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Looking Back, Listening Forward: A New Transcription of Leoš Janáček's Suite For Strings for Double Wind Quintet in the Harmoniemusik Tradition

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Looking Back, Listening Forward: A New Transcription of Leoš Janáček's Suite For Strings for Double Wind Quintet in the Harmoniemusik Tradition

Abstract

The *Harmoniemusik* tradition has provided the wind chamber repertoire with a tremendous wealth of literature. Spanning the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, these transcriptions of large-scale works had a formative influence on the creative activity of subsequent composers. Most notable are the transcriptions of operas. Some include more than twenty movements and capture much of the drama and intensity of the stage versions. While the Viennese wind octet with pairs of oboes, clarinets, bassoons and horns became the standard instrumentation for the properly defined *Harmonie*, many pieces were also arranged and composed for ensembles ranging from six to ten players. Composers such as Haydn (1732-1809), Stamitz (1745-1801), Mozart (1756-1791), Krommer (1759-1831), Beethoven (1770-1827) and Mendelssohn (1809- 1847) contributed works to the *Harmoniemusik* genre.

In that spirit, Leoš Janáček's (1854-1928) *Suite for Strings* (1877) serves as the basis of this research and transcription project. The project is divided into three parts. First, the background of the *Harmoniemusik* movement and its central characters, along with the development of the *Harmonie* ensemble and its repertoire, is examined. Second, an investigation of Janáček's early life and musical training, up to the years surrounding the composition of his *Suite for Strings*, offers a context for the origin of the work. A detailed analysis of the suite's six movements is provided for a better understanding of the piece. Third, the transcription process of transforming the original *Suite for Strings* into the author's *Suite for Winds* (2014) is described. The full score for all six movements is contained in the appendix.

Keywords

Janáček, wind quintet, Suite for Strings, harmoniemusik

Disciplines

Music

Comments

- A dissertation submitted to the graduate faculty of the North Dakota State University of Agriculture and Applied Science in partial fulfillment for the degree of DOCTOR OF MUSICAL ARTS
- · Dr. Warren Olfert, Major Professor
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A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty
of the
North Dakota State University
of Agriculture and Applied Science

By

Bradley Jay Miedema

In Partial Fulfillment for the Degree of DOCTOR OF MUSICAL ARTS

Major Department: Music

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Fargo, North Dakota

North Dakota State University Graduate School

Title

Looking Back, Listening Forward:
A New Transcription of Leoš Janáček's *Suite for Strings*for Double Wind Quintet
in the *Harmoniemusik* Tradition

By

Bradley Jay Miedema

The Supervisory Committee certifies that this *disquisition* complies with North Dakota State University's regulations and meets the accepted standards for the degree of

DOCTOR OF MUSICAL ARTS

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ABSTRACT

The *Harmoniemusik* tradition has provided the wind chamber repertoire with a tremendous wealth of literature. Spanning the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, these transcriptions of large-scale works had a formative influence on the creative activity of subsequent composers. Most notable are the transcriptions of operas. Some include more than twenty movements and capture much of the drama and intensity of the stage versions. While the Viennese wind octet with pairs of oboes, clarinets, bassoons and horns became the standard instrumentation for the properly defined *Harmonie*, many pieces were also arranged and composed for ensembles ranging from six to ten players. Composers such as Haydn (1732-1809), Stamitz (1745-1801), Mozart (1756-1791), Krommer (1759-1831), Beethoven (1770-1827) and Mendelssohn (1809-1847) contributed works to the *Harmoniemusik* genre.

In that spirit, Leoš Janáček's (1854-1928) *Suite for Strings* (1877) serves as the basis of this research and transcription project. The project is divided into three parts. First, the background of the *Harmoniemusik* movement and its central characters, along with the development of the *Harmonie* ensemble and its repertoire, is examined. Second, an investigation of Janáček's early life and musical training, up to the years surrounding the composition of his *Suite for Strings*, offers a context for the origin of the work. A detailed analysis of the suite's six movements is provided for a better understanding of the piece. Third, the transcription process of transforming the original *Suite for Strings* into the author's *Suite for Winds* (2014) is described. The full score for all six movements is contained in the appendix.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family for their ongoing encouragement and support of my musical studies throughout my life. Thank you, mom and dad, for enabling me to pursue my musical interests and for providing the means to fulfill my calling as a musician and as an educator. I am so grateful for the solid foundation you established in my early years and for your continuing influence today. Thank you, kids—Brendan, Brianna, and Gabrielle—for the joy you bring to my life and for the wonderful ways you already are developing your own musical abilities. I pray that you will always seek to use the gifts you have been given to serve others more than you serve yourselves. Most of all, I want to express thanks to my wife Lisa for her unwavering support throughout our years together and especially in these past months. It is an incredible blessing to be married to someone who understands and values the work one does. Thank you so much for being the bedrock of our home while I was away finishing my degree. I truly could not have done it without you and your selfless love.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION: RAISON D'ÊTRE

In the Western classical tradition, it is not uncommon for a given melody or musical work to be arranged in a variety of genres. Beginning with plainchant as a foundation for early polyphony to the use of folk dance tunes as the basis of serious instrumental works to the transcription of choral and orchestral pieces for the modern wind band, composers throughout the ages have borrowed well-crafted works to create new arrangements for musicians to perform. This process of transforming melodies from one genre to another has provided a wealth of music that not only enriched the repertoire available in any given medium, it also has fueled the composition of additional new works inspired by these fresh settings.

One example of this practice is that of the *Harmonie*, the small wind ensemble that served courts of European aristocracy in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Court musicians performed for a variety of functions ranging from official ceremonies to dinner parties to worship services, as there was a need for music in many aspects of aristocratic life. What sets the literature written for *Harmonie* ensembles apart from other pieces of that time is the abundance of transcriptions of substantial works, many of them operas, that were performed as background music and even as concert pieces. In Rodney Winther's *An Annotated Guide to Music* (2004), the category of music for ensembles with eight players (the typical *Harmonie* size) lists 134 works. Out of this number, fourteen are transcriptions of operas, some of which feature no fewer than twenty movements, generated by composers in the late eighteenth century. In addition,

thirty-six other works with titles such as "divertimento", "octet", "parthia" and "serenade" by composers from this same time supplement the list.¹

This relatively brief period has had a formative influence on wind chamber music repertoire. In Winther's guide, thirty-seven percent of the works for eight players fall within a forty-year period. This is a remarkable figure considering Winther's intent to create a representative list that includes pieces from over 300 years of chamber music. This does not take into consideration any repertoire for ensembles of six, seven, nine or ten players, which adds to his guide at least another forty-three works in the *Harmonie* tradition.² With composers such as Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven writing *Harmoniemusik*, much of this literature is exceptional in quality and enduring. However, with today's focus on composition for large orchestral and wind ensembles, new works for chamber ensembles are less common.

With that in mind, the purpose of this research project was to follow the custom of the *Harmonie* practice and transcribe a large-scale work for chamber ensemble. Although the Viennese octet (pairs of oboes, clarinets, bassoons and horns) became the standard *Harmonie* instrumentation, composers always have flexibility to write for the musicians they have available. In this situation, a double wind quintet–augmented by the addition of a pair of flutes–was the desired medium for this project. This was not only because of the accessibility to high quality players, but also because of the tonal palette available when the flute is added for brilliance in the upper range along with warmth and support in the

¹Rodney Winther, *An Annotated Guide to Wind Chamber Music* (Miami: Warner Bros. Publications Inc., 2004), 404-407.

²Ibid., 402-404, 407-410.

lower range. Furthermore, other existing works for double wind quintet influenced the decisions for scoring the movements of the selected composition. In particular, Graham Sheen's setting of Antonin Dvořák's (1841-1904) *Czech Suite* (1879) and Friedrich Wanek's transcription of Carl Orff's (1895-1982) *Carmina Burana* (1936) afforded creative stimulus in textural and timbral choices.

Choosing an appropriate piece that would serve as the basis of this transcription project was not a simple process. The number of orchestral works potentially available for this undertaking was sizeable, even aside from considering ballet and opera scores. As an added challenge, it was a priority to identify works by composers who were not necessarily celebrated for their instrumental output. Preference was given to works that were not already familiar to today's wind performers. In light of these considerations, the six-movement *Suite for Strings* (1877) by Leoš Janáček (1854-1928) was selected and the task of transcribing this "new" *Suite for Winds* (2014) commenced.

An additional benefit from choosing this work was Janáček's instrumentation for strings only. With no existing passages within the piece for winds of any kind, every single scoring choice was a fresh opportunity. For example, there was no concern about keeping an oboe solo from the original version in the oboe part in the transcription. Generally, instrumental registers from Janáček's original could be retained without octave displacement, mostly due to the inclusion of two flutes in the chamber ensemble. One deliberate exception is the scoring of the trio section in movement four. To provide variety of color and a more soothing setting, horns and bassoons were selected as the primary voices to open the section with the original violin and viola material scored one

octave lower in the horns and bassoons. This was purely a matter of personal taste and not a result of any perceived weakness in the original version.

It was the author's intent that the musical integrity of Janáček's composition not be compromised in this process. The *Suite for Strings* is definitely Janáček's work; if nothing else, this transcription should be seen as another vehicle for introducing the composer's delightful writing to a new generation of musicians. His music deserves to be studied and performed more often than is currently programmed. Furthermore, the wind chamber music medium can only become richer as high quality works, both newly composed and transcribed, are added to the repertoire.

