d'una persa cicala,
toccato appena e spento
nel torpore ch'esala.

Dirama dal profondo
in noi la vena
segreta: il nostro mondo
si regge appena.

Se tu l'accenni, all'aria
bigia treman corrotte
le vestigia
che il vuoto non ringhiotte.

Il gesto indi s'annulla,
tace ogni voce,
discende alla sua foce
la vita brulla.

Feeble sistrum in the wind
of a lost cicada,
no sooner touched than done for
in the exhaling torpor.

The secret vein
branches out fo the deep
in us: our world
barely holds up.

If you point they tremble
in the gray air,
corrupted leavings
the void won't devour.

So the gesture fades,
the voices die
and barren life
flows down and out.¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ William Arrowsmith, *Cuttlefish Bones (1920-1927)*, by Eugenio Montale. Translated by William Arrowsmith (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1933), p. 224.

¹⁴² An ancient Egyptian percussion instrument used in the worship of Isis, the Goddess of death. It consisted of a thin somewhat lyre-shaped metal frame through which passed loosely a number of metal rods to which rings were sometimes attached. A primitive rattle or jingling instrument.

¹⁴³ Poetic rendering by Jonathan Galassi. See Jonathan Galassi, *Eugenio Montale Collected Poems 1920-1954* [New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999], p. 58.

Each of the four stanzas conforms to a traditional alternating rhyme scheme: ABAB except stanza four which is ABBA. Stanzas one and two alternate rhyming “oh” and “ah”; stanzas three and four alternate “ah” and “eh”. Each stanza has fourteen words per stanza and the syllabication varies slightly from stanza to stanza.

The first phrase, *debole sistro al vento d'una persa cicala* [feeble sistrum in the wind of a lost cicada], consists of two sounds that suggest the mood of “gloom and doom.” The first sound is that of a faint *Sistrum*. This instrument has a morbid implication because of its use in ceremonies associated with the Egyptian Goddess of death, Isis. It is barely touched and is extinguished by the sultriness in the air. The heaviness of the air portrays the difficulty existing in the world. Montale adds the lonely song of a cicada to the mood.¹⁴⁴ This stanza evokes the interior state of the poet who strives to be hopeful but is immobilized by the anguish of living. Stanza two continues the pessimistic view of life.

In all of us there exists a secret vein, which is a metaphor for the presence of life. Our life force [la vena segreta] evolves from the profound in us. Powerful images involved in the mystery of life come to mind, such as the mineral veins deep inside the earth, essential for the life force above the ground, and the invisible veins that carry the blood of life through man's body. The stanza concludes with an apocalyptic vision: the world vacillates, struggles to find

¹⁴⁴ The cicada is an age-old symbol for the poet, going back at least as far as Plato's *Phaedrus*, where Socrates narrates the legend of the cicada who sings unendingly from birth to death without sustenance of any kind. See Jonathan Galassi, “Reading Montale,” *Eugenio Montale Collected Poems 1920-1954* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1998), p. 423.

balance. This recalls other Montalian poetic views, which search to communicate the nothingness of the world.

Montale uses the conditional tense for the third stanza: *If* you briefly capture the sad air of the remains of the glorious past, those, that this emptiness did not swallow, *would tremble* corrupted. By insisting on revealing the secrets of the world, one risks becoming like the ruins of the past, filled with the void of nothing. In very few words, Montale again expresses his sense of the nothingness of the world.

The sounds in stanza one are silenced because the gesture [*il gesto*] that initiated the sounds has concluded. Even the cicada has stopped its lonely song. The exposed [uncovered] life flows toward the delta and is rendered motionless. Everything ends with the gesture. Without effort, without motion, without a will, without desire, all things come to an end. We descend into the delta and we no longer flow. As long as we are in the flow of the river, we are in movement. The moment we arrive in the wide mouth of the river, the flow ends and we become motionless.

MUSICAL ANALYSIS

The atmosphere suggested by the isolated song of a cicada and the faint sounds of a delicately touched musical instrument seem to capture Bettinelli's musical imagination for the opening music of the fourth song. The muted violins in parallel motion play a quasi *ostinato* pattern at the interval of a major second. This seems to represent the feeble sounds of the weak sistrum on the wind [*debole sistro al vento*]. They accompany the song of the cicada, introduced by the flute at

measure 4 on repeating pitches G[#] and A[#]. Exploring the emotional and symbolic meaning represented by the interval of a major second is the key to understanding the first stanza. The faint repetition of this interval in all the parts at the dynamic level of *pp* creates an impressionistic background for the soprano to begin expressing the poetry. A sense of drowsiness comes from the non-directionality of the major second, which is pervasive throughout the setting of the first strophe.

Example 24. Bettinelli, “Debole sistro al vento,” from *Cinque liriche di Montale*, mm. 1-13, non-directionality of the major second interval and impressionistic instrumentation.

1 Moderato (♩ = 54)

CANTO

FLAUTO

CLARINETTO in SI b

VIOLINO I.

VIOLINO II.

VIOLA

VIOLONCELLO

Sordina

pp

pp

pp

pp

De - - - bo - le si - stro al ven - - - to d' a - - - na -

The cello enters at measure 19 on G[#] ascending chromatically. The viola continues the ascent using the outline of a whole-tone scale. Typically, Bettinelli refrains from adhering rigidly to any pattern, breaking the whole-tone ascent with the insertion of a B between A[#] and C. At measure 22 violin II continues the whole-tone scale of the viola, and violin I continues the ascent, but by leap rather than by step. Bettinelli asks the strings to play pizzicato, which corresponds directly to the poetic phrase *toccato appena e spento* [no sooner touched than done for].

Example 25. Bettinelli, "Debole sistro al vento," from *Cinque liriche di Montale*,
mm. 18-26.

18 I *poco tratt.* *a tempo*

loc - ca - to ap - pe - na e spen - - -

poco tratt. *a tempo*

20

p (*>*)

- to nel tor - po - re ch'è - sa - - - la.

pp *pizz.* *via Sordina* *mp*

pizz. *p* *arco* *p*

The musical score is presented in a standard format with a vocal line at the top and piano accompaniment below. The vocal line includes lyrics in Italian. The piano accompaniment is written for a grand piano, with separate staves for the right and left hands. The score includes various musical markings such as 'poco tratt.', 'a tempo', 'pizz.', 'via Sordina', and 'arco'. The tempo markings 'poco tratt.' and 'a tempo' are used to indicate changes in the speed of the music. The dynamic markings 'p' (piano), 'pp' (pianissimo), and 'mp' (mezzo-piano) are used to indicate the volume of the sound. The 'pizz.' marking indicates a pizzicato effect, and 'via Sordina' indicates the use of a sordina (mute) on the piano. The 'arco' marking indicates the use of an arco (arco) effect on the piano.

In the opening stanza there is a sparseness of tonal and harmonic color. This seems to represent the ancient Sistrum and perhaps the delicate state of the human condition. The first seventeen bars in the soprano consist of only four pitches: A[#] B C[#] D, which are a subset of the octatonic-2 scale. Starting at measure 18, E F[#] G[#] A C are introduced. All parts—including the voice—tie over the barline, and the phrase lengths are inconsistent, resulting in an unclear phrase structure.

An instrumental interlude of three measures separates the first two strophes. Measure 28 shows a sudden modulation from one whole-tone scale [C—D—E—F[#]—G[#]—A[#]] which has been prevalent in the instrumental parts since measure 19, to the other [C[#]—E^b—F—G—A—B]. He marks the first chord in the new “key” with a *sforzando*, emphasizing the dramatic shift that prepares the new poetic idea.

Example 26. Bettinelli, “Debole sistro al vento,” from *Cinque liriche di Montale*, mm. 27-32.

The musical score for Example 26 consists of three systems of staves. The top system features a vocal line with a soprano clef and a piano line with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The vocal line begins with a measure marked with a box containing the number '2' and a dynamic marking of *mp*. The lyrics 'Di - ra ma dal pro - fon - do in noi la vena se gre - ta :' are written below the vocal line. The piano accompaniment includes various dynamic markings such as *f*, *p*, and *mp*, and includes the instruction 'arco' for the violin part. The score is written in a modern, minimalist style with many ties and slurs.

It is interesting to compare the length of the musical setting of strophes one and two. Whereas Bettinelli wrote twenty measures of music for the first strophe, he needed only six measures for the second. This disparity again reflects poetic intent. There can be no rushing of the time needed to establish atmosphere as seen in stanza one. The ephemeral stability of the world in stanza two, on the other hand, is appropriately expressed in a mere six measures. Additionally, by the end of the second strophe, the soprano's melody has incorporated all the notes of the chromatic scale.

After a brief two-measure interlude, strophe three provides the climax of the piece. The extreme registers of the instruments are used. The flute line sweeps in measure 36 with a vitality that draws the other instruments into the motion, producing ambiguity, instability, and pure color in the vocal line. The dynamic is full and the tremolos intensify the urgency.

Example 27. Bettinelli, "Debole sistro al vento," from *Cinque liriche di Montale*, mm. 37-46.

37

mf *f*

Se tu l'ac - cen - ni, al - l'a - ria

f *mf* *ff* *arco* *f*

pizz. *f* *mf* *p* *(.)*

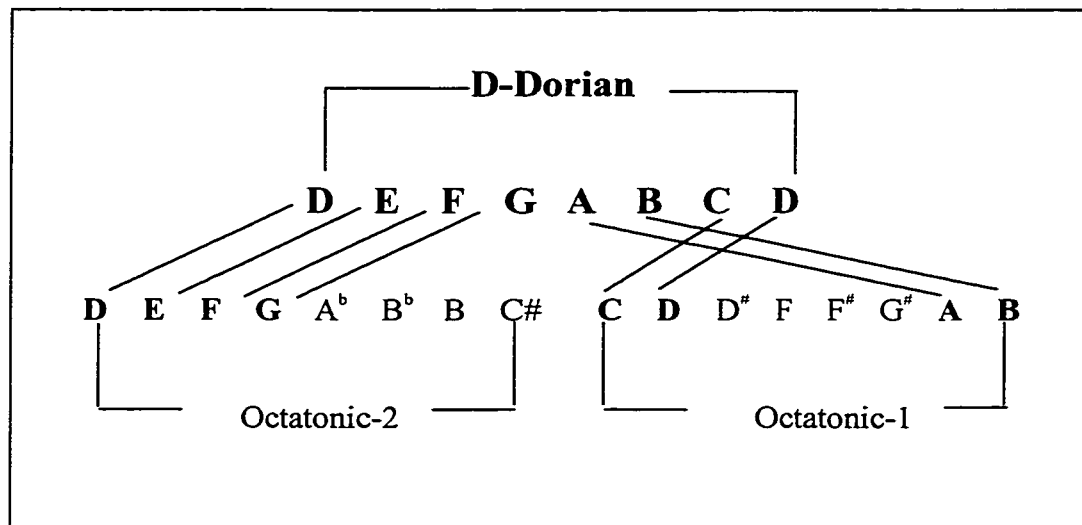
bi - - gia tre-man cor-rol-le le ve - sti - gia che il bu - io non rfn -

mf subito *4* *p*

mf subito *pp* *pp* *pp* *f* *arco*

As evidence of Bettinelli's fluid use of many melodic options available to him, it is interesting to note his use of the D-Dorian mode, as given to the flute [mm. 36-39]. He presents octatonic-2 and octatonic-0 scales in clarinet and flute [in mm. 52-53] so both Dorian tetrachords can be given octatonic significance. The Dorian tetrachord D-E-F-G is also present in octatonic-2, while the Dorian tetrachord A-B-C-D is common to octatonic-0. Therefore, he can move fluidly among these three sets.

Example 28. Bettinelli, "Debole sistro al vento," from *Cinque liriche di Montale*,
Dorian tetrachords be given octatonic significance.



Stanza four, beginning in measure 55, represents a prominent example of text painting. As is stated in the poetry "*il gesto indi s'annulla tace ogni voce*" [So the gesture fades, the voices die], the instruments, then the voice, are silenced. The remainder of the stanza is musically painted, as well, with the descent to the

mouth of the river illustrated in the descending lines of all the remaining parts. The unrest depicted by the minor seconds between the cello's C#, the viola's D, and the clarinet's Eb leaves the listener with the feeling of an "unsuffocated void" or of the Montalian theme, "the bareness of life."

Portami il girasole

Sap check'd with frost, and lusty leaves quite gone,
Beauty o'er snow'd and bareness everywhere.
[Shakespeare, Sonnets, V]

Each of Montale's five poems set by Bettinelli expresses "bareness" and a yearning for an unrecoverable past occasion of happiness. This is especially true of the last selection, "Portami il girasole," which also belongs to *Ossi di seppia*, published in 1925. The poet's world precariously balances between the threat of doom and the hope of redemptive paradise. There are no references to God in *Ossi di seppia*; the humanist Montale instead searched through the power of language to capture the essence of reality [truth, or perhaps God], which always seemed to elude his grasp. In his inexhaustible drive to grasp reality and to find its source, Montale struggled with the limitations of language. In his *Diario del 71* he voiced this dilemma in the poem "La lingua di Dio" [The Language of God]: "Se dio è il linguaggio" [If God is language].¹⁴⁵ Caught in the precarious struggle of the human condition, Montale sought a "total" language, that could come to terms with the "All."¹⁴⁶ Though committed to the search for truth, Montale was, however, often metaphorically ambiguous with his writings. His terse, compact stanzas, often object-driven, use only sharp, harsh descriptors to disguise his true feelings.

