

Benjamin Britten:
Composer as Conductor and the Art of Self Interpretation

by

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ABSTRACT

In the triumvirate of composer-performer-listener, while the listener always wins, the performer is the interpreter through which the listener experiences the writings of the composer. When the composer and performer are combined, however, a unique situation arises: the link from the composer to the listener becomes a direct line and the composer becomes his/her own interpreter. Such is the case with Benjamin Britten. Britten conducted almost his entire repertoire in recordings for Decca (the exceptions being *Paul Bunyan*, *Owen Wingrave*, and *Death in Venice*). A comparative analysis of the recordings of four of Britten's works, the *Serenade for Tenor, Horn, and Strings*, Op. 31; *Albert Herring*, Op. 39; *Spring Symphony*, Op. 44; and the *Nocturne*, Op. 60, shows that despite his complaints about performers not following his tempo markings, Britten often deviated from them himself, tending slower. Britten also occasionally added additional *rubato*, *ritardandi*, and *accelerandi* to his works. Additionally, a discrepancy regarding a pitch in the "Prelude" of the *Serenade* comes to light. Video of Britten conducting the *Nocturne* in rehearsal with the Canadian Broadcasting Company (CBC) Vancouver provides additional insight into his methodology. Benjamin Britten succeeded as a composer-conductor, and his catalogue of recordings provides essential primary reference material when studying his works.

To Mary, Karl, and Margaret:

Thank you for joining and supporting me on this journey.

You make it worth doing. I Love You.

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THE ART OF INTERPRETATION

The search for an ideal performance of a work is fraught with peril and controversy. The specific criteria for an ideal performance changes not only from individual to individual, but also with time. The desire to unify score with performance can easily be traced at least as far back as the Classic era, potentially further. Beethoven once wrote to Czerny, "You must pardon [an outburst from] an author who would have preferred to hear his work exactly as he wrote it, no matter how beautifully you played in general."¹ Erich Leinsdorf, in his book *The Composer's Advocate: A Radical Orthodoxy for Musicians*, states three simple premises:

1. Great composers knew what they wanted.
2. The interpreter must have the means at his disposal to grasp the composers' intentions.
3. Music must be read with knowledge and imagination—without necessarily believing every note and word that is printed.²

While the third premise seems to contradict, in actuality, Leinsdorf leaves room for performers to apply their understanding and interpretation of musical tradition to create an effective (and hopefully affective) performance for his or her intended audience.

This leads directly to the three persons at play in this equation: The composer, the performer, and the listener.³ Glen Carruthers posits that

Exchanges between composers and listeners, mediated by performers, constitute the artwork itself. . . The performance is inseparable from the musical object. The listener completes a process set in motion by the composer and performance is the agency that makes completion possible. It's a bit like a tree falling in the

1 Alexander Wheelock Thayer, *The Life of Ludwig van Beethoven* (London: Centaur Press, Ltd., 1960), 1:316.

2 Erich Leinsdorf, *The Composer's Advocate: A Radical Orthodoxy for Musicians* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), viii.

3 Roger Sessions, *The Musical Experience of Composer, Performer, Listener* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950), 4.

woods—the composition is the tree, the performer wields the ax, and the audience hears the thud. No audience—no thud.⁴

In this triumvirate of composer, performer, and listener, “the performer trumps the composer, but the listener takes all.”⁵ Although the listener is the ultimate factor in determining a definitive performance, for the sake of this argument, the listener will be taken for granted; instead focusing on the first two corners of the triad: the composer and performer.

This issue of the performer’s interpretation has been wrestled with by countless generations of musicians and scholars. Performers bring with them the sum total of their education and experience to each performance of a work. Carruthers refers to this as, “an amalgam of conscious and subconscious influences.”⁶

The composers’ history of disagreeing with the performance of their own works is well documented. Erich Leinsdorf addresses the issue by paraphrasing Mahler, “Before I heard what others did to my music, I may have done the same in bending older masters toward my own compositional ideals.”⁷ Carruthers, again in his essay on musical interpretation, cites two examples from differing perspectives.

Robert Schumann once wrote, “We fought once about your conception of my compositions. But you are wrong, little Clara. The composer, and only the composer, knows how to present his compositions. If you think you could do it better, that would be as if a painter, for example, wanted to make a tree better than God had done.”⁸ Harsh

4 Glen Carruthers, “Musical Interpretation and ‘The Historical Imagination’” (paper presented to the American Musicological Society Midwest Chapter, National Lewis University, Chicago, IL, October 4, 2008).

5 Ibid.

6 Glen Carruthers, “The Pedagogy of Interpretation” (in Hannan, M. (Ed.), *Educating musicians for a lifetime of learning*. Proceedings of the 17th Commission for the Education of the Professional Musician, Spilamberto, Italy), 21-25, accessed August 14, 2008, <http://www.members.isme.org/ceprom/ceprom-proceedings-2008.html>.