CHAPTER 2. AN OVERVIEW OF HARMONIEMUSIK

Though the roots of the *Harmonie* can be traced back to earlier centuries, the proper definition of that term limits its usage from the mid-eighteenth century until the 1830s as applied to the small court wind bands of European aristocracy, particularly the courts of central and Eastern Europe. Several important centers of musical activity developed in palaces from Vienna to Prague to Budapest. Their significance related directly to the amount of money spent on securing the finest musicians and directors available. The body of repertoire for these ensembles is known as *Harmoniemusik*, which range from transcriptions of operas and other large scale, multi-movement works to original pieces that were composed specifically for the assortment of performers at a given court. The popular appeal of *Harmoniemusik* can be measured by the sizeable number of manuscript copies listed for sale in a 1799 catalog of Viennese music seller and publisher Johann Traeg, which includes over 200 works for *Harmonie* ensembles ranging from five to nine parts.

At its core, the *Harmonie* consisted of pairs of horns, bassoons and oboes, eventually expanding to include a pair of clarinets as well. Occasionally other instruments such as flutes, English horns and basset horns could be added or substituted; in addition, the trombone, serpent, double bass or double bassoon were sometimes engaged to supplement the bass line with a lower octave, depending upon the needs of the

¹David Whitwell, *The Wind Band and Wind Ensemble of the Classic Period*, vol. 4, (Northridge, CA: Winds, 1984), 4.

²Ibid., 40.

music. Reinforcing the bass line often was a regional consideration, as described by Roger Hellyer:

Thus for instance one finds mention of the trombone in Paris and the serpent in London; the contrabassoon was used in Vienna, and at Oettingen-Wallerstein Rosetti himself played the violone . . . Therefore while composers may have been specific as to their requirements on their title page there can be no doubt that it would be common contemporary practice to use a different sixteen-foot bass if the prescribed one was not available.³

This flexibility allowed the *Harmonie* to serve each court fully with background music and entertainment for dinner parties, functional music for activities and social events, and concert music for both private and public performances. A standardized octet with pairs of oboes, clarinets, horns and bassoons became the Viennese tradition, emulated by other European court musicians and aristocrats.

The court of the Schwarzenberg family from Vienna and Wittingau is recognized as the location of the first *Harmonie* octet beginning in 1771. Three pairs of woodwinds (oboes, bassoons, and English horns in place of clarinets) and a pair of French horns made up the instrumentation of this *Harmonie* ensemble. The octet performed mainly at the Schwarzenberg's Viennese court and also at their palace in present day Třeboň, Czech Republic, though it is likely that the members of the octet, or perhaps the entire group, also would have played at other homes where the family resided. The Schwarzenberg archives, located in Český Krumlov, house one of the largest collections of *Harmoniemusik* in the world.

³Roger Hellyer, "Harmoniemusik: Music for Small Wind Band in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries" (PhD diss., Oxford University, 1973), 182.

Central to the development of the *Harmoniemusik* tradition was the establishment of a concert octet at the court of Austria's Emperor Joseph II in 1782. Before this time the majority of European courts employed instrumental ensembles of substantially larger proportions. An example from 1730 is the Viennese Imperial court wind band that was comprised of five oboes, five bassoons, one French horn, four trombones and thirteen trumpets.⁴ With the appointment of an independent octet at the Emperor's court in 1782, the relevance of the *Harmonie* became apparent, since these eight musicians were given additional pay beyond their court opera orchestra stipends to function as an octet. Interestingly, the pay for their *Harmoniemusik* role exceeded their annual stipend for playing in the orchestra.⁵

Following the creation of a *Harmonie* at the court of Joseph II, aristocracy throughout Austria were inspired to establish their own. The first to imitate the Emperor was his brother, Maximilian, replicated by the courts of Desterriech, Thun, Dittrichstein, Liechtenstein, and many more. The Beethoven biographer Alexander Thayer believes that Maximilian brought some of the wind players for his *Harmonie* from Vienna to Bonn in 1784:

The names of several of the performers upon wind instruments were new names in Bonn, and the thought suggests itself that the Elector brought with him from Vienna some members of the *Harmoniemusik* which had won high praise from Reichardt [reviewer], and it will hereafter appear that such a band formed part of the musical establishment in Bonn – a fact of importance in its bearing upon the questions of the origin and date of various known works both of Beethoven and of Reicha, and of no less

⁴Whitwell, "The Incredible Vienna Octet School, Part 1," *The Instrumentalist* 24, no. 3 (October 1969): 33.

⁵Whitwell, *The Wind Band and Wind Ensemble of the Classic Period*, vol. 4, 40-41.

⁶Whitwell, "The Incredible Vienna Octet School, Part 1," 33.

weight in deciding where and how these men obtained their marvellous [sic] knowledge of the powers and effects of this class of instruments.⁷

This gradual growth of the *Harmonie* tradition was likely aided by the fact that noble families from the outlying areas of the surrounding countryside would spend the winter season in Vienna, socializing in high society and savoring the lavish demonstration of culture and wealth. The nineteenth century Mozart biographer, Otto Jahn, offered a portrayal of *Harmoniemusik* in Viennese life:

Another branch of concerted music high in favor in Mozart's day was the so-called *Harmoniemusik*, written exclusively for wind instruments, and for performance at table or as serenades. Families of rank frequently retained the services of a band for *Harmoniemusik* instead of a complete orchestra. The Emperor Joseph selected eight distinguished virtuosi for the Imperial *Harmonie*, which played during meals, especially when these took place in the imperial pleasure-gardens. The performances included operatic arrangements as well as pieces composed expressly for this object. 8

As Jahn shared above, the repertoire for *Harmoniemusik* included original works such as partitas, divertimenti, serenades, and even concerti for soloists with octet accompaniment. Notable composers such as Haydn, Stamitz, Mozart and Krommer provided compositions for *Harmonie* that are still performed to this day. However, the innovative approach of *Harmoniemusik* composers and arrangers to transcribe popular operas, ballets and symphonic works for octet launched a tradition that influenced the development of writing for winds. Though modern-day transcriptions for concert bands often compile melodies from larger works into a medley or overture-like setting, the

⁷Alexander Thayer, *The Life of Ludwig van Beethoven*, (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1960), 2: 107.

⁸Otto Jahn, *Life of Mozart*, trans. Pauline Townsend (London: Novello, Ewer & Co., 1882), 2: 24. ⁹Marshall Stoneham, *Wind Ensemble Sourcebook and Biographical Guide* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1997), 8-9.

original arrangements for *Harmonie* were frequently made up of ten or more independent movements from the complete score and often were over an hour in duration.¹⁰

Composers even made transcriptions of their own works for *Harmonie* ensembles.

Mozart wrote about one such project to his father in 1782:

I've lots of work at the moment. – By Sunday week I have to arrange my opera for wind band – otherwise someone else will get in first – and they'll be the one to profit from it, not me; and I'm also supposed to be writing a new symphony! – How shall I ever manage? – You can't imagine how difficult it is to arrange such a thing for wind band – so that it suits the wind instruments and yet loses none of its effectiveness. – Oh well, I'll just have to sit up all night working on it, there's no other way. 11

A notice from the August 7, 1782 edition of *Weiner Zeitung*, entered by Phillip Martin, publicized an August 18 performance to be given in the *Neuer Markt* of Mozart's own arrangement of *Die Entfuhrung aus dem Serail* (1782). To date, this arrangement has not been discovered.

The extensive use of opera and ballet scores separates the *Harmoniemusik* tradition from other ensembles, particularly in the scope and quality of these transcriptions. Many scores were selected from the repertoire being presented in Vienna at that time to be arranged for *Harmoniemusik*. Furthermore, some works were transcribed for *Harmonie* ensembles before the actual Viennese premiere, thereby showing their status and overall popularity. The enthusiasm for opera in Viennese society certainly must have fueled the desire for more of these transcriptions, especially during the seasons of Advent and Lent when theaters were typically forbidden to offer opera

¹⁰Whitwell, "The Incredible Vienna Octet School, Part 1," 34.

¹¹Cliff Eisen, ed. *Mozart: A Life in Letters*, trans. Stewart Spencer (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), 451.

¹²Whitwell, "The Incredible Vienna Octet School, Part 2," *The Instrumentalist* 24, no. 4 (November 1969): 40.

performances. As the most costly musical genre to stage, opera benefitted from the inexpensive way that *Harmoniemusik* circulated and celebrated its growing body of repertoire. Since there were no copyright laws in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, it was commonplace for arrangements of successful operas to be marketed as quickly as possible through *Harmoniemusik* editions as well as through transcriptions suitable for other wind, string, and piano combinations.

Not only were *Harmonie* arrangements available for purchase, but courts, monasteries, and other centers of musical activity had libraries of music that were often loaned, copied, edited, and rearranged to accommodate flexible instrumentation. Jiří Sehnal's research of the Augustinian Monastery in Brno provides documentation of this practice:

During those times music was acquired by copying rather than by purchase. As early as Christmas 1816, the choir boys copied the operas "Don Giovanni" and "Titus" by Mozart from the original that conductor Tobiasek loaned them. In return they loaned a partita by Kramar and the ballet "Zephren" by Duport . . . The conductor, Tobiasek, mindful of his own interests, made use of Napp's [choirmaster] desire for new compositions for the harmonie. He visited Napp on September 23, 1817, and suggested that he would lend all new compositions to the Augustinian harmonie for copying if he were given the promise that his son would receive preferential consideration for admission to the choir. The choirmaster submitted Tobiasek's suggestion to the Abbot who readily agreed. . . . Because it was publicly known that at the monastery there was a good stock of wind band compositions which could be borrowed only with great difficulties from the military band, the choirmaster was frequently asked to lend compositions for copying. Napp lent music willingly to the regiment or to the members of the theater ensemble who helped the monastery choir, and to other well-known personalities.¹³

¹³Jiří Sehnal, "The Harmonie (Wind Band) of the Augustian Monastery at Staré Brno (Old Brno)," *Journal of Band Research* 12, no. 2 (Spring 1977): 16-17.