¹⁴⁵ This refers to the famous passage in St. John's Gospel, which begins "In the beginning was the Word;" notice the word *dio* is not capitalized.

¹⁴⁶ Montale appears to avoid finding God within himself. He often personifies objects in his search for redemption.

POETIC ANALYSIS

The following poem is a heart-broken invocation, borne out of desperation, to a sunflower to encounter the “Light.” It recalls the recurring Montalian theme of “*il male di vivere*.”

Portami il girasole

Portami il girasole ch'io lo trapianti
nel mio terreno bruciato dal salino,¹⁴⁷
e mostri tutto il giorno agli azzurri specchianti
del cielo l'ansietà del suo volto giallino.

Bring me the sunflower, let me
plant it
in my field parched by the salt sea wind,
and let it show the blue reflecting sky
the yearning of its yellow face all day.

Tendono alla chiarezza le cose oscure,
si esauriscono i corpi in un fluire
di tinte: queste in musiche. Svanire
è dunque la ventura delle venture.

Dark things tend to brightness,
bodies fade out in a flood of colors,
colors in music. So disappearing is
the destiny of destinies.

Portami tu la pianta che conduce
dove sorgono bionde trasparenze¹⁴⁸
e vapora la vita quale essenza;
portami il girasole impazzito di luce.

Bring me the plant that leads the way
to where the blond transparencies
rise, and life as essence turns to haze;
bring me the sunflower crazed with
light.¹⁴⁹

“Portami il girasole” does not conform to traditional rhyme schemes. Each stanza’s rhyme scheme is different: stanza one is an alternating rhyme: [ABAB]; verse two is a framed rhyme: [CDDC]; and verse three is an imperfect rhyme:

¹⁴⁷ Ligurian dialect for the air permeated with salt from the ocean.

¹⁴⁸ Literally, “blonde transparencies”.

¹⁴⁹ Poetic rendering by Jonathan Galassi. See Jonathan Galassi, *Eugenio Montale Collected Poems 1920-1954* [New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999], p. 46.

[EFGE] (the imperfect rhyme is in lines 10 and 11: *trasparenze* and *essenza*). The scansion is also irregular.

The key to this poem is found in the imperative phrase “*portami il girasole ch’io lo trapianti* ” [Bring me the sunflower let me plant it]. This imperative is a cry for help. In line two, the poet compares his human condition to the soil dried out from the Ligurian *salino* [salty wind]. Similar to the soil, his soul is barren, cracked, and lifeless. The anguish of his “*male di vivere*” is so intense that he appeals to an unidentified intimate *tu* [you] to transplant the sunflower into his anguished heart. With the blue background of the sky, he asks the *volto giallino* [little yellow face] to show itself to him all day long. Personifying the flower, the poet seeks to escape from his dark place and, like the sunflower, turn his face to the source of Light. By transplanting the sunflower into his own scorched soul, Montale hopes that years of barrenness will be replaced by fertility. Once rooted in his soul, he will be like the sunflower, who in the presence of Light, turns toward the source of truth, perhaps God.

As barrenness is eradicated by fertility in stanza one, darkness and obscurity are drawn to clarity in stanza two. In this stanza the flow of words is heightened by the interruptions of the “k” sound, which is repeated eight times. The accumulation of this percussive alliteration is a poetic device that seems to dissipate the darkness. The key to this stanza is in the last line: “to disappear is the fate of all fate.” He concludes the strophe on a pessimistic note, implying that to disappear is man’s destiny of destinies. This cynical tone continues in the next stanza.

The intense exhortation to the sunflower first heard in stanza one is restated more emphatically in the final strophe. At this point, he uses the intimate person, *tu*, making a stronger directive. The poet wants to be “impazzito di luce” [crazed with light] just like the sunflower. Through his invocation to the sunflower, Montale hopes to find the eternal truth that continues to elude him.

Montale’s use of nouns plays a highly metaphorical role in his syntax. In verse one, the *terreno bruciato* [field parched] alludes to the barrenness of his soul. In line two, the *salino* [salted wind] is symbolic of the harshness the soul experiences in day-to-day living. The recurring theme of “the nothingness of life” is reiterated in line eleven in the phrase “*e vapore la vita quale essenza*” [and life as essence turns to haze]. Montale continues to seek redemption through metaphorically working out images associated with the sunflower.

MUSICAL ANALYSIS

The musical setting of this poem uses the entire chamber ensemble, over which a dreamy melodious song for the soprano is shaped. Bettinelli employs a metrical disparity between simple [vocal line] and compound [instrumental] meter. Initially the meter is [2 / 4, 3 / 4] for the voice part and [6 / 8, 9 / 8] for the accompaniment. The instrumental parts at times play polyrhythmic subdivisions of four, five, six and seven sixteenth-notes while the voice part tends to move lyrically in longer note values. These rhythmic combinations are assigned exclusively to the first and third stanzas, which characterize musically the poet’s anxiousness in the opening line: “Bring me the sunflower, let me plant it in my

field parched by the salt sea wind.”¹⁵⁰ The example below illustrates the various polyrhythmic combinations at work in “Portami il girasole.”

Example 29. Bettinelli, “Portami il girasole” from *Cinque liriche di Montale*, mm. 9-11.

9

--- ta-mi il gi - ra - so - le ---

Bettinelli’s musical structure follows a traditional ABA’ song form plus a coda. The three sections of the musical form correspond to the three strophes of the text.

¹⁵⁰ Poetic rendering by Jonathan Galassi. See Jonathan Galassi, *Eugenio Montale Collected Poems 1920-1954* [New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999], p.47.

Example 30. Bettinelli, *Portami il girasole* from *Cinque liriche di Montale*, diagram of musical structure corresponding to poetic structure.

| Stanzas | | One | | Two | | Three | |
|---------|------------------|------|---------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|-------|
| Form | Instr. Intro. | A | Instr. Interlude | B | Instr. Interlude | A' | Coda |
| MM. | 1-7 | 8-27 | 28-40 | 41-57 | 58-61 | 62-83 | 84-94 |

The orchestral introduction begins with the viola and violin II presenting the motive that generates the musical material of sections A and A'. This particular motive has a turning quality that seems to represent musically the character of a "*girasole*"¹⁵¹ which in the course of a day turns toward the sun. Each member of the chamber ensemble is given this turning motive at some point.¹⁵² The turning motive has irregular groupings of sixteenth-notes: four, five, six and seven, and are layered in complex counterpoint. Intricate combinations of polyrhythmic layers in the counterpoint combine with dissonant harmonic intervals between the instruments to create both rhythmic and tonal clashes, which portray the poet's emotional state even before text has been introduced.

The first seven measures feature imitative entrances of the instruments. In measure 1, violin II has a six-note turn while the viola turns on a five-note gesture. The clarinet enters at measure 4 with a trill and then a variation on the motive. At measure 5 the violin I enters with an exact restatement of violin II's three-measure motive, but transposed up a perfect fourth. Its literal transposition

¹⁵¹ The literal translation of sunflower in Italian is 'turn to the sun.'

¹⁵² These particular motives that spin are reminiscent of Schubert's accompaniment in *Gretchen am Spinnrade*.

up a fourth hints at imitative writing. On the second beat of this measure the flute enters in an ascending motion that seems to grow out of the idea begun by violin I. Finally, the cello enters at measure 6, however, not following the spinning motive of the other parts. The cello enters, hesitates, then joins the viola at octave doublings at measure 8. These unison pitches ascend dramatically and land on an accented D; this highlights the simultaneous *forte* entrance of the soprano.

Example 31. Bettinelli, “Portami il girasole” from *Cinque liriche di Montale*, mm. 6-8.

The musical score for measures 6-8 of "Portami il girasole" by Bettinelli. The score is for a vocal part and a string ensemble. Measure 6 shows the vocal part entering with a forte (f) dynamic. The string ensemble provides support. Measure 7 continues the vocal line with a forte (f) dynamic. Measure 8 shows the vocal part and the string ensemble (viola and cello) playing in unison, with the dynamic level reduced to mezzoforte (mf).

The ensemble supports this *forte* entrance and then immediately at measure 9 reduces the dynamic level to *mezzoforte*. This demonstrates Bettinelli's understanding of the needs of the human voice, because he deliberately insists that the orchestra not cover the voice part. At the beginning of the score, Bettinelli

even instructs the ensemble to be conscious of the voice part and allow it to emerge in the forte sections.

“Every part must fuse together with one another and all together must create a transparent but homogenous sonorous atmosphere that will allow the voice to emerge even in the forte sections.”¹⁵³

The urgency of the introduction continues throughout stanza one and is musically represented by the various unsettled rhythmic relationships assigned to the instruments. The initial cell of the introduction permeates the entire fabric of stanza one and reappears slightly changed or transposed throughout each instrumental part. This contrapuntal texture has often been noted as characteristic of the linear writing of Bettinelli.¹⁵⁴ Throughout the first stanza Bettinelli piles up layers of shifting polymetric combinations, increasing tension and ambiguity to support the insistence of the text. The influence of Bartók is heard in the dense counterpoint and the interaction of expanding small intervals. The result is a forceful, intricate interlocking of dissonant elements. This musical setting adds to the yearning and anxious state of the poet.

Bettinelli differentiates musical structure through the use of *fermati* in all his song literature for soprano. In “Portami il girasole” he uses fermati in five strategic places: mm. 30, 35 (*vuota*), 40, 52, and 58. The first two *fermati* act like a double transition between stanzas one and two: a postlude for stanza one and an introduction for stanza two. The empty measure 35 is like an axis of silence

¹⁵³ N.B. “Ogni parte deve risultare ben fusa con le altre e tutte assieme devono creare una trasparente ma omogenea “*atmosfera sonora*” che lasci emergere il canto, anche nei “*f*”. *Cinque liriche di Montale*, “Portami il girasole”, p. 38.

¹⁵⁴ See Armando Gentilucci’s article “Presenza musicale di Bruno Bettinelli” in Elizabeth Gabellich, *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli* (Milano: Guido Miano Editore, 1989), p. 24.

between the first two stanzas [see measure 54 of “Debole sistro al vento:” it also contains a measure labeled *vuota* (empty)]. Measure 40’s *fermata* marks the beginning of stanza two; measure 52 separates the first sentence from the second in stanza two [stanza one and three only have one sentence]; measure 58’s *fermata* closes stanza two. Bettinelli uses many *fermati* to delineate structure, however, this does not take away from the expressive character of his music.

Returning to the end of stanza one, just before the first *fermata* at measure 30, a noticeable change occurs in the rhythmic drive in the instrumental parts. The complicated rhythmic layering begins to settle. The strings relinquish their energetic turning gesture to a trill and gradually *diminuendo* to *mezzo piano* closing stanza one at measure 30. In the next measure each instrument comes to rest on pitches (dotted quarter) they were previously trilling in measure 30, with the exception of the viola which continues to trill. The texture thins even more at measure 31 as violins I and II change to pizzicato. While the violin I and II trade pitches, the cello and clarinet tie held notes across barline. A simple homophonic bowed movement in the strings for the next five measures replaces the frenetic independent linear writing of the previous section. The layered texture giving way to a homophonic texture is Bettinelli’s direct response to the poetry in the first line of the second stanza: “dark things tend toward clarity.”

Example 32. Bettinelli, “Portami il girasole” from *Cinque liriche di Montale*, mm. 31-36.

4 31 Moderato (♩ =)

In this instance, Bettinelli moves toward “clarity” at the *moderato* (m. 36) by removing rhythmic movement and abandons the changing meters of stanza one for a time signature of 4/4. Clarity is further achieved by simplifying the harmonic language. The vertical sonorities start in the lowest register of the strings at measure 36 and gradually ascend by quarter and half-note to their higher range at measure 40. The chords emphasize the intervals of the tritone, perfect fourth, and fifth in the majority of their spellings. Bettinelli is able to move to the next sonority through the use of common tones. At this point, the ascending musical line’s goal completes the poetic intent—“darkness giving way to clarity”—by arriving on a unison G at the *meno mosso*.

Example 33. Bettinelli, “Portami il girasole” from *Cinque liriche di Montale*, mm.38-42.

38

Meno mosso (♩ = 56)

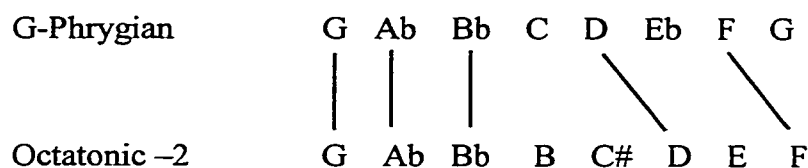
5 *p*

len - do no alla chiari-tà —

The middle section of the ABA song form reflects a more introspective and philosophical strophe. The orchestration is reduced to an octave G pedal in the extreme high registers of violin I, II, and viola, resulting in a *ppp* ephemeral shimmer. At this point, the soprano is given more freedom to be expressive in the new tempo because the complex instrumental texture of the previous stanza has changed to longer note values. As the upper strings sustain G *pianissimo*, the soprano moves within a G Phrygian modality in measures 41-44. At measure 45 the G pedal moves up to Ab, continuing the ethereal mood of the text. At the same

time, the soprano moves easily from G-Phrygian modality into the second phrase, which consists of pitches from an octatonic-2 collection. The ease with which Bettinelli moves to another pitch collection comes from the five common tones that exist between these two pitch collections.

Example 34. Bettinelli, “Portami il girasole” from *Cinque liriche di Montale*, illustrates the five common tones between the G-Phrygian mode and the octatonic-2 scale in mm. 41-48.



Example 35. Bettinelli, “Portami il girasole” from *Cinque liriche di Montale*, mm. 41-45.

5 *p*

Ten-do-no alla chie-ri-tà le co-se o-ssu-re, si e-sau-ri-sco-no i

The soprano part gradually makes use of almost all twelve tones of the chromatic scale (except F#), further obscuring a tonal center. However, by assertion of the sustained G in the ensemble and the soprano's entrance beginning on G [m. 41], the tonal center seems, for a moment, to be G. In measure 45 the strings move upward from G to a sustained Ab, building intensity. The text painting in the clarinet at measure 47 adds color at the moment the text expresses "un fluire di tinte" [in a flood of colors], outlining an octatonic-1 scale. The sweeping scalar motion of the clarinet comes to rest on D, adding the color of the tritone above the sustained Ab in the strings. In the next phrase, the dissonant tritone gives way to the perfect fourth interval, again associated with the text.

Bettinelli sets the text "queste in musiche" [this (colors) in music] using the P4 interval: A—E—E—D—A. More melodic text painting occurs at measure 49 in the flute part as the shape directly expresses the text "queste in musiche" [this in music]. This is held together in the large structure by the reference to the same tritone in the bimodal arabesque at the opening where D was the lowest and highest note and A^b had a prominent role. This stanza closes with the strings playing *con sordina* [muted] from measure 53. At measure 57 the strings and flute fade into silence. The clarinet breaks the silence with a cadenza figure using all the chromatic tones except E. A *fermata* over a quarter rest ends stanza two at measure 58 completing the text "fate of all fates is to disappear" by all parts disappearing into silence.

The missing E in the clarinet's previous figure, is the tone that begins the return of the turning motive first heard in the instrumental introduction. It is

similar to the opening, however, the woodwinds begin the motive instead of the strings. The instrumental texture, like the beginning, slowly adds layers and develops into a dense, complex rhythmic texture. The instrumental interlude takes on a new color, with the flute [mm. 60-63] taking what originally was played by violin II in mm. 1-3 and the clarinet [mm. 60-63] assuming the viola's motive in mm.1-4. Section A' returns, even more insistent, reflecting the imperative text "portami tu la pianta."

Example 36. Bettinelli, "Portami il girasole" from *Cinque liriche di Montale*, mm.58-61.

58 Tempo I. Mosso (♩ = 108)

The musical score for Example 36, measures 58-61, is presented in a standard musical notation format. The vocal line is written on a single staff, and the piano accompaniment is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The tempo is marked 'Tempo I. Mosso (♩ = 108)'. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 3/4. The score is numbered 212 H4 at the bottom.

The soprano's melody, however, is not a return of A. The only similarity between the first and third stanza is the first interval which is a descending tritone [D—Ab and B—F; see mm. 8-9 and m. 62, respectively]. The melody starting at

m. 62 gradually accumulates pitches, and by measure 75, all the pitches of the chromatic scale have been used. It is, however, the tone B that asserts itself throughout stanza three. Several phrases begin and end on B; the final note of the soprano melody rests on B at measure 82, however, it does not find resolution. Its function as a leading tone is not clear until the last five measures, which move harmonically to the final chord, C major.

Example 37. Bettinelli, “Portami il girasole” from *Cinque liriche di Montale*, mm. 90-94.

The musical score for Example 37, measures 90-94, is presented in a single system. The vocal line is written in treble clef, and the piano accompaniment is written in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The tempo is marked "Più lento". The score includes dynamic markings: "rall. . . ." and "stent. . . . ff". The piano accompaniment features a chromatic scale in the right hand and a more complex rhythmic pattern in the left hand. The score ends with a double bar line and the instruction "(Durata min. 3 circa.)".

At measure 83 the instrumental *stretto* captures the eagerness of the poet to find salvation. There are no more complex rhythms or alternating meter, and chromatic alterations of notes seem to have diatonic meaning rather than tonal obscurity. Starting in measure 87, the violoncello directs the harmonic function

toward C major by double stopping on the open fifth interval, C-G. The ascending movement in all the other instrumental parts (from m. 90 to the end) reflects the poetic idea of the sunflower lifting its head to the sun. All of the instrumental parts move upward in steps above the cello pedal and come to rest on a C major triad—God’s Key.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁵ See Elliott Antokoletz, *Twentieth-Century Music* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc, 1992), p. 279.

CHAPTER FIVE CONCLUSION

Merging poetic text with musical expression creates many challenges for a composer. While studying Bruno Bettinelli's *Cinque liriche di Montale*, and other selections from his song literature, it became apparent that the challenge for this composer was to find the best nuances of sounds to render a more profound understanding of the poetry. The primary intention of this study was to show how poetry would inspire Bruno Bettinelli's musical syntax in *Cinque liriche di Montale*. More specifically, the task was to discover Bettinelli's musical syntax as a consequence of this integration. Therefore, an examination of the expressive intent of the poetry was preliminary to an evaluation of the technical working out of Bettinelli's musical choices.

Once the poetry and music were analyzed separately, conclusions then could be made as to how Bettinelli's contemporaries, as well as great masters of the past, shaped his musical choices. Composers that he admired range from Beethoven and Brahms to Puccini, Debussy, Stravinsky and Bartók. Therefore, it is not surprising that elements from all of these composers (more precisely, pitch collections of his contemporaries) are synthesized in his music. Bettinelli used pentatonic-diatonic modalities with whole tone, octatonic, and chromatic materials—from the “Impressionistic” pentatonic and whole-tone scales used by Debussy; to the octatonic scales widely employed by Stravinsky; to the many diatonic modes associated with Bartók's Hungarian folk idiom. The result of this integration was not an imitation of his predecessors or contemporaries for he

never remained in any one pitch collection long enough for his music to become stylized or cliché. In actuality, his compositional procedures can be viewed as a progression from small, simple structures to larger, more complex ones.

The five basic pitch collections Bettinelli draws upon in his compositional procedure may be understood by the number of notes they contain: 1) pentatonic (five notes), 2) whole-tone (six notes), 3) diatonic modes (seven), 4) octatonic (eight notes), and 5) chromatic (twelve notes). By virtue of containing fewer notes, smaller pitch collections produce more occurrences of widely spaced intervals, thus fewer opportunities for half-step dissonance. Conversely, as the number of pitches in a set increases, so does the opportunity for dissonance, chromaticism, and tonal ambiguity. Hence, Bettinelli may draw upon pitch sets with less dissonance to reflect lyrical poetic ideas and greater dissonance to express a more dramatic tone. Furthermore, the five set-types may be viewed in order according to their number of half-steps: 1) pentatonic (zero), 2) whole-tone (zero), 3) diatonic modes (two), 4) octatonic (four), 5) chromatic (twelve). Bettinelli's tendency to modulate from smaller, more consonant pitch sets to larger, more dissonant ones seems to be influenced by the rather pessimistic mood of Montale's poetry.

The tendency of Montale's poetry to dwell on the pessimistic side of life is generally at odds with Bettinelli's optimistic character. His willingness, however, to explore the emotional depths of darkness and hopelessness found in Montale's poetry is evidence of his availability to put his musical language at the service of the text.

Bettinelli abandons traditional tonality in the songs of *Cinque liriche di Montale* and characteristics of his musical language emerge as a synthesis of pentatonic-diatonic modalities with whole-tone, octatonic, and chromatic materials. For example, in “Sul muro grafito” Bettinelli begins implying E as a tonal center in the introduction by using segments from the octatonic-1 and octatonic-2 collections, and then takes the same two collections to create a hybrid scale, the gypsy mode. As the poetic language becomes more dramatic and agitated, Bettinelli begins in F Lydian and gradually adds chromatic coloring through the insertion of half steps. Thus, the build up of chromatic elements places in greater relief the agitated, dramatic text.

Passages from “L’anima che dispensa” illustrate different solutions of integrating various scalar types and points to a basic element in Bettinelli’s style. In this instance, he moves through F Dorian, G Phrygian and E Dorian, the notes D and G serve as a common reference within all three modes. The presence of polymodal chromaticism is a basic element of Bettinelli’s compositional style. By combining tetrachords from the above modes, Bettinelli creates octatonic collections. Typically, when a change of tonal center occurs, the change represents not a “modulation” but simply a shift of mode. Another compositional tool found in this song, was the presence of the pentatonic scale as a five-note nucleus to form larger scales and modes. It is the presence of common tones, which permits the movement from one pitch set to another. The symmetrical nature of the pentatonic and octatonic scales—unlike the diatonic scale, are

tonally ambiguous and are another example of Bettinelli's compositional procedure of combining smaller collections to produce larger ones.

Bettinelli's approach to the third song, "Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno," is concerned about a textual and timbral development. The first stanza's impressionistic instrumental scoring is built upon nontriadic vertical combinations. He explores the sonic possibilities of open fifths and octaves to produce a musical effect for the phrase—"Glory of expanded noon." In such contexts harmony takes a new role: it becomes a largely static means for producing atmospheric and coloristic effects of sonority. The first stanza gradually adds chromatic coloring to the sonority, accelerates the harmonic movement, and forms close clustering of dissonant intervals, rendering complete tonal ambiguity. Bettinelli uses a five-note collection of pitches—in fact, the same pitch collection as "L'anima che dispensa," *do re la so so*—to form a larger pitch set. In this instance, the pentatonic collection is a subset of D Dorian. Once again Bettinelli alternates between dense and sparse textures, forming partitions that result in an overall musical architecture. Specifically, independent instrumental lines blend to form dense chordal textures for the purpose of obscuring tonality. In contrast, this instability prepares for a partial recapitulation of the opening musical idea and returns to firmly establish tonal stability—D Dorian.

The compositional procedure of taking smaller segments from pitch collections with fewer half steps to form a more chromatic pitch collection, continues in "Debole sistro al vento." Chromaticism provides a powerful expressive force in Bettinelli's music. For example, the soprano line for the first

seventeen bars consist of only four pitches: A# B C# D, which belong to a larger pitch collection—octatonic-2. In fact, by the end of the second strophe the soprano's melody has incorporated all the notes of the chromatic scale. From D Dorian, Bettinelli once again takes the two tetrachords within this collection and gives them octatonic significance. The first tetrachord is a subset of the octatonic-2 pitch collection and the second tetrachord belongs to the octatonic-0 pitch collection. Hence, Bettinelli moves freely—because of commonality—between all three-pitch collections.

Finally, Bettinelli's ability to combine and reshape musical fragments is evident in the opening measures of "Portami il girasole." He moves from a modal scale, with fewer half-steps, to a pitch set with more chromatics, to reflect the pessimistic tone of the poetry. In this case, G Phrygian moves through various common tone permutations to form a new pitch collection—octatonic-2.

Another interesting feature of Bettinelli's musical language is the use of purely musical devices throughout *Cinque liriche di Montale* that work together to illustrate word painting. The flute was given portrayed the visual arch of the sky through shape in "Sul muro grafito." In the same song, underneath the word "sparse" the instrumental texture was thinned to tied whole notes and the rocking motions of waves were assigned to an ostinato figure in the cello. "Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno" the musical representation of extreme voicing of the strings in open fifths and octaves and long note values supports textual image of an expansive mid-day. The position of the sun in the phrase *il sole in alto* (the high

sun) is symbolized by the violin and viola sustaining in the extreme tessitura an A for four measures of tied whole notes.

Bettinelli is known for his propensity to write intricate combinations of polyrhythms and this is true in his song literature. There are several examples of complex rhythms throughout *Cinque liriche di Montale* that mirror the poetic thought and are usually associated with emotional traits of agitation or impetuosity. The most obvious example of this is in “Portami il girasole.” The poet is frenetic, demanding, and insisting to “bring the sunflower.” Bettinelli writes a turning motive that generates musical material for the beginning and end of this song. This turning motive becomes a musical metaphor to describe the character of the sunflower [that also turns to face the sun] and the poet’s agitated emotional state. Bettinelli layers shifting polymetric combinations in a complex counterpoint that create rhythmic and tonal clashes. The resulting tension in the musical expression tension correlates to the poet’s anxious state. This study has, however, not revealed any uniform set of rhythmic principles that are dictated by a prescribed system. Yet, a number of examples have demonstrated a clear connection between musical rhythm and syllabic stress in the language.