The continual cycle of loaning and editing music creates a challenging situation for modern-day researchers to track and verify the work of *Harmoniemusik* arrangers and composers.

David Whitwell credits three specific arrangers in establishing the tradition of transcribing operas and large-scale works for *Harmoniemusik:* Johann Went (1745-1801), Joseph Triebensee (1772-1846) and Wenzel Sedlak (1776-1851). ¹⁴ Some of their arrangements are still performed for today's audiences. Contemporary authors have commended their transcriptions and the skill of their craft:

The idiomatic use of wind harmony as a proper medium in its own right characterizes the best wind music. There is a great gulf between the composers who achieved this and the hacks who seem to have regarded the octet as a poor substitute for the orchestra or the organ. What makes Went, Triebensee and Sedlak special is that their arrangements are imaginative transformations of [the original] works. In their works, the wit, the drama, or the nobility of the original emerges once more.¹⁵

In particular, Bohemian-born Went is credited for his pioneering work in transcribing over fifty opera and ballets scores for *Harmonie*. His service as oboist and English hornist in the courts of Count Pachta in Prague and Prince Schwarzenberg in Vienna and Wittingau, plus the National Theater orchestra in Vienna, prepared him for his appointment in 1782 as second oboe in the first *Harmonie* of Emperor Joseph II. Based upon the existing body of repertoire, it is apparent that all the musicians in the emperor's octet were highly skilled, virtuosic players who could handle technically demanding parts. A December 21, 1783 entry from Cramer's *Magazin der Musik* spoke of the emperor's *Harmonie*:

¹⁴Whitwell, "The Incredible Vienna Octet School, Part 1," 31.

¹⁵Stoneham, Wind Ensemble Sourcebook and Biographical Guide, 9.

Among all kinds of musical news which has been related to me, one piece that was to me especially remarkable concerned a group of musicians organized by the Kaiser, the sound of whose wind instruments has achieved a new high level of perfection. It is known in Vienna as the kaiserlich-königlich *Harmonie*. This group consists of eight persons, it performs by itself as a complete and full ensemble. In it they even perform pieces which are in fact intended only for voices, such as choruses, duos, trios and even arias from the best operas; the places of the vocal parts are taken by the oboe and clarinet. One of this *Harmonie*, the virtuoso Wehend [Went], has arranged them.¹⁶

Went oversaw the repertoire of the emperor's *Harmonie* for nearly twenty years. By exclusive agreement, he also provided music for the Schwarzenberg *Harmonie* and continued to do so after he had resigned his oboe position with the emperor. At times Went created two different arrangements of the same work to suit the instrumentation of each ensemble. For example, the Schwarzenberg octet utilized English horns in lieu of clarinets. The Viennese Traeg catalogue (1799) lists numerous works by Went, including chamber music, a symphony, and eleven works for *Harmonie*, though the catalogue listing does not begin to reflect his extensive output of *Harmoniemusik* transcriptions and original pieces.¹⁷

Second in importance for the *Harmoniemusik* legacy is Joseph Triebensee, the eldest son of oboist Georg Triebensee (1746-1813) who performed as first oboe with Went. The younger Triebensee, who was a fine oboist himself, married Went's daughter. He performed alongside his father in theater orchestras before receiving the position of director, composer, and arranger for Prince Liechtenstein's octet in 1796. He remained with the Liechtenstein court until 1809, but prior to his departure, he spent at least two

¹⁶Whitwell, *The Wind Band and Wind Ensemble of the Classic Period*, vol. 4, 17.

¹⁷Hellyer, "Went, Johann," in *Grove Music Online*. (Oxford University Press, 2001-), accessed February 26, 2014, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/30118.

years carefully compiling and copying his numerous *Harmoniemusik* transcriptions and compositions before adding them to the Imperial Court's library. His surviving works reflect the wide variety of early nineteenth century music of the court, which included functional works, dance selections, marches, pieces for various court celebrations, and serious concert music. ¹⁸ Triebensee was thorough in maintaining his collection of *Harmonie* repertoire. However, he was not as thorough with his choral, orchestral, and chamber music, so many of these works were lost. Like Went, the operatic transcriptions of Triebensee were complete and exact arrangements of the original works and not merely a medley of the most familiar tunes. ¹⁹

The third composer and arranger who influenced the development and growth of *Harmoniemusik* is Wenzel Sedlak. He was a prominent clarinetist who arrived in Vienna when the role of the clarinet was growing as a recital instrument and as an integral member of the orchestral wind section, replacing the oboe as the primary melodic instrument in *Harmoniemusik*. The oboe's fate was directly tied to the deaths of both the elder Triebensee and of Went. The resignation of Joseph Triebensee from the court of Prince Liechtenstein completed the loss of these three influential oboists from the Viennese *Harmonie* movement. Like the previous exponents of *Harmoniemusik*, Sedlak is well-known for his transcriptions of large orchestral scores for opera and ballet. His more than sixty surviving arrangements include works by Auber (1782-1871), Rossini (1792-1868), Donizetti (1797-1848) and Bellini (1801-1835). Central and perhaps the

¹⁸Whitwell, The Wind Band and Wind Ensemble of the Classic Period, vol. 4, 47.

¹⁹Whitwell, "The Incredible Vienna Octet School, Part 3," *The Instrumentalist* 24, no. 5 (December 1969): 42-43.

²⁰Whitwell, "The Incredible Vienna Octet School, Part 4," *The Instrumentalist* 24, no. 6 (January 1970): 38.

most important work in Sedlak's output is his transcription of Beethoven's *Fidelio* (1805). Roger Hellyer believes that Beethoven himself authorized the transcription and may have even directly supervised the process.²¹ Although this transcription is significant in the octet repertoire, it is performed less frequently than transcriptions of other works by Mozart, Beethoven and Rossini, possibly due to the more dramatic character of the music.

Interestingly, the octet version of *Fidelio* was published in 1815, shortly after the piano version was released in 1814, but the full orchestral score was not available until 1826, thereby demonstrating the publishers' likely perception that there would be a greater demand for the *Harmonie* edition rather than the orchestral version.²² Quoting an announcement from the July 1, 1814 issue of the *Wiener Zeitung*, Whitwell shares information that came straight from Beethoven:

The undersigned, at the request of the Messrs. Artaria and Co. [publisher], herewith declares that he has given the score of his opera *Fidelio* to the aforesaid published for publication under his supervision in a complete piano score, quartets, or arrangements for wind octet. The present musical version is not to be confused with an earlier one, since hardly a musical number has been left unchanged, and more than half of the opera was newly composed. Scores in the only authorized copy and also the book in manuscript may be had from me together with the reviser of the book, Mr. F. Treitschke, R.I. Court Poet. Other unauthorized copies will be punished by law. Vienna, June 28, 1814 Ludwig van Beethoven²³

Because the publishing industry was burgeoning during the late Classic period, these *Harmoniemusik* arrangements became available through a variety of publishing

²¹Hellyer, "Sedlak, Wenzel," in *Grove Music Online*. (Oxford University Press, 2001-), accessed February 26, 2014, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/25306.

²²Whitwell, "The Incredible Vienna Octet School, Part 4," 39.

²³Whitwell, "The Incredible Vienna Octet School, Part 5," *The Instrumentalist* 24, no. 7 (February 1970): 35.

houses, primarily because the great arrangers were contracted to write for multiple publishers outside of their court positions. The instrumentation for these published arrangements was not standardized according to the court *Harmonie* ensembles but was most often a sextet (pairs of clarinets, French horns and bassoons) with the other parts marked as *ad libitum* or *ripieno*.²⁴ Although the initial purpose of *Harmoniemusik* was to serve a practical role of functional and background music for the courts rather than for concert performances, the repertoire grew from easily accessible to truly virtuosic. The mature wind serenades of Mozart (an outgrowth of the *Harmonie* tradition), probably composed for one of the Viennese ensembles, are considered by many to be among his greatest works.

Following the Napoleonic wars, the cultural and political landscape of Europe changed with the growth of unified nation-states and rise of nationalism. Most of the *Harmonie* ensembles of the Austrian and Bohemian courts were disbanded due to financial hardships and the gradual dissolution of kingdoms and principalities. Even so, as late as 1827 a traveling Englishman, Edward Holmes, had this to say about an aristocratic *Harmonie* he heard while traveling on the mainland:

A friend invited me to an evening concert, in which were performed the overtures and various pieces from the *Don Juan* and *Clemenza di Tito* of Mozart, excellently arranged as sestetts [sic] for two clarionets, two bassoons, and two horns; there was not power enough for the full pieces, but the airs please me extremely, being blown with so subdued and mellow a tone as might have been borne in a small room. . . . One of the performers gratified me with a piece of sentiment which I did not expect from a person of his appearance; after playing a tender air from an opera

²⁴Stoneham, Wind Ensemble Sourcebook and Biographical Guide, 21-29.

of Mozart, he said' "I think the composer means that the lady feels pain here," placing his hand on his heart.²⁵

Only the court octets of the emperor and of Prince Liechtenstein endured into the 1830s without pause. The *Harmonie* movement formally ended with the death of Prince Johann in 1836 and the subsequent dissolution of the Liechtenstein court octet. This ensemble, along with the Imperial *Harmonie*, had existed for over fifty years and was responsible for producing some of the great masterworks for chamber ensembles of both transcriptions and original works.

²⁵Edward Holmes, *A Ramble Among the Musicians of Germany* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1969), 75-76.