In general, the results of this study support the following conclusions. Bettinelli uses whatever musical elements are at his disposal to create the effect he needs to communicate the text. He juxtaposes many moments of sharp contrast between textual density and thinning to mirror the poetic intent and that the listener is conscious of these variations and transformations that correspond to poetic meaning. The concept of melody in Bettinelli’s music should not be

viewed in the traditional sense, that is, collections of motivic ideas connected as a single melodic source. Rather, it seems to gradually form itself out of necessity to communicate the text, without imposing preconceived melodic ideas. Generally, the melody adheres to a mid-range tessitura for the singer. Often the vocal line follows a step-wise movement except when needed to express the text. He is a master contrapuntalist in creating strong emotional ties to the text. Finally, the structure of Bettinelli's music often resembles a mosaic—the separate stanzas, instrumental interludes merge with poetic intent to form a continuous musical expression.

In examining Bettinelli's prolific compositional output one can sense this composer's need to communicate spiritual, emotional, and musical ideas through his music. These ideas, whether simple or complex, unfold through a language that seems to be natural and effortless. Those who know him well, however, understand his artistry comes from instinct restrained by severe discipline. His rigorous training permitted him to be grounded in the compositional forms of the past, and in searching for his unique expression claim the freedom, not to adhere to any set procedure. He composes with the intent to be understood, received, followed, and appreciated by the public. Whether listening or performing Bettinelli's music, one can be grateful for the profound moments one experiences having known his music.

APPENDIX I AUTHOR'S FIRST INTERVIEW WITH BRUNO BETTINELLI

Italian Transcription—Milan, Italy July 12, 1998

SHARON KENNEY (SK): *Ciò che desidero mettere a fuoco per la mia dissetazione. Per portare a termine il mio lavoro presso l'Università del Texas, io devo svolgere una lezione recital nella quale dovrò parlare, esporre ed eseguire alcune delle sue musiche, che rappresenteranno un condensato della mia tesi di dottorato.*

Chiedo scusa se parlando non userò il Lei ma il Tu. Per me, che sono una americana, riesce molto difficile questa forma che voi italiani usate.

Vorrei conoscere i diversi aspetti delle tue composizioni per soprano e per coro, che potrebbero essere eseguite da me per il mio dottorato e anche dal mio coro di voci femminili. Infatti io insegno e sono capdipartimento musicale della Nightingale-Bamford School di New York.

BRUNO BETTINELLI (BB): Ecco ho già preparato per lei alcune mie composizioni sia per soprano che per coro. Ora mia moglie Silvia gliele porta. Anche lei è cantante, soprano, e insegnante di canto al Conservatorio di Bergamo, dove anche Donizetti ha studiato; inoltre si è diplomata in composizione. Del resto anche lei, signora, ha una voce bene impostata, come si sente dal suo modo di parlare.

Si tratta di composizioni, come può vedere, che risalgono a diversi momenti della mia vita. Esaminandole lei potrà farsi un concetto della mia preferenza per la voce umana, il migliore e più utile strumento musicale che in modo sublime esprime ogni sfumatura dell'anima.

SK: *Forse un approccio alla tua letteratura potrebbe offrire la traccia dello sviluppo del tuo stile.*

BB: Io ho sempre vivo nella memoria il periodo iniziale dei miei studi di composizione al Conservatorio Giuseppe Verdi di Milano, nella classe di Giulio Cesare Paribeni (divenuto quasi un mio secondo padre). Ricordo che durante il primo corso (avevo 13 anni) stentavo a trovare un giusto rendimento nello studio. Se mi avessero fatto affrontare il famoso esame di conferma, incubo di tutti gli studenti, mi avrebbero estromesso dalla Scuola. All'inizio del secondo corso la mia mente si è improvvisamente aperta e, d'un tratto, ho capito tutto quello che al momento occorreva.

Il mio modo di scrivere per la voce è libero da forme precedenti, come può ben vedere, non ha riferimenti alla romanza operistica o lirica, ma piuttosto alla forma del Leader. Ho cercato di rispettare la voce ed il suo timbro, così che sia possibile penetrare nei contenuti più nascosti e nelle vibrazioni emotive del testo poetico. Ho trattato la voce umana con umano rispetto per le sue meravigliose possibilità espressive, per le esigenze della respirazione e del fraseggio, per il colore dei vari registri e per i limiti relativi secondo la natura stessa. Mi sono sforzato di essere fedele al rilievo che devono avere le diverse espressioni letterarie.

La continua evoluzione del mio pensiero musicale affonda le radici nella convinzione di non potermi mai allontanare dalla fondamentale esigenza di comunicabilità. L'astratto intellettualismo, vale a dire la musica scritta a freddo, a tavolino per puro calcolo matematico, non è per me possibile perché l'artista deve esprimere ciò che sente profondamente nel suo spirito.

Sino dalle mie prime composizioni ho cercato di non sottostare alle influenze sia dell'epoca post romantica che neoclassica. La mia forma è fondamentalmente contrappuntistica (lettura orizzontale dell'partitura) e mi mantengo fedele a questa caratteristica.

SK: *Potresti indicarmi le composizioni che tu senti come le più rappresentative del tuo stilo personale così come si sono susseguite nel tempo?*

BB: Ho sempre cercato una mia linea personale senza aderire ad alcuna specifica scuola. Sicuramente sono numerose le mie composizioni e per me tutte hanno un significato. Del resto le più importanti case editrici italiane hanno incatalogo le mie opere.

SK: *Potresti parlarmi del tuo avvicinarti alle forme complesse quali la sinfonia, le più sviluppate forme per voci e orchestra, le tre opere, le cinque liriche di Montale, il Salmo IV, ecc.?*

BB: Durante i miei studi mi sono preparato alle varie forme di composizioni, dalle più semplici alle più complesse. Dopo il periodo scolastico ho cercato di esprimermi secondo un mio stile personale. Così mi sono sottratto agli influssi post romantici o neoclassici ed ho sviluppato la dimensione del contrappunto, i contrasti dei volumi sonori e le tensioni agogiche.

Le mie personali esperienze mi hanno sempre più convinto che occorre aver vissuto in proprio il tormento creativo che comporta lo studio della composizione. Tormento che si può ritenere affine a quello che travaglia l'autentico creatore. Fin da giovane mi sono trovato in possesso di una salda e completa preparazione che me ha reso partecipe di ogni possibile aspetto dei linguaggi e delle relative "grammatiche." Ho conquistato, direi, una tecnica raffinata, di gusto nella scelta dei mezzi di espressione, di cultura, che mi hanno consentito lo sviluppo della facoltà di critica e soprattutto di auto critica. Ho cercato e trovato in me stesso il mio modo di esprimermi.

SK: *Tu componi ancora regolarmente?*

BB: Sì, quando mi sento. La mia operosità non conosce soste, così invecchio più lentamente. Se non scrivessi sarebbe come se mi mancasse l'aria che respiro.

SK: *Potresti indicare quali sono state le prime influenze musicali sullo sviluppo del tuo personale linguaggio musicale?*

BB: Anche per me è stato vero ciò che Bela Bartók affermava e che ho citato nella prima pagina del mio libro "La Composizione musicale" edito da Rugginenti a Milano nel 1996: "Ogni arte ha il diritto di affondare le sue radici nell'epoca precedente: nè si tratta di un diritto soltanto, perchè è anche un dovere".

SK: *Ci sono stati dei compositori che hanno esercitato un particolare influsso nel suo linguaggio musicale?*

BB: Certamente. Come diversi altri musicisti della mia generazione, ho provato le varie tendenze del poli-diatonismo, secondo i maestri e i modelli quali Stravinski

e Hindemith. Non sono mai stato un seguace del neoclassicismo. Mi sento vicino a Bartók. Mi sono anche accostato alla dodecafonìa, con il suo linguaggio seriale, che ho tuttavia abbandonato perchè troppo artificiale.

Mi sono mantenuto sempre fedele al mio ideale di chiarezza in un clima di grande modernità. Io scrivo al di fuori di schemi classici o seriali prestabiliti, dall'iniziale impostazione fioriscono idee continue che creano via via una ricca trama di raffinatezze e di forza, con un fondo di gioia dell'invenzione, di ottimismo affiorante.

SK: *Quando tu componi vuoi raggiungere qualche méta teorica oppure ti lasci condurre dal tuo istinto musicale?*

BB: Certamente è l'ispirazione a condurmi, anche se è indispensabile essere padroni della forma teorica.

SK: *È valida l'osservazione di Armando Gentilucci, il quale afferma che le tue armonie derivano da elementi cromatici e in questo senso una ricorda Bartók?*

BB: Sì sono pienamente d'accordo.

SK: *Vorresti esporre su che cosa si fonda la tua considerazione sulle capacità espressive della voce umana e forse anche quale limite la natura pone alla voce dell'individuo e come le sue personali considerazioni l'hanno avvicinato a scrivere per la voce?*

SK: *Quando tu hai scritto pensavi ad una ben individuata interprete?*

BB: No, no, ho pensato alla voce e alle sue possibilità espressive.

SK: *Durante le mie letture sul periodo della tua prima infanzia e giovinezza sono rimasta colpita dalla drammaticità della vita durante e fra le due guerre*

mondiali. Potresti indicarmi alcuni dettagli circa i suoni e le memorie di quel tempo entrati a far parte delle sue opere vocali? Forse ciò ha esercitato un certa influenza nella scelta sia dei testi letterari che dei poeti per quanto riguarda le sue composizioni.

BB: Lei, signora, dimostra di essere molto sensibile ed intelligente. Le dirò che io ho sperimentato veramente che la furia della guerra, che a periodi alterni si scatena sui popoli, quasi fosse un fenomeno naturale ricorrente con tragica puntualità, non ha avuto fino ad oggi il potere di interrompere il flusso delle più valide eredità spirituali che ogni generazione tramonda all'altra.

Rovine spaventose stanno ad indicare il susseguirsi di eventi bellici scaturiti dall'improvviso, misterioso ottenebrarsi della ragione umana e portano, con le loro miserie, i germi di futuri conflitti; eppure ogni volta rinasce, più ostinata che mai, la speranza in un avvenire migliore del mondo.

Io mi esprimo come un uomo e un'artista che ha vissuto dentro i contrasti, le assurdità, le tragedie dei miei tempi.

SK: *Io sono rimasta profondamente impressionata quando ho letto che la sua opera "Count Down", 1970, che ha centrato la crisi d'un uomo di mezza età che si uccide al pensiero che il mondo gli crolla addosso. Penso che tu ti sia trovato nella stessa situazione durante la seconda guerra mondiale.*

Io sono nata nel 1950 e sono contenta di non aver vissuto nel mio paese durante un conflitto come quello, ma rimango attonita di fronte a persone come te, capaci di ricongiungere questi tronconi di vita e di porre mano, come nel suo caso, ad una impressionante produzione artistica.

BB: Lo sviluppo e la conclusione di una guerra moderna portano inevitabilmente a una proliferazione vertiginosa, anche se disordinata, di nuove e impensabili dimensioni che, fatalmente, incidono a fondo sulla vita e il costume del singolo individuo e della collettività. Tutto questo si è andato verificando, come non mai, dal momento in cui si è delineato per l'umanità il destino dell'era atomica e spaziale.

Dalle macerie di un'Europa disfatta è nata nuova coscienza di uomo europeo, ricca di impulsi atti a riportare questa dolorosa figura, così duramente provata a causa dei suoi stessi errori, sul piano che le compete nell'ambito del pensiero, delle arti e delle scienze.

SK: *Puoi dirmi, per favore, quali persone da principio hanno esercitato una importante influenza su di te?*

BB: È difficile rispondere perchè io sono cresciuto, per mia fortuna, in un ambiente artistico a cominciare dalla mia famiglia, e poi l'ambiente musicale milanese del Conservatorio, della Scala, il maestro Umberto Giordano, direttori d'orchestra quali per esempio Antonio Guarnieri, Vito Frazzi, e poi gli apparteneti al movimento artistico rivoluzionario detto del futurismo, eccetera.

SK: *All'inizio è stato difficile fare ascoltare e pubblicare la tua musica?*

BB: Direi di no. Si Ricordi che altre importanti case editrici italiane hanno pubblicato e divulgato le mie composizioni.

SK: *Quale accoglienza, all'inizio, ha avuto la tua musica dal pubblico e dalla critica? Pensi di aver ricevuto un buon successo di critica?*

BB: Certamente sia in Italia che all'estero, in modo particolare negli Stati Uniti.