²⁶Hellyer, "Harmoniemusik: Music for Small Wind Band in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries", 227.

CHAPTER 3. BACKGROUND AND MUSICAL TRAINING OF LEOŠ JANÁČEK

Leoš Janáček was born on July 3, 1854, in the Moravian village of Hukvaldy, a hamlet in the easternmost part of the modern Czech Republic not far from the borders with Poland and Slovakia. He was the ninth child of the family, the fifth one to arrive in Hukvaldy, and eventually only one of nine surviving children of fourteen. His father and his grandfather, both named Jiri, were school teachers, both of whom had an affinity for music. These patriarchs of the family served as the village teacher, as well as musicians, as part of the Czech kantor tradition. Kantor is a Czech term meaning a teacher rather than the song leader in a church. While the roles of teacher and musician in a small community were important and appreciated, they did not pay well. The kantor's was based upon the number of students enrolled in school, which in a village the size of Hukvaldy would be quite small. The Janáček family had to rely on extra support from growing produce and keeping a few animals. Despite the challenges of living a humble and crowded existence, and the continuous threat of hunger, the family remained close and found joy in music making. For the first years of his life, "little Leoš lived in close contact with music, nature and poverty."²

Leoš excelled in music at an early age, even though his other academic achievements in the Hukvaldy school were less than impressive. His parents recognized his musical talent, so to alleviate overcrowding in the family home, they sent him to Brno at the age of eleven to be a choir boy and to study music at the Augustinian "Queen's" Monastery. His father wanted him to continue in the family tradition of teaching, and the

¹Mirka Zemanová, *Janáček* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2002), 10.

²Jaroslav Vogel, *Leoš Janáček: A Biography* (London: Orbis Publications, 1981), 38.

best option for pursuing a thorough education in music was study at a choir school. The well-known composer and scholar of Czech sacred music, Pavel Křížkovský, was choir master at the monastery at that time and was responsible for establishing an influential musical presence in Brno. He also was a friend of the family. Leoš took up residence and began his duties with the choir, thus becoming a "Bluebird," which was the nickname given to the choristers due to their blue robes. Choral scholars generally were provided free room and board by the school, with any remaining fees paid by the parents. However, the best students received full coverage of all their other expenses, which unfortunately did not include Leoš. Zemanová quotes Janáček's autobiographical reminisces:

Bluebirds! This is what we, the boys from the Thurn-Wallesassin Foundation, were nicknamed . . . because of our light blue uniform trimmed in white. Lonely, and constantly watched over, we stood, in moments of melancholy, by the barred windows. From the prelate's garden, tiny bluish birds used to fly over to peck up what we had crumbled up for them . . . they were also 'bluebirds,' but these friends of ours were freer than us.⁴

Because of his experience under Křížkovský's leadership, Janáček acquired a great deal of knowledge of choral style and vocal composition techniques as well as exposure to an extensive repertoire of significant choral literature. Works such as Luigi Cherubini's (1760-1842) *Coronation Mass* (1825) and other masterpieces by Beethoven, di Lasso (1532-1594), Haydn, Rossini, Victoria (1548-1611) and Weber (1786-1826)–to name just a few–were part of the performances given in the church and also on stage.⁵

³Zemanová, *Janáček*, 15.

⁴Ibid., 16.

⁵Vogel, *Leoš Janáček: A Biography*, 38.

This exposure to great choral music shaped his musical palette and fueled his enthusiasm for working with the choir, which Křížkovský entrusted to him on occasion. Furthermore, Janáček's association with Křížkovský caused him to become aware of his own Slavonic roots, stirring a nationalistic spirit that eventually would become an obsession and a critical influence in the development of his unique compositional voice.

In 1866, one year after Janáček began his studies at the school, his father passed away at the young age of fifty. Although Janáček's older siblings were married or out of the house by this time, his mother Amalie, an early widow at age forty-seven, still had younger children at home and struggled to stay out of poverty. She was also a fine musician in her own right and took over her husband's church organist responsibilities for a while, but when the new *kantor* came to fill the position vacated by her husband's death, she had to move. The older children took turns providing lodging for her, and she only returned to Hukvaldy near the end of her life when she was gravely ill. Reflecting back on this lonely stage in his life, Janáček wrote, "My world, my very own world was to begin now. It was to embrace everything. My father dead—the cruelty of it is unimaginable."

Janáček's four years at the monastery prepared him well for the professional challenges that were to follow. In 1869 he enrolled at the Brno Imperial and Royal Teachers' Training Institute, just as his father had desired for him years before. He received a modest state scholarship to supplement his living expenses, an amount that

⁶Hans Hollander, *Leoš Janáček: His Life and Works*, trans. Paul Hamburger (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1963), 25.

was far more than the pension on which his mother was trying to survive. Beyond the usual subjects of history and geography, plus his continued involvement in music, Janáček also became fascinated with the study of psychology. Lectures presented by Dr. Parthe and Emilian Schulz, director of the Institute and future father-in-law of Janáček, impressed and inspired him to delve even more into this area of study, which would have an impact on his later compositions. By 1872 Janáček had completed his formal education, allowing him to undertake a two-year required teaching assignment at one of the Institute's schools, comparable to student teaching in today's undergraduate education programs. At the same time he began serving as an assistant choir director to Křížkovský at the Monastery school, covering daily rehearsals in preparation for the Sunday mass. Though this position was unpaid, Janáček gained a great deal of experience by discovering an even broader base of repertoire.

One year later, Janáček was appointed choirmaster of Svatopluk, the choral society of Brno's working men. Still not yet twenty years old, Janáček increased the reputation of this ensemble by widening its repertoire base it and by increasing the scope and visibility of the organization by moving its concerts from city taverns into the new Besední Dům, thus changing the society's identity from that of a small singing club to a respectable choral ensemble. While it was a significant shift to change from working with a compulsory choir of young school boys to a volunteer choir of mostly uncultured and musically untrained men, Janáček proved to be popular from the start. Rehearsal

⁷Zemanová, *Janáček*, 20.

⁸John Tyrrell, "Janáček, Leoš," in *Grove Music Online*. (Oxford University Press, 2001-), accessed February 27, 2014. http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/14122.

attendance improved greatly, and after a few concerts the local papers branded the male chorus as the best choir in Brno. He would not accept payment for his service in leading this ensemble, and he always remembered his time with these singing workers with much fondness:

Outside it is raining, snowing, freezing. But the worker, as soon as he steps out of the factory where he has toiled the whole day in the deadly dust, still remembers that one more duty awaits him: his singing rehearsal. Perhaps he is hungry and thirsty; his wife and children wait for him at home. What keeps him from going home, why does he hurry to the rehearsal room? I cannot answer this question – but I admit that nowhere have I found such devotion, diligence, love and assiduousness among singers. ¹⁰

Janáček's tenure with Svatopluk, brief as it was, became a decidedly pivotal time in his life. His first compositions come from this period, almost all of which are choral works for male voices. Within a few months of his appointment, he composed four choral works for performances in April and June of 1873. His first choral composition, *Orání* [Ploughing], became his signature anthem with the ensemble and was performed numerous times under his leadership. Already in this early phase of his musical career, Janáček's inclination towards nationalism was noticeable: *Orání* was a simple yet creative setting of a Moravian folk text, "Bonny lad, why aren't you plowing?" These composing and conducting experiences led Janáček to believe that he would not simply teach geography and history; he was destined to become a music teacher, and for that he would need additional training.

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⁹Tyrrell, *Janáček: Years of a Life*, vol. 1, *1854-1914*, *The Lonely Blackbird* (London: Faber and Faber, 2006), 85.

¹⁰Zemanová, *Janáček*, 22.

¹¹Nigel Simeone, John Tyrrell, and Alena Němcová, *Janáček's Works: A Catalogue of the Music and Writings of Leoš Janáček* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 99.

Janáček was granted a one-year leave of absence from his teaching position in 1874, and that autumn he enrolled in classes at the Prague Organ School. The curriculum at the school required three years of courses, but since Janáček already was a proficient musician, he was excused from the first year of studies. He completed the remaining two years of coursework in just one year, since that was the length of his leave. He worked hard in the areas of composition, harmony, counterpoint, figured bass, improvisation, fugues, and organ playing, earning top marks in all areas except figured bass. 12 Financially, Janáček existed at or below poverty level. His landlady provided breakfast, lunch was scarce, and dinner was an occasional gift when offered to him through the kindness of others. Heat was pilfered from a neighbor by leaving his door open for the emanating waves of warmth to creep into his room. Since there was no money for a piano, Janáček improvised by drawing piano keys on the table with chalk, which allowed him at least to practice silently his fingering patterns for Bach preludes and fugues. Eventually a piano was donated for his room, most likely from Ferdinand Lehner, an associate of Křížkovský in Prague and apparent guardian angel of the young Janáček. ¹³

Another hardship was that he had no money to afford the cultural and musical opportunities of Prague, a much larger and more vibrant city than Brno. He was able to attend free concerts in churches, but it is probable that he rarely set foot inside a city theatre or opera house. One known exception was a benefit concert for Bedřich Smetana (1824-1884) in April of 1875, who was already deaf at this time, when Janáček heard the

¹²Zemanová, *Janáček*, 26-27.

¹³Tyrrell, *Janáček: Years of a Life*, vol. 1, *1854-1914*, 93.

symphonic poems *Vyšehrad* (1872-1874) and the premiere performance of *Vltava* (1874). He recalled his impressions of that significant day:

The orchestra was just ending and the deafening tumult united in the name *Smetana!* Suddenly so many people flashed past and pushed that it became almost dark. They led the ailing composer up the stairs. Only *his face* [emphasis original] imprinted itself on my soul. I still have it clearly in my mind: always in the hubbub and as if in the mist. Certainly at the time my eyes devoured only him and to all else I was deaf and blind.¹⁴

Shortly before crossing paths with Smetana, Janáček was briefly expelled from the organ school for writing a scathing criticism of a performance by one of his professors. František Zdeněk Skuherský, the director of the school and teacher of courses in counterpoint, harmony, and improvisation, had conducted a Gregorian mass in a local church, about which Janáček wrote a less-than-favorable review. In his appraisal of the performance, Janáček criticized his professor for the sloppy presentation by the choir and their poor rhythm, inaccurate phrasing, and lack of command of the Latin language. Furthermore, he faulted Skuherský for choosing incorrect tempi and incorporating polyphonic motets into the pureness of a unison, Gregorian mass. Janáček provided musical examples of what he thought would have been better.

Janáček was dismissed from the school on March 9, just one day before the winter term ended. He later shared in his diary, "A memorable day. I was persecuted for telling the truth." The expulsion did not last long, and Janáček was allowed to return after an extended Easter holiday back home; Skuherský, however, immediately went on leave, most likely because of Janáček's readmission. This conflict between an outspoken

¹⁴Tyrrell, *Janáček: Years of a Life*, vol. 1, *1854-1914*, 94.

¹⁵Vogel, *Leoš Janáček: His Life and Works*, trans. Geraldine Thomsen-Muchová (London: P. Hamlyn, 1962), 48.

student and defensive professor apparently did not compromise Janáček's overall respect for his teacher. They intended to write a composition thesis together, which did not happen due to distance factors, not because of personal misgivings. ¹⁶

In a matter of months, Janáček completed his first year of study at the Prague Organ School by passing the examinations for the second year curriculum, thus earning his final certificate for the two-year course for organists. The successful outcome of these exams qualified him to take the state examinations in October of that year, after which he was approved to teach music both in schools and at the Teacher's Institute. His test scores ranged from "adequate" to "very good," earning him the title of provisional teacher of music, but with the understanding that he would pursue an extra qualification in violin within the next year. On the basis of this, Janáček was assigned to teach the most advanced class of singing at the Brno Teachers' Institute and to supervise all teaching of music and singing. It appears that he received some type of extension from the state board and did not take an exam in violin until 1878. It was not until 1880 that the term "provisional" was dropped from his teaching certificate, which changed his appointment to simply that of music teacher.¹⁷

Upon his return to Brno, Janáček immersed himself once again in the musical culture of the city. He resumed his association with the Augustinian monastery and also with Svatopluk. He began writing a series of articles in a local paper about the musical landscape of Brno, and after being asked to direct another community choir, he resigned from his position with Svatopluk to take up the helm of another male choral society, Brno

¹⁶Vogel, Leoš Janáček: His Life and Works, 48.

¹⁷Tyrrell, *Janáček: Years of a Life*, vol. 1, *1854-1914*, 104.

Beseda. Two notable things set Beseda apart from Svatopluk. Beseda existed only for the purpose of singing rather than as a workman's club that also happened to sing, and its membership was more affluent and better trained in music. Janáček quickly turned the ensemble into a mixed chorus (thirty-six men and sixteen women) and added an orchestra, appropriate for accompanying larger choral works.¹⁸

Pulling together these performing resources allowed Janáček to showcase his own original works, much as he did with the Svatopluk concerts a few years earlier, but at the slower rate of one new piece per year rather than one new piece per concert. The *Suite for Strings* was premiered at a concert in December of 1877, his first complete instrumental work that was probably inspired by a performance of Dvořák's *Serenade for Strings* (1875) programmed seven months earlier. At the Beseda concert in December of 1878, Dvořák himself accompanied three of his own choral works from the piano, after which he was ceremoniously accepted as an honorary member of the Beseda. Janáček continued incorporating Dvořák's music in his Beseda concerts and became a life-long admirer, champion, and friend of Dvořák. The two men even went on a tour of Bohemia during one summer. Janáček later wrote, "You know how it is when someone takes the words out of your mouth? For me it was always like that in the company of Dvořák."

It did not take long for Janáček to realize that his growing interest in composition could benefit from further study. Four years after his first leave of absence from the school, Janáček once more was able to leave his teaching position for a year of study,

¹⁸Tyrrell, *Janáček: Years of a Life*, vol. 1, *1854-1914*, 112-113.

¹⁹Ibid., 113-115.

²⁰Vogel, *Leoš Janáček: His Life and Works*, 57.

thanks again to the influence of the Institute's director, Emilian Schultz. Janáček originally wanted to study in Russia with Anton Rubinstein (1829-1894). When that opportunity did not materialize, he took the advice of his piano teacher and applied to the Leipzig Royal Conservatory. Mendelssohn had established the conservatory in 1843, and while it was one of the leading music schools in Germany, it was known for being rather traditional in its perspective. With that in mind, it is probable that Janáček submitted his *Suite for Strings* along with his recent *Idyll for Strings* (1878) as part of his application packet, realizing that these instrumental works—his most significant pieces composed to date—would be in line with the conservatory's traditional leanings. ²²

Janáček was accepted into the conservatory and took his entrance exam in early October of 1879. At this time he was courting his future wife, Zdenka Schulzová, who was the daughter of Institute director Emilian Schultz and also his piano student, eleven years his junior. Zdenka was twelve years old when Janáček started teaching her in 1877, fourteen years old when he declared his love for her, and sixteen years old when they married in 1881. Life in Leipzig seemed full of promise for the developing composer. Unlike his experience in Prague, where he could not attend concerts or the theatre, Janáček was able to go to numerous performances, many of them free to conservatory students. During his time in Leipzig, he was able to hear in person famous performers such as Edvard Grieg (1843-1907), Clara Schumann (1819-1896), and even his musical hero, Rubinstein. In a letter to Zdenka, Janáček wrote his impressions of witnessing Rubinstein live in concert:

²¹Tyrrell, *Janáček: Years of a Life*, vol. 1, *1854-1914*, 138.

²²Ibid., 140.

Yes, to be a great artist is beautiful! How I felt today at the concert! When I hear Rubinstein's compositions I feel extraordinary: my spirit truly melts, it takes wing, becomes free and, at the moment when I listen to it, paints free pictures for itself. I like his compositions so much that it seems to me that some day I should become his heir. This verve, this speaking 'to the soul' I find nowhere else but in his compositions. It is so natural, uncontrived, he reveals himself just as he is, how he feels, he doesn't go after any musical doctrines, he seizes my innermost depths.²³

However, it didn't take long for Janáček to grow disenchanted with his situation at the conservatory. He found that the practice rooms were poorly equipped, the professors were past their prime or he felt were inferior teachers, and his fellow students were younger than he with little in common.²⁴ His growing love for Zdenka and his intense desire to live closer added to his frustration. After spending only four months at the conservatory, Janáček wrote to his beloved Zdenka on January 30, 1880:

Was it home-sickness? Dissatisfaction with my teachers? Yes, doubts have been thrown on my high and cherished hopes, and I therefore sank into a very depressed mood. And the more I became absorbed in such thoughts, the worse I felt, until my state of mind was unbearable. Against this I put the picture of you and the thoughts of [our] future. . . . I came to a deeply felt conclusion then: I hold you so dear that I cannot live without you. And I was also convinced that I could no longer stay here in Leipzig. 25

At the end of February Janáček left Leipzig for Vienna and entered the

conservatory there for the remaining portion of his year of study. The stay in Vienna turned out to be even shorter than his time in Leipzig, and while he was closer to his dear Zdenka, the cultural and musical atmosphere of Vienna was somewhat frustrating for Janáček. The cost of living was much more expensive; his accommodations were dismal; concerts were no longer free as they had been in Leipzig; and the prevailing attitude at

²³Tyrrell, *Janáček: Years of a Life*, vol. 1, *1854-1914*, 151.

²⁴Zemanová, *Jan*áček, 32-33.

²⁵Ibid., 37.

than the conservatory was in support of the progressive Richard Wagner (1813-1883) rather than the conservative Johannes Brahms (1833-1897). Janáček was attracted to the formalist side of Brahms through the influence of his former teacher in Prague, and that outlook on composition had a great impact on this stage of his creative output. However, when Janáček's violin sonata and a song cycle were rejected from the conservatory's end-of-term competition for being too academic (e.g. Brahmsian), even after protest from Janáček and his composition professor, Franz Krenn, the disillusioned and devastated Janáček decided to move on. He was unable to receive a diploma since he didn't finish the course of study, though Krenn, who also taught Gustav Mahler (1860-1911), did issue a private report of his progress.

In retrospect, Janáček's various study opportunities outside of Brno contributed to his growth and development, though with gradually diminishing returns. His experience in Prague at the Organ School was the most successful, especially in light of his improved compositional technique and harmonic language as well as what he gained as a keyboardist. In Leipzig he had the good fortune of taking in numerous concerts, hearing some of the greatest non-operatic music of the time, and increasing his technical skills in composition and in performance. His short-lived time in Vienna seemed to be the most challenging and unsettling in his life. Janáček learned little from his teacher and heard virtually no new music, other than the opportunity to finally attend an opera, which would figure prominently in his later compositions. The disastrous outcome of the conservatory's composition competition shook his self-confidence, and if nothing else,

²⁶Zemanová, *Jan*áček, 38-39.

²⁷Ibid., 39.

instilled in him a desire to become more self-educated and self-reliant.²⁸ However, it is this resolve that figures prominently in the direction Janáček would pursue with his compositional output, making him the distinctive composer who is now recognized as one of the most important Czech composers.

²⁸Tyrrell, *Janáček: Years of a Life*, vol. 1, *1854-1914*, 181.