SK: *Hai cercato di scrivere musica accessibile o di questo aspetto non hai tenuto conto?*

BB: Io ho cercato sempre di comunicare ciò che sento e in modo particolare la mia visione positiva realtà personale. La mia preoccupazione di sempre è quella di poter comunicare direttamente, tramite un discorso fatto di suoni, con le persone che ascoltano, le quali, pur non sapendo nulla o quasi di tecniche musicali, siano in grado di dirmi alla fine “Sì, è difficile, però questo brano ci ha preso e lo abbiamo potuto seguire nelle linee generali.” Questo è il miglior risultato cui possa aspirare il compositore di oggi. Ho sempre ritenuto poco utile o addirittura poco produttore quella moda che, da qualche tempo, pretende di imporre al pubblico le presentazioni illustrative dei pezzi nuovi farcite di dati tecnici e di locuzioni astruse, tali da generare, in realtà, una grande confusione di idee di chi, non addetto ai lavori, si accinge all’ascolto. Penso che - una volta esposti pochi, semplici e chiari termini esplicativi che siano in grado di offrire un sintetico orientamento di massima - sia giusto lasciare che la musica “parli” da sola.

SK: *Tu hai scritto un “Vocalizzo” per soprano e tenore. Da dove ti è venuta l’dea di scrivere un pezzo senza parole?*

BB: Dalla grande considerazione in cui tengo la voce umana. Per me questa è sommamente importante per le possibilità espressive che offre. Non c’è suono di strumenti che la eguagli!

SK: *Come pianista, hai accompagnato lezioni di canto ed hai osservato come è costruita la voce umana e quali sono le tecniche di canto?*

BB: Certamente. Durante i miei anni di studio al Conservatorio, mi divertivo, ogni tanto, a offrirmi come “volta pagine” dei collaboratori al pianoforte. Ne traevo vantaggio perchè potevo controllare da vicino tutte le sfumature interpretative e tecniche di ciascuno, procedendo ad utilissimi confronti e valutazioni di carattere estetico e stilistico.

Avrei potuto dedicarmi ai cantanti lirici se avessi seguito i consigli e gli inviti di mio zio Angelo Bettinelli. Era maestro di canto, direttore d’orchestra. Mi invitava ad accompagnarli al pianoforte. Io, però, sentivo che non era quella la mia strada. Più che alle romanze ero attratto da altre forme di canto. Mi riferisco ai Lieder di Schubert, Schuman, Brahms, Wolf e Strauss.

SK: *Da giovane hai subito pensato di scrivere per voci, oppure lo hai deciso più tardi?*

BB: Certamente subito.

SK: *Hai incontrato difficoltà conflittuali a combinare insieme la sua carriera di insegnante e di compositore?*

BB: Direi di no. Dopo aver insegnato armonia complemetare, a causa die miei meriti artistici di compositiore mi è stata assegnata la cattedra di Composizione di Conservatorio di Milano, che ho tenuto per parecchi decenni e sono stato maestro di generazioni di noti compositori, direttori d’orchestra e strumentisti. Tra loro vorrei ricordare i maestri Abbado, Muti, Canino e, perchè no? mia moglie Silvia qui presente.

SK: *Tra le tue composizioni vocali qual’è la tua preferita e perchè?*

BB: Come si fa a rispondere? Mi riesce infatti più facile ricordarne alcune. Avevo una grande ammirazione per il poeta Giuseppe Ungaretti, del quale già nel 1938, un anno dopo il mio diploma al Conservatorio di Milano, avevo realizzato tre liriche per coro a 4 voci: “Nascita di Aurora”. “Dove la luce” e “O notte”. Come musicista ho sempre sentito l’estrema interiorità di questa poesia in forma corale, quasi non bastasse una voce singola ad esprimere la sua ampiezza di respiro, la profondità dei concetti e soprattutto l’universalità dei temi che coinvolgono continuamente l’uomo.

Poi mi è caro ricordare la mia “Terza Cantata” (varianti su un sonetto di Tommaso Campanella, filosofo e famoso autore della utopistica “Città del sole”). Sono parole che sintetizzano le varie e ricorrenti fasi delle vicende umane. Le varianti che fanno seguito al testo di Campanella si articolano su alcune parole che dovranno susseguirsi in ordine progressivo. Per maggiore evidenza sono state disposte in successione circolare e vanno lette in senso orario. Fra queste predomina, all’inizio e alla fine, il termine “Amore” inteso con senso universale del Bene. Le parole, vengono ripetute una dopo l’altra con insistenza quasi ossessiva, volta a volta come invocazione, come urlo sgomento, come invettiva, come implorazione e finalmente come speranza. Ho voluto esprimere la circolarità dell’esistenza, di moto perpetuo della natura e della miseria umana. Questa si inabissa nella cupezza più tenebrosa del Male per poi esplodere nella luce del Bene e dell’Amore. Il ritorno complessivo e rasserenante di “Amore” e la rinnovata citazione dei versi di Campanella, completano l’immagine di questa

“ruota” in eterno movimento che non concede tregua, nell’alternarsi del bene e del male, alla giornata terrena dell’uomo.

SK: *Come hai fatto a scegliere i testi poetici? Hai sentito il bisogno di comporre lei stesso i testi letterari per meglio esprimere la tua arte? Come hai coltivato il Poeta dentro di te?*

BB: È difficile rispondere. Ho scelto quei testi poetici, e anche ne ho scitti, perchè mi hanno presentato i forti contrasti della vita e della natura. Tutti, però, con una certa caratteristica finale di ottimismo. Infatti, secondo me, è il Bene che vincerà sul male. Io ho molta speranza nell’uomo. Ho avuto rapporti di ammirazione con il poeta Montale e di vicinanza, oltre che di ammirazione, con i poeti Quasimodo e Ungaretti e con lo scrittore Riccardo Bacchelli.

SK: *Hai mai scritto in altre lingue? Parli altre lingue?*

BB: No, soltanto in italiano e in latino. Non parlo altre lingue.

SK: *I pezzi per soprano ti sono stati commissionati oppure sono sbocciati dalla tua ispirazione?*

BB: Sono proprio sbocciati dalla mia intima ispirazione e dalla rispondenza tra la mia natura di artista e le mie reazioni agli eventi del mondo in tumulto.

SK: *Tu senti che la tua musica sia universale, o europea, oppure è più conforme all tradizione italiana?*

BB: La musica è un linguaggio universale e pur avendo alle mie spalle la tradizione italiana io mi sento inserito in modo particolare nella musica euorpea di questo secolo. Da giovane avevo avuto la fortuna di incontrare il famoso violinista Bronislaw Huberman che mi parlava sempre della necessità di fondare

un' Europa unita e anticipava di vent'anni le analoghe teorie dell'italiano De Gasperi e del tedesco Adenauer, teorie regolarmente sabotate dalla miope politica del francese De Gaulle e dai suoi seguaci, fanatici e inguaribili sostenitori di una anacronistica "grandeur" del tutto assurda e avulsa dall'cruda realtà di un mondo come l'attuale in cui nessuna nazione occidentale europea può considerarsi egemone ed autonoma, a dispetto di walsiasi e inutile "force de frappe".

SK: *E, da ultimo, vorresti dire qualcosa intorno alle tue composizioni di musica sacra?*

BB: Dico che per me, che sono cristiano credente e praticante, è come un bisogno religioso scrivere musica sacra, sia a cappella che con accompagnamento e anche musica per organo. Devo confessare che una nostalgia per la lingua latina. Proprio in questi giorni mi sto interessando della composizione di tre mottetti per l'anno santo del 2000. Penso che in Italia esista la necessità di un serio rinnovamento della musica per la liturgia. L'attuale produzione musicale in questo settore avrebbe bisogno di maggior competenza e profonda ispirazione. Mio sto interessando in questi giorni ad alcune antifone in canto gregoriano tratte dalla Liturgia del Corpus Domini.

APPENDIX II AUTHOR'S FIRST INTERVIEW WITH BRUNO BETTINELLI

English Translation of the First Interview—Milan, Italy July 12,
1998

SHARON KENNEY (SK): *I would like to discuss my treatise with you. In order to complete my doctorate at The University of Texas at Austin, I must give a lecture recital in which I must speak about my topic for thirty minutes and then sing for approximately thirty minutes examples of repertoire that is representative of my research. Forgive me for using the familiar form of you in speaking with you. As an American, I find it difficult to address you in the formal tense.*

I would like to discuss your song literature for soprano and your choral music. I am Head of the Music Department at The Nightingale-Bamford School in New York City and I would be interested in finding new material for my treble choir.

BRUNO BETTINELLI (BB): I have already prepared for you some of my compositions for soprano and chorus. Now if my wife would bring them to me. She is also a singer, a soprano. She teaches voice at the Conservatory in Bergamo where Donizetti studied. Silvia also graduated in composition. You, lady, also have a voice well placed. I can tell by the way you speak.

My compositions, as you will see, represent various moments in my life. Examining them, you can see I have a preference for the voice. It is the best and most useful instrument that in a sublime way expresses every nuance of the soul.

SK: *Perhaps looking at your song literature for soprano could possibly trace the development of your style.*

BB: I still remember my initial studies in composition at the Conservatory Giuseppe Verdi in Milan, in Giulio Cesare Paribeni's class (he became like a second father to me). I remember during my first course (I was thirteen years old), I had difficulty finding the right productive capacity for studying. If they had made me take the famous entrance exam, a nightmare for all students, they would have dismissed me from the school. At the beginning of the second course, my mind suddenly opened, and I understood what I needed in that moment.

My way of writing for the voice is free from preceding forms. As you can see, my songs are influenced by Lieder, not the operatic school. I have always tried to respect the voice for its timbre, which can penetrate the hidden meaning of a poetic text. I treated the voice with respect for its wonderful expressive capabilities, for its need to breathe and phrase, for its various registers of colors, and for the limits that nature places on it. I was compelled to be faithful to the prominence that must have diverse literary expressions.

The evolution of my musical thought had its roots in the conviction that I must not depart from the fundamental need to communicate. Abstract thinking, that is to say, music written coldly, purely to calculate math, is not for me because an artist must express what he feels in the depths of his spirit.

From early on in my composing I tried not to remain under the influence of the Post Romantic and Neoclassic period. My method of writing is basically contrapuntal and I am faithful to this characteristic.

SK: *Could you share with me what composition that you feel best represents your personal style of writing and how it became, subsequently?*

BB: I have always tried to find my own style without adhering to any school. Certainly, there are numerous of my compositions and for me they all are significant. In fact, the most important Italian publishing houses have catalogued my works.

SK: *Would you speak to me about how you approached large forms like symphonic, vocal and orchestral, opera, Psalms IV and specifically “Le Cinque liriche di Montale?”*

BB: My studies prepared me for writing in various compositional forms, from the simple to the complex. After my scholastic training, I tried to express myself according to my own personal style. Consequently, I withdrew from Post Romantic and Neoclassic influences and developed a contrapuntal style with contrasting of volumes of sonorities, and tightening tempi.

My personal experience has always convinced me it is necessary to have lived one's own creative torment that the study of composition stands. It is the torment that one can consider akin to the travails of an original creator. From my youth, I found I possessed a solid and complete preparation that has enabled me every possible aspect of languages and relative grammar. I conquered, I'd say, a refined technique of selecting expressions, from culture, that allowed me the

development of critical powers that, above all, enabled me to criticize myself. I searched and found a way to express myself.

SK: *Do you still compose on a regular basis?*

BB: Yes, when I feel like it. My activity does not understand rest. In this way I grow older more slowly. If I didn't compose, it would be like not having air to breathe.

SK: *Could you indicate what was the first musical influence on your musical style?*

BB: For me, it was Bela Bartók and I cited in my book "La Composizione musicale" published by Rugginenti in Milan, 1996: "All art has the right to confront one's roots in the preceding period. One must treat it not only as a right, but as an obligation."

SK: *Have there been composers who have exercised a particular influence on your musical language?*

BB: Certainly. Like many musicians of my generation, I tried various trends of poly-diatonic, according to the models of Stravinsky and Hindemith. I have never followed the neoclassical trend. I am most like Bartók. I even tried twelve-tone serial that I abandoned because it was too artificial.

I have remained faithful to a clear ideal in this modern climate. I write outside of the established classical or serial schemes. From the beginning I set in position continuing ideas that permitted a rich, refinement of power, and a joy of invention and optimistic refining.

SK: *When you compose do you adhere to theoretical method or do you follow your musical instinct?*

BB: Certainly, it is inspiration that guides me, and it is indispensable to have mastered theoretical forms.

SK: *Is it valid Armando Gentilucci's observation that affirms that your harmony is derived from chromatic elements and in this sense a remainder of Bartók?*

BB: Yes, I am in full agreement.

SK: *When you write for the voice, do you have a particular person in mind?*

BB: No, no, I thought of the voice and its expressive possibilities.

SK: *Could you give a few details and memories of your youth during the two World Wars? Did these memories enter into your vocal works? Perhaps it influenced your choice of texts and poets?*

BB: You, lady, show to be very sensitive and intelligent. I can tell you that I have hoped truly that the fury of war, in an alternative period would unleash its people. It is almost a phenomenon recurring with tragic punctuality. There has not been a moment to interrupt the flux for a more valid spiritual heritage from one generation to another.