CHAPTER 4. JANÁČEK'S SUITE FOR STRINGS (1877)

Janáček was immersed in choral and keyboard music from an early age, and yet his experience with instrumental music lay dormant until his year of study at the Prague Organ School. His instructor and director of the school, František Zdeněk Skuherský, exposed the young composer to new concepts in form and orchestration. Sketches in one of his notebooks reflect the exercises he completed in 1874-1875. An interesting example is this *Intrada in G Minor* for four violins, written on November 25, 1875, which begins with this theme:



Example 1. Opening motive of Intrada in G Minor

This material would resurface two years later as the opening theme for the fourth movement of his *Suite for Strings*. No longer an assignment for class, the six-movement suite was composed in 1877 for the newly created string ensemble Janáček assembled for his Beseda choral group. It is highly likely that the inspiration for this suite was the performance of Dvořák's *Serenade for Strings* programmed earlier in the year,² though any musical homage in the work can be traced more easily to composers like Beethoven and Wagner than to Dvořák.

The *Suite for Strings* follows a typical pattern of movements grouped according to tempo and form, yet even in this regard the work seems to have closer ties to the bygone era of the Baroque dance suites when compared to the *Serenade* by Dvořák, Janáček's

¹Vogel, Leoš Janáček: A Biography, 53.

²Tyrrell, Janáček: Years of a Life vol. 1, 1854-1914, 116.

mentor. Originally, the six movements were titled Prélude, Allemande, Sarabanda, Scherzo, Air and Finale. Movements one, two, three and five were given titles that reflect their possible Baroque association. However, when Janáček presented the work for printing in 1926, these titles were withheld, and they were published with only their tempo markings.³ An indication of the young composer's inexperience surfaces in his labeling and handling of movement three. A true sarabande is a dance in triple meter, yet Janáček's movement is set in quadruple time, treating it more like a bourée. In addition, he chooses the less typical harmonic movement of binary form by remaining in the tonic for an abundance of the movement rather than following the usual motion to the dominant at the end of the 'A' section and the return to tonic at the close of the 'B' section. Whether Janáček's choice of harmonic vocabulary, particularly of modulation, was a direct response to his training at the Organ School or was just a manifestation of the unique composer he was to become, the use of modulation was a means of infusing tonal drama and excitement into his music. Modulatory traits such as this appear in his early instrumental music as well as in his later works.⁴

Movement one, Moderato, with its bold and energetic qualities, may be reflective of an inspired and youthful composer. The opening unison motive, with rapid grace notes just ahead of the longer note values, provides an emphatic, robust entrance for the strings that is evocative of the music of Franz Liszt (1811-1886).⁵ As the movement progresses, it undergoes a variety of texture changes ranging from one voice (cello and double bass

³Tyrrell, Janáček: Years of a Life vol. 1, 1854-1914, 116.

⁴Ibid., 117.

⁵Vogel, *Leoš Janáček: A Biography*, 62.

moving in octaves in m. 36) to two voices in counterpoint (second violin and viola in dialogue with cello and double bass in m. 39) to full orchestral tutti (all string parts in m. 47). Within the tutti scoring Janáček keeps the texture fresh by changing from homophonic to polyphonic, building to a climax in m. 57 that is rich in texture and lush in orchestration with the *divisi* in the upper three string parts. The melodies that he employs feature long, flowing lines from the romantic tradition.

Harmonically, Janáček adheres to a tonal tradition that is occasionally unsettled by his quirky handling of modulations. His use of chord progressions follows the classical training he would have received at the Organ School, albeit with some chromaticism that was typical of the composers of his day. The movement opens in G minor, moves to B-flat major with a brief stint in A major and then settles into C major for the middle section beginning in m. 36. This section sounds the most tonally stable, even though it does not reflect the principal tonality of the movement with the intermittent dominant-tonic chords in C major that punctuate the texture. This is the longest section of the movement before it passes through E-flat major and then returns to G minor and B-flat major on its way to the closing key of G major. By this time G major does feel like the home key, which he reinforces with a nine-measure crescendo and accelerando that builds from pianississimo to fortissimo and pushes the extreme range of the first violin toward the strong G major cadence in m. 81. A short coda brings back the opening motive, but the energy quickly subsides as the movement closes peacefully with long-held chords in the upper string parts and arpeggiated figures in the lower strings.

Janáček's fondness for extreme ranges is apparent already in his first instrumental work, as is his growing facility in composing for string instruments. In addition to the high notes in the first violin, Janáček also pushes the limits in the cello part with notes that are above the viola in m. 15 and above both the viola and second violin in the final measures of the movement. The change in timbre brought about by this scoring is notable since a cello in that register sounds very different than a violin or viola playing the same notes. The color is much more intense and vibrant, which allows the cello to penetrate the overall texture effectively. In addition, Janáček's early approach to composition indicates a developing grasp of the string idiom. For example, with each successive leap in the first violin, he prepares the performer with an appropriate interval and supports the part with octave *divisi* (e.g. mm. 75-80). This penchant for extreme ranges would carry over to his later works, favoring very high and very low registers while downplaying the middle range.⁶

Movement two, Adagio, is a lovely cantabile that has no perceivable ties to its original title, Allemande. The movement calls for muted first violin, second violin and viola parts (the cello and double bass are tacet), thereby creating a much lighter texture when compared to the fullness of the first movement. In essence, the lyrical, arioso-like second movement begins with the melody in the first violin until it shifts briefly to the viola at the start of the second section and to the second violin a few measures later. However, much of the Adagio is scored for four parts since the second violin is divided much of the time. Here again, Janáček showcases the extreme ranges of the violin and

⁶Tyrrell, "Janáček, Leoš," in *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, accessed February 27, 2014. http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/14122.

viola by scoring the material in the upper register of the instruments. Other than the final note of the movement, the first violin part can be performed solely on its top two strings, and the viola part requires its lowest string for just one note in the penultimate measure. The middle section has the highest tessitura of the movement with all string parts scored in close spacing above the treble staff, generating an ethereal yet powerful sound at the climax in m. 17. Only at this particular point in the movement does the dynamic level of *forte* eclipse the movement's predominantly *pianissimo* markings. It has been suggested that the high string writing of the movement was influenced by Wagner's *Lohengrin* (1845-1848) which was performed in Brno around Janáček's time.⁷

While the harmonic language of movement two is primarily traditional, recurring chromatic passing tones and suspensions obscure any secure establishment of tonality. Chromatic chords such as diminished and augmented triads produce an atmosphere that appears almost impressionistic when compared to the other movements. Measures 11, 12 and 13 begin with a diminished chord with each one prepared and resolved by chromatic motion. The harmonic structure is also affected by the lack of perfect cadences, weakening the impact at the ends of phrases. An example of this is the cadence in m. 9, which comes to rest on a G major chord in first inversion when the second violin resolves to B³ located below D⁴ in the viola part. The melodic line is very long; in fact, the melody takes all thirty measures of the movement to be entirely stated. It is a well-crafted melody, with the overall contour matching the dynamic, harmonic and rhythmic motion that Janáček put into place for support. One noteworthy occurence near the end of the

⁷Vogel, *Leoš Janáček: A Biography*, 62.

movement is the gradual abatement of rhythmic energy. Looking at m. 25, the flow relaxes from eighth note values to quarter notes (including triplet quarters) in m. 26 to half notes in m. 27 to a whole note in m. 28, concluding with a long note extended by a fermata to close the movement. The general feeling at the end is tranquil, aided by the meandering harmonic motion that stays closer to the tonic of G major and the culminating G major chord in root position that provides repose.

Movement three, Andante con moto, is a cheery, dance-like movement that suggests strong folk roots in its mood if not in simple structure. The sing-able tune, performed solely by the first violin with the other strings accompanying, primarily consists of stepwise motion with some larger leaps that outline diatonic arpeggios. Why Janáček initially labeled this movement Sarabanda is a mystery since it has no compelling stylistic ties to that dance form. Because the suite's movements were published without the Baroque dance labels and nearly fifty years after its composition date, the early mislabeling may be a careless error by a young composer. Of the first three movements, the Andante con moto is the most conservative in terms of range and technical demands other than one instance of the cello extending upward to D⁵ near the end of the first section. This movement also offers a bit of reprieve after the intensity of the opening Moderato and the slow, pensive atmosphere of the Adagio.

Harmonically, movement three follows a traditional path, though Janáček simplifies the structural harmonic motion by keeping both sections of this simple binary form in the tonic of G major. Typically the first section of binary form ends with a harmonically open cadence, making it impossible to end there without it sounding

incomplete; however, Janáček closes the 'A'section with a perfect authentic cadence in G major and continues onward in the same key. This static treatment of harmony keeps the Andante con moto almost too simplistic and soothing. The lone interjections that provide some freshness in the midst of chronic G major is the surprising E-flat major chord (chromatic submediant) that appears in measures 15 and 23. In spite of its harmonic simplicity, movement three is a charming, modest movement that evokes rustic images of the countryside.

The fourth movement, Presto, is the emotional core of the work. Whereas the first three movements provide faint echoes of the Baroque era, the Presto pays tribute to the Romantic scherzo and trio tradition of Beethoven. Its opening theme is playful and exuberant with staccato articulation, imitative and polyphonic textures and sudden dynamic contrasts. The trio section is based in the key of G major. Its slower Andante tempo marking seems fitting for its more lyrical yet asymmetrical theme. The trio begins with a gentle homophonic texture peppered with off-beat accents typical of Janáček's style. The texture then evolves to a more polyphonic style as the material becomes more active in mm. 128-151. Some of the part crossing in the middle strings is complicated, and the unwieldy obbligato in the first violin (mm. 137-148) is one of the most challenging passages in the entire work. Janáček shows his liking for extreme ranges once again by bringing the viola up to B⁵ (m. 150) and the cello to G⁵ (mm. 150-151) near the end of the trio section, where the opening of the trio theme is quoted one octave higher at a *pianissimo* dynamic level. The da capo of the scherzo, which is written out,

returns to D minor and passes through C minor and G minor. Instead of predictably closing in G major, he ends the movement in D major.

Janáček's handling of tonality is largely conventional in the Presto aside from two exceptions. First, he did not open the movement in G minor but rather in D minor (the reverse of that situation might have proved more effective); and second, he concluded the movement in D major. This is not surprising in some ways because D minor was the opening key. However, since much of the movement is centered in G minor or G major, the D major finish is a bit jarring. Even though his treatment of tonality in this instance feels somewhat clumsy, the energy and fervor of a young composer cannot be overlooked in this fiery movement.

Movement five, another Adagio, is the antithesis of the second movement. Here the cello and double bass, which were absent in the earlier Adagio, are given a prominent role. Even the viola and violin parts utilize primarily their lower register. This is a complete paradigm shift from the high tessitura of movement two, and the effect is not lost on the listener. The cello solo in the middle section of the movement does extend well into the octave above C⁴, but the passage does not remain at that level for very long. Rhythmically this Adagio is more active than the previous one due to the variety of rhythmic combinations employed, which includes dotted rhythms and triplet figures, but the overall feeling is still fluid and almost improvisatory in nature. Structurally the movement is in ternary form with the 'B' section (mm. 14-31) providing the most interest after the calm, recitative-like opening in the 'A' section. All thematic material is unified

by a falling motif that spans a perfect fourth or augmented fourth, exhibiting some of Janáček's most cohesive writing in this work.

Janáček begins this movement in the key of D major, linking it to the bright ending of the Scherzo. He spends most of the first 'A' section (mm. 1-13) in that key, until a short detour through B major settles into B-flat major for the remainder of the movement. At important structural moments Janáček avoids inserting tonic chords in root position but rather favors chords written in inversion. This serves to soften the impact and create a more contemplative atmosphere. Examples occur in m. 9 with the D major chord in second inversion (double bass sounding A² below the written cello D³) and in m. 14 where the B-flat major chord is again in second inversion. In addition, Janáček uses pedal point to delay the arrival of the tonic in root position as in mm. 29-30 and 39-40. These occurrences of pedal point near the end of the movement offer a sense of pastoral resolution and tranquility.

The sixth movement, Andante, is an uncommon instance of Janáček composing in sonata allegro form. He observes the rules of the established form by opening the exposition with the first theme in B minor, passing through a transitional passage, and then leading into a second theme area in the related key of D major. The exposition is repeated, similar to many sonata allegro form movements from the early Classical period. Janáček manipulates the material from the second theme in the development section by establishing an imitative dialogue between the upper and lower strings. At thirty measures in length, the development is the longest section of the movement. As expected, the recapitulation brings back the first and second themes from the exposition (both now

in B minor), followed by a coda that ventures briefly into F major (mm. 74-76) before cadencing in B major to close the movement and thus the entire work.

In spite of the skill Janáček displayed in crafting this movement in sonata allegro form, the choice of andante for the tempo of the work's finale has been characterized as lackluster if not uninspired. Even Dvořák's *Serenade for Strings*, Janáček's supposed inspiration to compose the suite, ends with a rousing Allegro vivace. Vogel critiques the final movement as follows:

Unfortunately the last movement is the least effective, being utterly unlike a finale in character (once more an Andante). And by being written in B minor (it even modulates to B major) it wanders dangerously far from the main key of the work (G minor) which it is supposed to round off. It is also the least satisfying structurally owing to the somewhat hasty conclusion . . . 8

However, the finale is not lacking in intensity or animation. This study leads to the conclusion that the recurring dotted eighth note and sixteenth note groupings along with dynamic swells contribute more to the work than Vogel acknowledges. The Andante's ending, albeit abrupt with its sudden shift to B major, is certainly exciting. Furthermore, while the suite's scheme of tonality that Janáček laid out is unorthodox, he is consistent in closing the minor movements in a major key center. Janáček's supposed weaknesses in the handling of conventional forms and harmonic rules might best be overlooked in view of the trajectory this composer would take in the coming decades of his compositional output, a direction related less to the conservative era he followed and more to the progressive era in which he would take part.

⁸Vogel, *Leoš Janáček: A Biography*, 63.

A few years after its composition, Janáček would look back at his *Suite for Strings* with less than favorable regard. He told his piano teacher in Leipzig, Ferdinand Wenzel, that he thought this work and his *Idyll for Strings* were inferior, a notion he still held as late as 1924. Nonetheless, by 1926 he had changed his outlook enough to warrant revisiting the piece and authorizing its publication in that year. The wide variety of moods, interesting timbral combinations, thoughtful arrangement of movements and unusual scoring configurations make this suite an artistically valid instrumental work. Today, the *Suite for Strings* is viewed as a significant piece representing Janáček's first compositional period in which he sought to expand his knowledge of instrumental composition and develop his own distinctive voice. Fortunately, Janáček did not lose or destroy the score and parts during the fifty years between the suite's genesis and its eventual publication, allowing subsequent generations to benefit from his youthful creation.

⁹Simeone, Tyrrell, and Němcová, *Janáček's Works: A Catalogue of the Music and Writings of Leoš Janáček*, 182-183.

CHAPTER 5. FROM STRINGS TO WINDS

Transcribing a work for a new combination of instruments is an exciting process. Even though the building blocks of sound are provided for an arranger in the original piece of music, the final product is very much a unique creation. Some might liken the undertaking of a transcription to painting by number, an activity where the artist's choices of colors and designs are predetermined without any imaginative or inspired decisions. However, that is not an accurate representation of the work an arranger does. Each arranger approaches a given piece of music with his own interpretive ear and understanding of the principles of orchestration, shaping a distinctive musical outcome.

Consider the numerous transcriptions of Modest Mussorgsky's (1839-1881)

Pictures at an Exhibition, composed for solo piano in 1874. Nearly thirty arrangements exist for chamber or symphony orchestra, plus another fifty versions for diverse media such as brass sextet, drum and bugle corps, jazz band, jazz orchestra, percussion ensemble, piano trio, punk band, rock band, string sextet, wind band and a variety of solo instruments. While some arrangements are more successful than others, all of these versions have unique qualities that distinguish one from another. Each arranger made specific decisions in orchestration and scoring that imprinted his musical fingerprint onto the transcription.

In creating *Suite for Winds* (2014) from Janáček's *Suite for Strings*, the instrumental registers from the original were generally maintained. One instance where octave displacement was used was mm. 8-11 of movement one, where the flute and oboe parts were scored one octave higher than the violin and viola parts for added brilliance.

Another example can be found in the beginning of the Andante section of movement four, in mm. 100-128, where the horn and bassoon parts were dropped one octave lower than the violin and viola parts for a more calming, pastoral effect. However, modifications such as these were rare since the majority of the work was transcribed at the same pitch level as Janáček's original setting.

Some adjustments had to be made in passages where a given string performance technique would not be possible on a wind instrument. For example, in mm. 49-53 of movement six, the string tremolo in the violin parts was reduced to whole note chords in the upper woodwinds. Also, sixteenth note passages that lie well on string instruments were altered for wind instrument performance. An illustration can be found in mm. 21-23 of movement one and again in mm. 25-33, where rapid sixteenth note figurations in the second violin and viola parts were changed to eighth notes in the second oboe and second clarinet parts. Though not substantial, these minor changes do influence the overall effect in those sections.

Furthermore, articulations were adjusted when necessary to become consistent with corresponding passages. This was done only in a few instances when a symbol, such as an accent, staccato or slur, was missing. For example, staccato markings were added to the second bassoon part in m. 2 of the third movement to match the upper parts.

Decisions to alter anything from the strings version were made after much study and comparison of the affected passages. Honoring the intent of Janáček's composition was always the guiding principle so that the integrity of his work would not be compromised.

The timbral diversity afforded in a double wind quintet, particularly when compared to a string ensemble, is markedly increased. In the string family, there is a limited variety of color in ranges that overlap (e.g. C⁴ can be played on the violin, viola, cello and double bass), but the pitch takes on a different tonal quality due to the inherent characteristics of each instrument. The timbral difference becomes much more significant with the double wind quintet tonal palette where again all instruments are capable of playing C⁴, but the contrast among flute, oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon is clearly obvious. The richness of timbre and wealth of color combinations are much of what make composing and arranging for winds such a rewarding experience.

Movement one, with its array of full tutti sections and more exposed, intimate passages afforded many opportunities for variety in scoring. Thinning the texture to one woodwind per part in mm. 12-19 created a satisfying contrast after the emphatic opening. Arranging the clarinets against the subdued flute and oboe parts in mm. 26-35 allowed the warmer tone of the clarinet to carry the mood of the original cello solo. Similarly, the first clarinet and horn parts in mm. 39-46, paired with the bassoons *a la pizzicato* cello and double bass, were selected as a tranquil means to convey the lyricism of the second violin and viola parts. A single wind quintet, initially comprised of the first players from each part and later of the clarinets, horns and second bassoon, was chosen for variation in texture and color in mm. 55-72 before the full ensemble returns to close the movement.

Scoring decisions were a little more straightforward in movements two and three. The horns and bassoons were not utilized at all in movement two, and the remaining upper woodwind parts were never combined in larger groupings than three or

four voices at once. This allowed the ethereal atmosphere of the original string setting to remain intact. Movement three was arranged in varying combinations of four to six parts, capitalizing on timbral differences between the opposing groups, before the climactic entrance of the full ensemble in m. 22.