The frightening ruins remain which indicate we follow one another through warmongering events. They spring unexpectedly and mysterious obscuring man's reason. Nevertheless, even in his misery, each time hope is reborn more obstinate for a better world to come.

I speak like a man and artist that has lived through the contrasts, absurdity and the tragedies of his time.

SK: *I was profoundly impressed when I read that your opera "Count Down", 1970, was centered around the crisis of a middle aged man who killed himself because of the world seemingly fallen down around him. I think that you must have found yourself in the same situation in World War II.*

I was born in 1950 and I am glad that my country has not had world war conflicts. But I am in front of a person who has had the capacity to live through this period and in spite of it has an impressive artistic output.

BB: From the ruins of a defeated Europe, a new conscience of the European man was born.

SK: *Can you tell me, who was the principal influence on you?*

BB: It is difficult to respond because I grew up, fortunately, in an artistic atmosphere, beginning with my family, and then the Conservatory, La Scala, Umberto Giordano, directors of orchestras, for example, Antonio Guarnieri, Vito Frazzi, and they belonged to a revolutionary artistic movement of futurism, etc.

SK: *Was it hard to have your music published at first?*

BB: I would say no. Ricordi and other important publishing houses popularized my compositions.

SK: *What kind of acceptance did you receive from the public and critics? Were you well received by the critics?*

BB: Certainly I was in Italy and abroad and in particular in the United States.

SK: *Did you try to write music that was assessable or was this not an important aspect to you?*

BB: I have always tried to communicate what I feel in particular my positive personal vision of reality. I have always been preoccupied to communicate directly a discussion of sounds with people who listen, who know nothing of the technicalities of music and are able to tell me, “Yes, it is difficult, but this selection touch us, and we were able to follow the general idea.” This is the best a composer of today could hope.

SK: *You wrote “Vocalizzo” for soprano or tenor. Where did the idea come from to write a lied without words?*

BB: From the important consideration I hold for the voice. There is not another instrument like the voice!

SK: *As a pianist, did you accompany voice lessons?*

BB: Yes. During my school days at the Conservatory, I would from time to time offer to turn pages for someone.

Had I wanted to dedicate myself to opera, I would have followed the advice of my uncle Angelo Bettinelli. He was a voice teacher and orchestral conductor. He invited me to play for his lessons. I, however, knew this was not my path.

SK: *Did you find it difficult to combine your careers as a teacher and composer?*

BB: I would say, no. After I had taught harmony, and because of my composing that assigned me to the chair of Composition at the Conservatory in Milan.

SK: *How did you select your poetic text? Did you feel the need to write your own verses to better express your art? How did you cultivate the poet inside of you?*

BB: It is difficult to respond. I choose these texts and I also wrote text, because they presented strong contrasts of life and nature. All, however, had a certain characteristic ending of optimism. In fact, I believe, it is the good that will wing over hate. I have a lot of hope for man. I admired the poet Montale. I also admired Quasimodo, Ungaretti and the writer Riccardo Bacchelli.

SK: *Have you composed in other languages? Do you speak another language*

BB: No, only Italian and Latin. No, I don't speak another language.

SK: *Where your songs for soprano commissioned or written out of inspiration?*

BB: They blossomed from my intimate inspiration and the response between my artistic nature and my reaction to the world in tumult.

SK: *Do you believe your music is universal, European or perhaps conforms to Italian tradition?*

BB: Music is a universal language and having the Italian tradition at my back, I feel in particular included in the European music of this century. As a young man I had the fortune to meet the famous violinist Bronislaw Huberman that always spoke to me about the necessity to form a united Europe. He anticipated twenty years the analogous theories of the Italian De Gasperi and the German Adenauer. Theories regularly sabotage by the short-sighted politics of the French De Gaulle and his followers. Fanatics and incurable supporters of an anachronistic "grandeur" of all absurd and torn cruel reality of the world. In actuality, none of the western European nations can consider themselves leader and autonomous — "force de frappe".

SK: *And the last question, could you speak something about your sacred compositions?*

BB: I am a practicing Christian. It is a religious need to write sacred music. I must confess nostalgia for Latin. Actually in these days I am thinking about composing a three motets for the Holy Year 2000. I think in Italy there exist a need to seriously rinnovate liturgical music.

APPENDIX III AUTHOR'S SECOND INTERVIEW WITH BRUNO BETTINELLI

English Translation—Milan, Italy August 18, 1998

SK: KENNEY (SK): *In your life you had plenty of friends and especially friends who had a close relation to music. They were important people and you have been lucky to meet them. But nowadays young musicians lack such a direct contact with the world of music. They have no friendship with experienced musicians. How can you explain that?*

BRUNO BB: (BB): What you are saying is true. It happens because they did not attend a conservatory. If you know 100 people, you can find just one or two friends among them; then you lose contacts with the others. On the contrary, up to now, I have kept in touch with my conservatory group. Only death has separated us (two friends of mine have recently died: GAVAZZENI and TOFFOLETTI).

SK: *Among the symphonies you composed, is there one you like best?*

BB: I love all my works, but I am particularly fond of my fourth symphony (a short one). Bernstein at the International Festival of Venice conducted it for the first time in 1954. Bernstein himself chose my symphony. The general manager of the Festival (Mr. Labrocca) sent him over to America 20 scores, among which he had to choose the piece of music he would later conduct in Venice. That work was to represent Italian music. I had written that symphony for Celibidake, but then he did not turn up any longer. I received a phone call from Labrocca who told me he needed an unpublished work, never performed before, for his Festival in autumn.

Since I had no news from Celibidake, I decided to give Labrocca my symphony. At the end of the concert in Venice, I met Celibidake who was in the audience and he told me: "You have chosen Bernstein instead of me." "That is life, Maestro!", I answered. "I did not think you would choose my symphony, so I sent it to Mr. Labrocca."

SK: *I suppose you got no money for that work.*

BB: No, I did not, as usual. I never earned money out of my compositions.

SK: *Why did you wait 30 years before writing another symphony?*

BB: Because, you know, it is not so easy to write symphonies in series. I wrote my first symphony in 1938: it is marked by a "finale corale con basso ostinato" (choral finale with ground bass). I instrumented it with a big orchestra; then the symphony has been performed all over the world (even at La Scala Theater with Maestro Muti). It makes an impression! I realized that writing a symphony is no joke, especially if you think of your predecessors (Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven). It is enough to turn your hair white! So I thought I had better have a break. In any case, my first symphony really turned out all right. Then I wrote another during the war period. I left the army because I was in danger of being taken prisoner by the Germans. I took refuge in Bellagio (Como Lake). But I was always running the risk of being sent to hard labour because I was young. I hate German people for what they did both in 1914 and in 1939. When the war broke out in 1939 I was guest at my uncle's in Frankfurt and I hardly had the time to escape. According to me, German people are stupid, even if the greatest musicians, writers and philosophers were German.

SK: *How can you write for the orchestra without using a clef/tonality?*

BB: It is a matter of training and practise. You must follow what you feel. When I compose, I do not usually play the notes on my piano: I have the orchestra inside. This is the only way of composing for an orchestra. You must be “musical”. When you study composition, you have to learn harmony, counterpoint and the fugue. These are the pillars of the house and they are absolutely necessary. But then, while composing, you have to forget them. I mean, they are the basis that the young musician will use instinctively because they are in his blood, in his DNA (after studying for 7 years). Starting from them, he can produce the most strange, reckless and daring piece of music. I can forget tonality because I have it inside. During the 8th, 9th and 10th year, at the conservatory students learn orchestration. My method is as follows: I let them listen to a bit of music (Ravel for example). Then they have to guess what the composer wrote after that bit. At the end I show them the original score, so that they can understand their mistakes and how the composer solved the different problems linked to the composing act. Little by little they can understand how orchestration works. If you have “orchestration” in your head, everything will be easier. I can say I was born with such a gift (my mother put an orchestra in my head!). When I compose, I can hear the sound of the different instruments inwardly. The first rehearsal is a great emotion for me. When I hear what I had so far just imagined, I feel a priceless joy. It is true that I had already played the main theme on the piano, but it was just a rough draft.

SK: *How could your works be published by several editors when you were still young? Nowadays young musicians find so many difficulties in that phase.*

BB: I know. The situation was different those days: it was easier. I won a lot of contests and Ricordi published my works immediately. Following in his footsteps, also other editors courted me. I did not look for them: they looked for me.

SK: *You wrote two things for soprano: Psalm 4 and Psalm 1 (this one is for soprano and mezzosoprano or for two tenors). Why did you chose n° 1 and n° 4 among all psalms?*

BB: When I choose a text, I take care of choosing one rich in contrasts, otherwise it becomes a bore. In Psalm 4 the situation is this: entreaty to God and threat to men who do not believe in God. This gives me the possibility of creating musical chiaroscuro effects. There is the moment of prayer, but there is also anger towards men who never pray. Men must fear for God's wrath and they do not have to sin. This creates a contrast. In Psalm 1 there are two characters: the pious and the impious man. The former prays to God, the latter is against God. I want to point out the contrast between good and evil. I also wrote a cantata for Ungaretti. His first lyrics were desperate, because he wrote them during war. But after praying to God, everything seems brighter. In my music there is always the aspiration, the desire for good. It is a wheel: after war, terror, silence you come back to love, which is the main characteristic of man, even if he is also a scoundrel. I am sure that in each person the desire for good and for peace is very strong. The music I composed for singing is always marked by contrasts, by a quest for something.

SK: *I see you have a dog called FOX. I have a dog too.*

BB: I think dogs have a soul because they are able to feel love for their master and to die for him. It is not a rational soul but just a sensitive one.

SK: *I read your book which is quite difficult to understand. Can you explain the Concerto for piano and orchestra?*

BB: The movements are linked: the first movement flows directly into the following one, without a rest, while usually there is a pause (during which the audience makes a lot of noise).

SK: *Your wife studied singing. Who was her teacher?*

BB: Mrs. Magnoni who sang at La Scala Theater. My wife was a school-fellow of Muti's wife (Cristina Mazzavillani) who studied with Mrs. Maria Carbone.

WIFE: We were in two different grades but we studied subsidiary subjects all together: harmony, scenic art.

BB: People understand nothing of music nowadays. They just wait for a DO di petto, like a goal during a football match). I do not like trills. This is especially Parma mentality. There is no musical culture in this century. We are very far from the German musical culture of the nineteenth century, for example. People like only Rossini, Donizetti, Verdi, who was a genius. [Then Maestro moves to the piano, to explain the chromatism of a composition.]

APPENDIX IV AUTHOR'S THIRD INTERVIEW WITH BRUNO BETTINELLI

English Translation—Milan, Italy July 10, 1998

SHARON KENNEY (SK): *It is difficult to understand how the conservatory system is structured. In Elisabetta Gabellich's book, the exact year you attended conservatory and your age was not clear.*

BRUNO BETTINELLI (BB): I did give you the book written about my compositions?

DON TARCISIO (DT): Yes, you did. But that concerns composition. What about your piano studies?

BB: For what concerns my piano studies, I started to thump on the piano when I was nine years old and my mother...

SK: *Was she a pianist?*

BB: Well, she was an amateur. You see, it was the norm to teach music and piano to girls. My mother did her best to teach me, but I was not interested at all in playing the piano, so she sometimes became angry with me, closed the piano and sent me out to play. After a while, however, I came back on my own and started to practice the piano. It seems I already had the instinct. After a short period with an ignorant teacher, my mother found a very good young lady who became very fond of me and considered me a genius. I was about ten or eleven and had already written several compositions. She insisted that I take the admission exam at the

conservatory in composition. Consequently, I started attending the conservatory because it was possible to take theory and solfeggio courses as an adjunct student. I started studying theory and solfeggio with Mr. Pozzoli.

SK: *This is inadequately described in Gabellich's book. It doesn't speak of your age at that time.*

BB: I was ten or eleven.

SK: *But were you still attending regular school at the same time?*

BB: Yes, at the same time as I attended elementary school, then my first years in grammar school, until high school. I took an exam in theory and solfeggio with Mr. Pozzoli, which was not very good. I only got a passing grade. That particular morning I think I was thinking about something else. I wasn't inspired! I saw birds on the trees. You know how silly young people are? When I was thirteen, I started attending composition courses and I took the examination in composition. Once again, pushed by my young teacher. My parents were not enthusiastic...my father was an excellent painter, my uncle was an excellent musician, Angelo Bettinelli, a singing teacher, friend of Toscani, Puccini and others...

SK: *Have you ever worked with Angelo Bettinelli?*

BB: No, but when I was eighteen I worked for two years as a substitute pianist at the Del Verme Theater. This experience made me understand that I really didn't want to work in the theater. My uncle insisted he would help me and that I could earn a lot of money, but I told him that working with singers was not good for me. However, observing how the theater works was very useful to me when I wrote my three operas.

During my first year of composition, I really didn't understand anything—I was too young. However, while studying in my second year I made a sudden change, which is typical at thirteen/fourteen years of age, and so I had a great year at school and I was among the best students. Meanwhile, I helped fellow classmates who couldn't do their compositions. I had a certain aptitude for conducting and I directed for some time.

SK: *Were you conducting at fourteen?*

BB: No, I started when I was eighteen and I continued until I was twenty-four. I then realized that I had to choose between composition and conducting, as both aren't possible. I'm not...Strauss, who was able to do both at the same time. So, I choose composition and teaching, which means little more than hunger. I have always been a little silly about making people pay me, like my wife. In fact, there's still the legend that Bettinelli is too honest and he doesn't want to be paid. When young people come to me and I know that they can't afford high charges...I am not able to ask them for 100.000 lire or 200.000 lire like many of my colleagues. You can't do that, and my wife does the same, giving singing lessons without pay. She teaches composition, harmony, counterpoint and the fugue at the Bergamo Conservatory. She isn't able to make people pay her either. It seems to be a family trait. We are rich just the same with many things that don't depend on money.

So, I continued my course work. I graduated in piano, choral music, singing. There were choral courses with Spinelli and vocal polyphony. Finally, in 1937 I graduated in composition and conducting.

SK: *It was your early training that was unclear in reading the text you gave me. I realize your young piano teacher was important to you, but her name was not mentioned in the text. What was her name?*

BB: Armi Gallieni. She was a very good woman and she really loved me. She was crazy about me. I don't know what she saw in me. I was not Mozart. Perhaps, she had no one any better and so...

SK: *Your manner of playing the piano on the cassettes you gave me, was very musical. I was deeply touched because of your musicality. You have a very special touch.*

BB: I have greatly improved over the years, but at the beginning I wasn't very good.

SK: *Can you describe in more detail the conservatory curriculum. We Americans don't understand how it works.*

DT: She would like to know something about life in the conservatory, because it's very difficult for them to understand.

SK: *It's very different from our university system.*

BB: It's a big gap you have, because, you know, conservatory is something which stands on its own merit. It is like a big box completely different from university. It's the nest where musicality is formed from the beginning. It's a big family where we loved one another, and we were very close. I said we loved but nowadays it has become a jumble. But when I attended, there were 150 students and 60/70 teachers, and we were like a family, we loved each other and we were

close. So, the conservatory has been for me like where the cub grows till he becomes an adult and then learns to stand on his own.

SK: *Was it a place where you could also make mistakes and be corrected without being ashamed of it?*

BB: Yes, of course. Then you could learn from other's experiences. In the classroom, many of my schoolmates were better than myself, and I tried to perceive what they were doing and I made it mine. Consequently, that helped me to grow up. I think this is the irreplaceable task of the conservatory. Nowadays, they talk about introducing conservatory in high school, but I think it's a big mistake because you can't do well in both Greek, Latin and composition, too. One must compromise. It's more or less what's happening in America, am I wrong?

SK: *No, you aren't.*

BB: Conservatory must be absolutely apart from the other schools. It's a closed box where only what concerns music must enter. Then of course, I'm the first one who says that students must also know Latin and Greek; actually, all my ex-pupils have a degree from the university, and most of them have studied as well in the classical high school. For example, Muti, Camino, Abbado, Pollini. They all took classical course work. You can study that at the same time, but the conservatory must not be considered inside those schools. On the contrary. A student can be a musician and attend the conservatory and also study at a high school, until he graduates.

SK: *All this at the same time?*

BB: Yes, also at the same time.

DT: May I ask a question, just to complete hers?

BB: Please.

DT: Could you explain to her what is the advantage of having 10 or 12 students in the same classroom at different stages of their course work? That's to say first course, second course, etc.?

BB: I had some pupils, like my wife, who studied with me and had a degree in composition. She became my pupil after completing the fourth course. She also has a certificate in accounting from High School. First she studied in Brescia with a very good teacher to complete the fourth course, then she entered the conservatory. So, you see, it is possible to do courses of study at the same time. I had many students that started with me and completed ten years with me. At the beginning harmony is very simple...do, mi, sol, mi, sol, do, sol, do mi...till the degree finishes with orchestration, symphonies, etc. taken from beginning to end. I had the composition course from the first year till the tenth. They grew up with me. They came with short pants and they left with beards and long pants.

DT: So the advantage is that when the teacher corrects one student, the others listen carefully.

BB: They listen, and they remember the mistakes they made or discover something they will have to do in the future. The advantage in conservatory is the unity among the students, the osmosis between teachers and pupils. Then of course, there were other composition classes, Pedrollo's one etc. and the piano

classes. We also had studio class where everyone performed his work, also for instrumental, piano, violin, cello, etc.

SK: *How often during the year were these student performed concerts?*

BB: Well, usually the final student concert was at the end of the year, but there were studio classes all during the year. Everyone who was ready to perform played something. So there was a continuous control over the student's progress. Where can you find another school which can do the same? It's impossible to combine the classical high school with all these things. This widespread assimilation of music through the students experience, the schoolmates, and teacher's experience. Only in this way, is it a big family.

DT: It is individualistic teaching.

BB: I wrote about this in my book: Conino and Muti rivaled for who could produce the most beautiful canons and counterpoint. They were and are still very good friends. They competed against one another reproducing Bach's examples, the fugue art. The music they produced were very difficult canons. In this way they acquired an excellent technique. Muti has an excellent ability to write counterpoint. He was also very talented in composition. Also, Canino obtained my best degree in composition with the four highest marks (ten and lode), even if there was Ghedini on the commission who caused fear among the students.

SK: *Did Muti take 10?*

BB: Muti took ten, Canino took 10 and "lode" which is more. One of my wife's vocal students just took a 10 and "lode" with a special mention. An extraordinary girl whom you will hear of soon.

SK: *What's her name?*

BB: Maria Zilocchi. And she was recommended to my wife by Gavazzeni, who is a family friend. She was 15 when she came to work with my wife. My wife didn't know what to do with her because she had no voice, but she was very intelligent. Gavazzeni had said that the girl was special. Actually, my wife accepted her and has now been working with her for six years. She has developed a great voice.

SK: *Was the military in your day the same as today?*

BB: No, it's not the same. That was instigated by the Fascists, and it was one of the good things they did, among the bad ones. Like also the "Littoriali" of art and culture, which were competitions in every town, from which the best participants had the possibility to compete in the final competition. All the musicians who won these competitions had a great career: Quartetto Italiano, Trio di Trieste, Elisa Carminelli etc. and I won that competition too.

At that time you could do the military service while you studied, so that you didn't lose any of the school year. And then, during the summer, I attended the Italian cadet officer school and I became sublieutenant. Nowadays, they wait till they have finished school and then they lose a year doing nothing. So, I did the military service in that way and then, at the outbreak of the war in 1940, I was recalled. I didn't become a hero, nor did you Americans shoot at me.

APPENDIX V AUTHOR'S FOURTH INTERVIEW WITH BRUNO BETTINELLI

English Translation—Milan, Italy July 10, 2000

BRUNO BETTINELLI (BB): This book says that Italian artists during Fascism were controlled by the regime, but this just isn't true. Great artists like Malipiero, Respighi, Casella, Petrassi or Dallapiccola have never written anything paying homage to Mussolini or fascism.

SHARON KENNEY (SK): *It is very important for me to understand how you survived during this period.*

BB: Briefly, up to a certain point Mussolini did many good things for Italy, for artists and especially socially. An organization called "la maternita infanzie" [motherhood and babyhood] which assisted mothers and their children, improved usage of the land through drainage, transportation, and summer vacations for children of workers. Artists were free to do whatever they wanted. Mainly because Mussolini had a Jewish lover, named Sarfatti. Also, during this time, there were many Jewish people who were Fascist party leaders (then later under the command of Hitler he persecuted the Jews. Fortunately for Mussolini, Bottai, a fascist leader, worked closely with him. Later, however, he became an anti-fascist. In fact, today his son is an Ambassador for Italy. So, up to a certain point, Mussolini did many beneficial things for Italians, until he aligned himself with that bastard Hitler who ruined the world, along with Stalin. I'm an anti-

Communist and anti-Nazi (Germans of that type). I'm sorry that many important musicians were all Germans. Fascism did many good things and 90% of Italians were for Mussolini. Then when the Fascists went with Hitler, they destroyed everything good Mussolini had done. He was a dictator, but there were no concentration camps here. My father was a socialist and he could no longer show his pictures in Venice. Let me tell you a story. He [my father] had an anti-fascist friend who was an antique dealer. Often they would meet with other anti-fascist friends in his store and talk about the political situation. One day a policeman happened by the store and said, "At police headquarters it is known that here you speak badly about Mussolini all day long." My father's friend emphatically denied this. Then said, "In this store we talk badly not only all day long but all night too." But nothing happened to them. Italians have for centuries been shrewd, dishonest but also generous. We have Spanish, Norman, Swabian, and Arab blood. Other populations have always ruled us. After the Romans, others dominated us. We have never been a nation but many tribes. It is only 150 years that Italy has been united. Too few to be united like German. We still aren't.

SK: *I worry that in the future, with so much immigration, Italy won't be Italy any longer.*

BB: I don't know what the future holds and I'm glad to be at the end, to be 88.

SK: *During Fascism there was a lot of contemporary classical music, and many foreign artists came to Italy to perform their music. Did Mussolini ever try to hinder these performances?*

BB: No he didn't. There was the festival in Venice. He let everybody do whatever they wanted, you need never to speak badly about Fascism. His lover founded the movement called "Novecento Italiano" for painters. She was a very intelligent Jewish woman. Mussolini founded the Italian Academy for musicians and painters. For example, I used to go to fascist meetings out of curiosity, even though I was never registered with any party.

SK: *But you do vote?*

BB: Yes, I do. My father was a socialist and was a friend of the leader of the socialist party, Turati. Even Mussolini, at the beginning, was a socialist and the director of the socialists' newspaper. I watched the birth of fascism in Milan and went often to my Uncle Angelo's house. Toscani sent singers to him to learn opera. I was there often with my cousins. From his window, I could see the Galleria. In 1917-18, when Communism exploded in Russia, here [in Italy] "le squadre rosse" [red squads] formed. From my cousins window I saw the red squads assault Italian soldiers, drag them by the hair through the Galleria, because they accused them [Italian soldiers] of supporting the war [WWI]. I can still see it. The "Arditi" were like the Italian marines that wore black shirts, which became the fascist uniform. When they [Arditi] saw their friends assaulted [by "I rossi"] they started fighting. The Industrialist [contracting class] realized they [Arditi] were on their side and they supported them with money. Mussolini saw that the Arditi were against Communism, so he left the socialist party to support the "Arditi." What followed was the march on Rome. He was appointed President of the government by the king and then he became a dictator. He was a very good

speaker and writer. He put many things in order and realized many wonderful works. Then he went with Hitler and that was his end. He thought that he could win the war in five minutes, while it had just begun. Mussolini destroyed Italy.

SK: *La Scala was destroyed during this time (1943). I read where you cried when entering into the ruins.*

BB: Yes, I did like a child.

SK: *In your house, were you ever afraid of the consequences of fascism?*

BB: My father was a very brave man, and everybody knew he was against fascism. I tried to calm him down, but he was very angry because he couldn't show his pictures without joining the party. I used to go to fascist meetings where there were also communists who would oppose fascist ideas. But nothing ever happened to them. So, there were good and bad aspects, but there was also a certain freedom.

SK: *Did any of your friends or family members become victims in World War II?*

BB: In my family, a cousin died, and then other members were injured. Many of my friends who came back from Russia were very ill. I defended Mussolini but I think he was also an imbecile. He put Italy in order, created the welfare state and gave the nation dignity. He created a certain feeling of patriotism.

SK: *As a young man was there ever a priest who influenced you?*

BB: Not me directly, but my cousin. He was a very religious man and he was friend of Monsignor Orsenigo. I went to the Fellowship Hall where there was this monsignor who later was appointed Apostolic Nunzio to Berlin. He didn't influence me directly, but I knew about him from my cousin. In 1939 I went to

Germany, Belgium, and Holland and just before the outbreak of the war I escaped home. Monsignor Orsenigo was against Hitler and I knew this but I never had any direct contact with him.

SK: *Did Fascism impose ideas or choices on you in regard to expression, poets or music?*

BB: No, total freedom. Actually there were papers established like *La Voce* which was anti-fascist.

SK: *Did Fascism influence the poems of that time?*

BB: Maybe for some artists it did, but the great poets like Ungaretti and Montale were all anti-fascist.

SK: *Why did you choose Montale to set to your music?*

BB: I selected him because he as a poet with an imposing vision. He was in the First World War and the first poems I set to music were desperate. He was a patriot and Quasimodo too. They were both awarded Nobel prizes. For them it was only poetry, nature and man. Then there was the Futurist Movement, which was for Fascism. Then there was D'Annunzio who did what he had to for money, yet he was a great poet. *Alcione* is a very beautiful collection of poems. He had many musicians for friends, like Malipiero, Casella, Puccini and Pizzetti. Pizzetti was the Director of the Conservatory in Milan and I passed my exams with him. Pizzetti helped D'Annunzio to compile the works of ancient Italian musicians' composers.