Movement four, much like the first movement, provided wonderful opportunities for contrasts in scoring. The strongest passages in the outer scherzo sections were arranged for all ten parts with quick exchanges between smaller groupings for dramatic effect. Most of the material from the original version, other than the opening measures of the middle Andante section, was scored at the same pitch levels as in Janáček's setting. The constant quarter note accompaniment in mm. 42-97 was shared between the clarinets and then the oboes, allowing the imitative melodic line to be showcased in the remaining parts of the ensemble. Because of the number of opportunities for contrast, the fourth movement was the most enjoyable to transform from strings to double wind quintet.

Similar to the range considerations in movement two, the scoring of movement five required that a part or two be left out, this time the flutes. Whereas movement two featured the upper register of the high strings, movement five explored the middle and lower register timbres of the lower instruments. Also, this movement never employed all eight parts at once, but rather featured different combinations of one to seven instruments. The use of bassoon, English horn paired with clarinet, and horn variously carrying the melody helped maintain the somber mood of the original.

The final movement was scored in a manner comparable with movements one and four. In the lighter sections as few as three or four instruments were utilized, saving the

strongest moments for all ten parts. Each instrument was given an opportunity to perform the melody at some point in the movement. For added depth, the second bassoon was often scored one octave lower than the first bassoon, reflecting the texture of the double bass and cello in the original version. This octave doubling occurs in the previous movements as well but to a lesser extent. One editorial change was made with the rhythm of the melodic line in mm. 5-6 to match the rhythm in mm. 60-61, the more plausible figure due to the recurring dotted rhythm motive used throughout those sections.

Whether or not this transcription is ever published and regardless of any future performances, the *Harmoniemusik* tradition is still relevant and significant today.

Looking back to existing works and arranging them for a variety of ensembles allows the music to be heard in fresh and exciting new ways. At its core, that is the heart of an arranger's work—not to supersede the composition, but to enhance it—and was the overall goal of this research and transcription project. It is hoped that the research behind this project as well as the transcription itself will stimulate others who are passionate about wind chamber music to make their own contributions to the field, benefitting future musicians.

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APPENDIX. SUITE FOR WINDS (2014)

Bradley Miedema

Transcribed from

SUITE FOR STRINGS (1877)

by Leoš Janáček

I. Moderato	49
II. Adagio	72
III. Andante	78
IV. Presto	84
V. Adagio	111
VI. Andante	119

Instrumentation

Flute I
Flute II
Oboe I
Oboe II/English horn
Clarinet I in B-flat & A
Clarinet II in B-flat & A
Horn I in F
Horn II in F
Bassoon I
Bassoon II

I. Moderato

































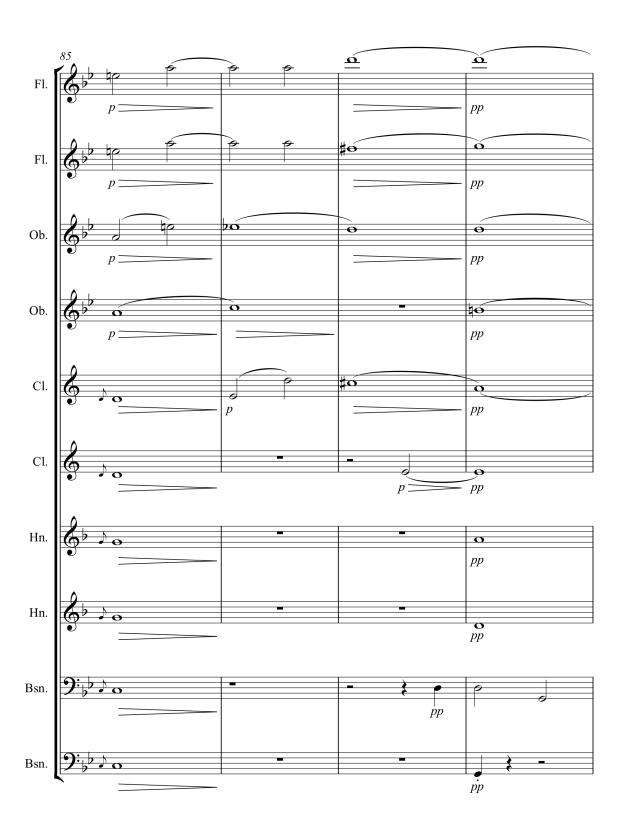


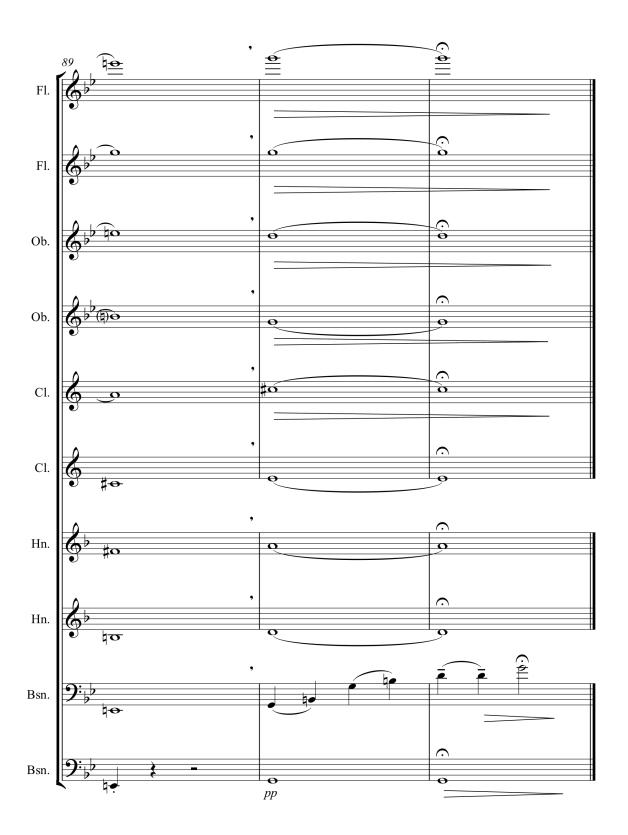












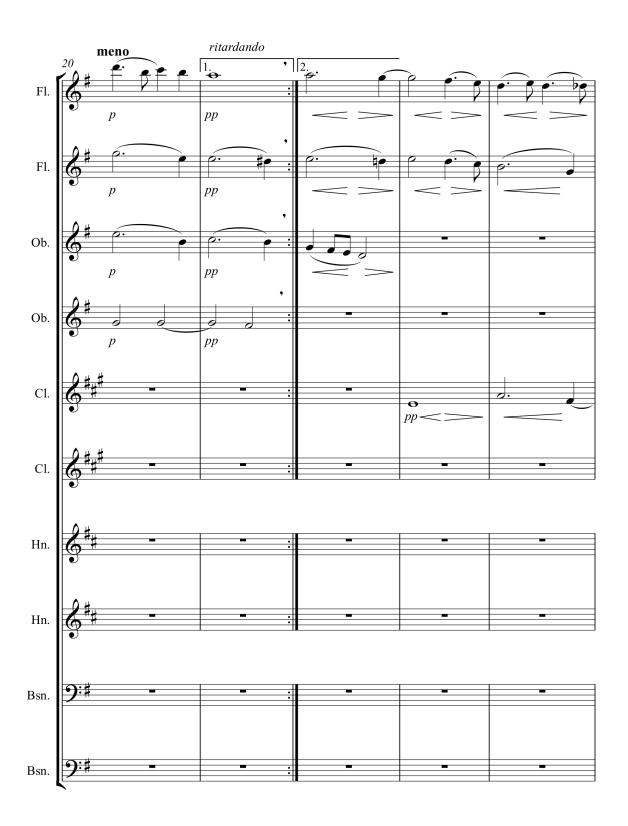
II. Adagio













III. Andante con moto













IV. Presto

















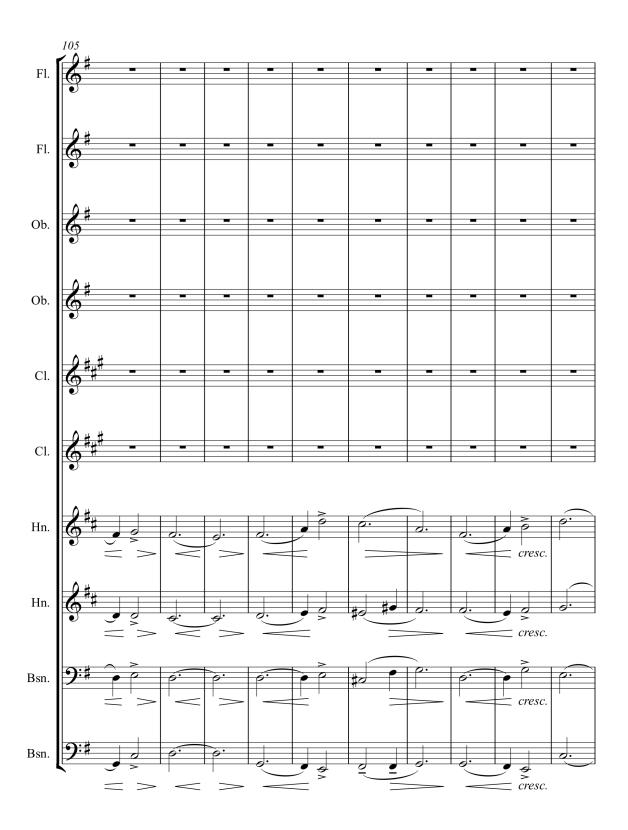






































V. Adagio

















VI. Andante





