SK: *Why don't you talk about this in your book?*

BB: I preferred not to, but I spoke about these musicians and my visit to Frankfurt.

SK: *Can you mention some of the personages that were painted by your father?*

BB: They were above all musicians, Puccini, Mascagni.

SK: *Do you think Mascagni was a Fascist?*

BB: Yes, I think so. In my book Giulio Mercati talks badly about Fascism. But I lived in that period and I say that it is not correct [to speak badly] because it [Fascism] protected many artists. My father caricatured Puccini, Mascagni, Leoncavallo, Toscanini, Guarnieri, Debussy, Ugo Ietti and other writers, Massimo Vorchio and Hitler, too. But I don't display it.

SK: *How did Pizzetti influence you? Did you study with him?*

BB: No, he was on the examining board and director of the conservatory. All of his works reflected past times and the medieval ages. He was not concerned with politics. Bossi and Paribeni too, my teachers, never spoke about politics. Everyone had his or her own opinions. I was anti-fascist like my father, but was impartial enough to say that it was not completely negative. Once I was invited to a Fascist meeting on Fascist music. My opinion was that it didn't make sense to talk of fascist art, because Fascism was still current and not until it had run its course would we be able to see its value.

SK: *Gavazzeni said something similar. Gavazzeni's father advised him to join the Fascist party if he wanted to become a conductor. Did your father ever advise you to join the Fascist party to work?*

BB: Gavazzeni's father was a deputy in the parliament, then he resigned. Yet he told his son to join the party if he wanted to become a conductor. But I don't like to be catalogued.

SK: *I decided to write only on the Cinque liriche di Montale because there was too much music Maestro Bettinelli had written for me to cover in my treatise. Now let's talk about Montale.*

Why did you use the combination of clarinet and flutes for this setting?

BB: Because they suit the verses and, moreover, supported by the strings these two instruments converse with the voice, but the strings are also very important.

SK: *In this first setting you used an octatonic scale to express the poetry. It seems that you use these kinds of scales in your music.*

BB: The fact is that I don't have any system to follow. I write what comes from my soul. I never calculate. Giulio Mercati too makes these kinds of observations, but I can't explain why I write in this way or that.

Wife: When my husband decides to write something, he begins preparing the composition in his mind a long time before writing it. I can see it because he's silent and quite distracted, and this means he's planning a composition.

SK: *Why did you use only these five poems?*

BB: Because I thought they were the right ones. I wrote them to participate in a contest and I won. The competition did not allow me to write a lot. After the contest, my selection was performed and Montale came to hear them. But he didn't say anything to me. I only spoke with him to get permission to set his music. He came to the concert with his girlfriend. It was performed along with other

composers (1948-1949). When I read a poem, it is the content, which excites me. I try to find the music, which can best give the same idea, in this case of boats or a feeling of narrow spaces. My music tries to give this impression, like Impressionism, that comes from the influence of Debussy.

SK: *I think your music is more abstract than impressionistic.*

BB: Yes, it can be both.

SK: *In the melody sung by the soprano, I believe you used two scales, which I have called gypsy mode.*

BB: Yes, maybe I did. When I write I don't do any calculation and I don't think about intervals. For this reason, I can't stand Schönberg's serialism.

SK: *In this poem you can find the theme of loneliness. Did you capture it by using the clarinet?*

BB: Yes, I did, and also with some indistinct sounds. But I also set two poems by Montale for SATB choir with the same words. "Sul muro graffito..." and "Debole..." I finished the version for choir last year.

SK: *You use a lot of unisons even in the piano between verses.*

BB: This is the version that won the contest for string quartet, but there's also a version for string orchestra with double basses too. When I put a text to music, I try to live the feeling of the poet. Montale studied as a baritone and was very musical. This version for choir will make an impression. It's a little bit difficult but I always write in a difficult way. There's also a CD with the hymn for Saint Ambrogio. There's one for the night and another one for the dawn.

SK: *Montale always speaks of "life-sickness," but you chose five of his poems that express hope.*

BB: This is the poem of Campanella, which begins serene and then becomes tragic, but in the end there's hope. My belief is, there is good inside men, however, evil often prevails. There is, however, hope that one-day hope will return. My idea of life and the tragic moments we are living today, is that good will come again.

SK: *You are still an optimist notwithstanding all the troubles in your life. Montale was not like that.*

BB: No, he wasn't. He was a very closed and quite a nasty man. The introduction of the "Anima" reflects the dances mentioned in the poems, but I wanted to stylize them and not represent them precisely. I wanted to give the feeling of a happy dance developing in the music. I always try to follow the content of the poems and to understand the poet's mood, because in this case first was the dance and then sadness. There are always contrasts.

SK: *What does this flute part mean?*

BB: It's the movement of the wings of the wind in the poem. There's also a sort of descriptiveness, and many contrasts.

SK: *Montale never talks of God, but he talks of a light which could be interpreted as God.*

BB: I don't know if he was an atheist but he was very pessimistic.

SK: *The image of the sunflower that searches the light may be interpreted as if he was searching for God.*

BB: Yes, it's as if he was ashamed of searching for God. Man's soul is very difficult to understand and maybe he was ashamed of showing his inner soul. Atheism, in general, is often a kind of pain and suffering.

SK: *In "Portami girasole" you used a different meter for the soprano. I believe it represents a dualism between good and evil. Also in the poem, "La terra," there is this struggle in life—many contrasts. Sometimes your music is very theatrical. But I like that in the end there's hope. Does "si maggiore" of the last bar mean God?*

BB: No, but I didn't think of it. I did it naturally. I don't know how to explain my musicality. I'm not an accountant. Music for me is like something that boils and when it comes out you must put it into order for people. But before it's like lava which burns everything.

Wife: When my husband writes a composition, the first 10 bars then become 20, because they are condensed altogether and then he widens them, he amplifies them. It's like lava coming out from a volcano and then expanding. Then you have to cut and amplify what you wrote.

SK: *Did you teach at the conservatory when you wrote this?*

BB: In 1948, I still taught complementary harmony. Then Ghedini made me teach composition.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abbiati, Franco. *Storia della Musica*. 4 vols. Milano: Garzanti, 1967.
- Antokoletz, Elliott. *The Music of Bela Bartók: A Study of Tonality and Progression in Twentieth-Century Music*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984.
- . *Twentieth-Century Music*. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1992.
- Arrowsmith, William. *Cuttlefish Bones (1920-1927)*. New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1933.
- . *Cuttlefish Bones (1920-1927)*. New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1948.
- . *The Occasions*. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1987.
- Becker, Jared. *Eugenio Montale*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1986.
- Benét's *Readers Encyclopedia*, 3rd ed., eds. William Rose Benét and Bruce Murphy. New York: Harper and Row, 1987.
- Béla Bartók Essays*, ed. Benjamin Suchoff. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1976.
- Bruno Bettinelli: *Catalogo delle opere pubblicate*. Milano: G. Ricordi and Co., 1986.
- Bettinelli, Bruno. *4th Concerto per orchestra*. Orchestra di Milano della Rai. Aldo Ceccato. CRMCD 1016.
- . *La Composition Musicale*. Milano: Rugginenti Editore, 1996.
- . *Opere corali*. SARX Records, Milan, Italy. SX027-2.
- . *Sinfonia Breve*. Orchestra del Teatro La Fenice. Leonard Bernstein. CRMCD 1026.

- Biasin, Gian-Paolo. *Montale, Debussy, and Modernism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989.
- Budden, Julien. *The Operas of Verdi from Don Carlos to Falstaff*, Vol. 3. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978.
- Enciclopedia dello spettacolo*, ed. Claudio Sartori. Roma: S. D'Amico, 1966.
- "Eugenio Montale." *Columbia Dictionary of Modern European Literature*, 2nd eds., Jean-Albert Bede and William B. Edgerton. New York: Columbia University Press, 1980.
- Eugenio Montale Collected Poems 1920-1954*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1998.
- Gabellich, Elizabeth. *Linguaggio Musicale di Bruno Bettinelli*. Milano: Guido Miano Editore, 1989.
- Galassi, Jonathan. *Eugenio Montale Collected Poems 1920-1954*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999.
- Gatti, Guido M. "Bruno Bettinelli." *La Musica Dizionario*. Torino: Unione Tipografico, 1968.
- Gavazzeni, Gianandrea. "Un milanese: Bruno Bettinelli," *Musicisti d'Europa a studi sui contemporanei*. Milano: Suvini Zerboni, 1954.
- Gentilucci, Armando. "Presenza di Bruno Bettinelli." *Il Convegno Musicale*. Torino: Giacomo Caula, 1965.
- Marengo, Silvio Riolfo. "Bruno Bettinelli." *La Nuova Enciclopedia della Musica*. Milano: Garzanti, 1983.
- . "Franco Abbiati." *La Nuova Enciclopedia della Musica*. Milano: Garzanti, 1983.
- . "Gianandrea Gavazzeni." *La Nuova Enciclopedia della Musica*. Milano: Garzanti, 1983.
- Mercati, Giulio. *Bruno Bettinelli Il cammino di un musicista*. Milan: Rugginenti, 1998.

Merriam-Webster's Encyclopedia of Literature. Springfield, Mass.: Merriam-Webster, 1995.

Montale, Eugenio. *Auto da fé: Cronache in due tempi*. Milan: Il Saggiatore, 1966.

——— *Quaderno di traduzioni*. Milan: Mondadori, 1976.

——— *The Occasions*, translated, with preface and commentary, by William Arrowsmith. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1987.

Monteverdi, Giulio Cesare. "Il quinto libro de' madrigali" [1605]. *Source Readings in Music History*, ed. Oliver Strunk. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1965.

Nava, Delfino. "Bruno Bettinelli." *Dizionario Musicale Larousse*. Milano: Paoline, 1961.

——— "Guilio Cesare Paribeni." *Dizionario Musicale Larousse*. Milano: Paoline, 1961.

——— "Santo Spinelli." *Dizionario Musicale Larousse*. Milano: Paoline, 1961.

——— "Bruno Bettinelli." *Dizionario Musicale Larousse*. Milano: Paoline, 1961.

Neumeyer, David. *The Music of Paul Hindemith*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986.

New Catholic Encyclopedia. 16 vols. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967.

The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, ed. Stanley Sadie. London: Macmillan, 1980.

Petazzi, Paola. "Bruno Bettinelli." *New Grove Dictionary of Opera*. London: Macmillan Press Limited, 1992.

Pugliese, Stanislao G. *Carlo Rosselli: Socialist Heretic and Antifascist Exile*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999.

Rebay, Luciano. "Montale, Clizia, e l'America." *Forum Italicum* 16/3. 1982

Sachs, Harvey. *Music in Fascist Italy*. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1987.

VITA

Sharon Elizabeth was born in Opelika, Alabama on December 22, 1950. She is the daughter of Martha and Leslie Kenney, Jr. After graduating from Southside High School in Gadsden, Alabama, she entered Samford University in Birmingham. In 1974, she graduated with honors with a Bachelor of Music Education as a student of Eleanor Ousley. In September 1977, she entered the graduate program at The University of North Texas at Denton under Laurel Miller. Her graduate work was interrupted when she took an apprenticeship with the Chicago Lyric Opera Center for the American Artist, where she debuted the role of Konstanze in Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*. Maestro Walter Baracchi at the Chicago Lyric, encouraged her to participate in the Bel Canto Seminar in Italy working with Renata Tebaldi and Carlo Bergonzi. While in Europe, she won international vocal competitions in Pavia, Mario del Monaco at Villa Manin, Belvedere Wettbewerb für Opernsänger, and the Rosa Ponselle of New York. In 1987 she returned to the States to complete a Master of Music degree in vocal performance. As an educator, Ms. Kenney has taught as a public and private teacher (K-12), and college (two and four year). She frequently conducts church choirs and vocal master classes for high school. Ms. Kenney has sung Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* (Corpus Christi Symphony), Symphony #9 (Chestnut Hill and Olney Symphony, PA), Mahler's *Third Symphony* (Philadelphia Symphony and Philadelphia Singers), Mozart's *Grand Mass in C* (Nashville Symphony), and Verdi's *Requiem* (Busseto, Italy). She has performed leading

roles in Puccini's *Tosca*, *La Bohème*, *Suor Angelica*, Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *L'Elisir d'amore*, and Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. She conducted Bass's *Gloria*, Faurè's *Requiem*, Saint-Saëns' *Christmas Oratorio*, and Vivaldi's *Gloria*. Ms Kenney has been the musical director for many Gilbert and Sullivan productions as well as Broadway Musicals at her school in New York. Currently, she is in her fifth year as Music Department Head at The Nightingale-Bamford School, a K-12 private girls' school on the Upper East side of Manhattan. Her choirs have performed at Carnegie Hall and concertized in Italy and England. She is a member of the following professional organizations: ACDA, MENC, ORFF, NATS, NYSAIS, and the independent Interschools of New York. Ms. Kenney and her husband William Biggart live in Riverdale, Bronx, New York City.

Permanent address: 3050 Fairfield Avenue #4C
Bronx, NY 10463

The author and Martha Kenney typed this thesis.