7 Leinsdorf, 50.

8 Carruthers, “Musical Interpretation.”

words, no doubt, and his opinion is absolutely clear. The second, more recent example pits composer Oskar Morawetz against pianist Glenn Gould. Morawetz recollects,

When he performed my piece he really played magnificently, but everything differently than I wanted, about twenty degrees faster than what I wrote, terribly fast [dotted quarter 159 instead of 138]. And when he was asked to record my piece for the CBC, he said to me, "Oskar, I won't play it for you at all. I made up my mind how the piece should go, and that's it. . . . And something else, it seems to me that the way you speak, you don't understand your own music."⁹

Leinsdorf adds that his "own conviction is that composers have very clear ideas about how they want their works performed, and they are more likely than anyone else to be correct."¹⁰

Leinsdorf relays additional possibly conflicting anecdotes regarding conductors' interpretations. The first involves Richard Strauss, here as the composer, after attending a rehearsal of his opera *Der Rosenkavalier* in the 1920s. "The chief conductor of the troupe, proud of his company's meticulous preparation, spoke to the composer during the interval with considerable pride, claiming that every syllable, every small note was sung just as written, 100 percent exact. To which Strauss retorted, 'Why do you want it so exact?'" While this may seem contrary to the idea of the ideal interpretation as first playing what is on the page, Leinsdorf theorizes that, "the chief conductor had coached and drilled the cast in the best manner of a Beckmesser, demanding pedantic accuracy while missing the spark and spirit of the dialogue."¹¹

Leinsdorf goes on to discuss the issue of Ravel who "wanted the notes to be played and nothing else." Yet how then does one handle the folk influences on Ravel's writing, especially the Viennese waltz lilt in *La Valse* and the dance step of the *Bolero*?

9 Carruthers, "Musical Interpretation."

10 Leinsdorf, 47.

11 Ibid., 48

"A note perfect rendition of [those works] would actually destroy the quintessence of those pieces, their authenticity and flavor, be that Spanish or Viennese."¹²

By the mid twentieth century, the composer-conductor had become an almost common sight. Walter Arlen recognizes this in a 1965 review of a recording of Britten's works:

For better or for worse, composers are putting themselves on records as composer-conductors with increasing frequency. Stravinsky has long been eloquent, waxing nearly his entire output self-conducted, some of it in two or more versions. Copland has turned conductor of his music on discs as well as in concert, and Benjamin Britten's works are now being recorded by the composer himself.¹³

Music cannot exist without performance, and performance, by nature, is an interpretation from the performer of the composer's written music. Combining these two roles into a single individual leads to an interesting confluence. If the requirement of historically *informed* performance practice is taken as given (that is to say, an awareness of performance practices, traditions and ideals of the era in which the music was written), then having a preservation of the composer performing his or her own work creates the ideal informational source for future performances of the works.¹⁴

BRITTEN THE CONDUCTOR

Benjamin Britten began his conducting career on September 25, 1936, when he led the premiere performance of his own work, *Our Hunting Fathers*, at the Norfolk & Norwich Triennial Musical Festival.¹⁵ He led performances of his own works only five

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Walter Arlen, "Benjamin Britten Conducts Own Works," *Los Angeles Times*, October 31, 1965.

¹⁴ Here, "informed" is stated and stressed regarding historical performance practice rather than "accurate." Although it is the responsibility of a performer to have an awareness and understanding of said practice, the performer, even the composer, must have the freedom to choose what he or she believes will create an ideal performance at any given time.

¹⁵ "25 Sep 1936, [Premiere of *Our Hunting Fathers*]," Britten-Pears Archive, accessed February 11, 2014, <http://brittaa1.memset.net/DServe/dserve.exe?>

times over the next nine years, including a performance in November, 1941 at the Civic Theatre in Chicago when he conducted both his *Sinfonia da Requiem* and *Les Illuminations*.¹⁶ In 1945, he began to conduct more frequently, although still performing only his own works. That year he conducted seven different concerts in England and France.¹⁷ 1946 saw him continue with four concerts in England, Switzerland, and the Netherlands (both Amsterdam and Utrecht). Not only was the Amsterdam performance the first production of *The Rape of Lucretia* outside of The United Kingdom, it was also Britten's first time conducting opera.¹⁸

In 1947, Britten took the newly founded English Opera Group to the Glyndebourne Festival. There, he conducted the premiere of his opera *Albert Herring* on June 20th. Britten would go on to conduct the premieres of the rest of his operas through *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 1960. Britten's first foray into conducting another composer's work came in the fall of 1947.¹⁹ On August 17th at the Tonhalle in Zurich and September 26th at the Friends House in London, he led the English Opera Group in a concert of English vocal music featuring works of Morley, Lawes, Weelkes, Berkeley, Gibbons, Purcell, and Bridge, as well as excerpts from his own arrangement of Henry Purcell's *Six Duets*.²⁰ Following a performance of his arrangements of several additional Purcell works in the winter of 1948 and the premier of his arrangement of *The Beggar's*

dsqIni=Dserve.ini&dsqApp=Archive&dsqDb=Performance&dsqSearch=PerfCode==%27PERF8611%27&dsqCmd=Show.tcl.

16 Suzanne Robinson "An English Composer Sees America': Benjamin Britten and the North American Press, 1939-42," *American Music* 15, no. 3 (Autumn, 1997): 324.

17 "List of Performances Conducted by Benjamin Britten." Britten-Pears Foundation. November 4, 2013. Accessed November 4, 2013. <http://brittaa1.memset.net/Dserve/dserve.exe?dsqIni=Dserve.ini&dsqApp=Archive&dsqDb=Roles&dsqSearch=RoleCode==%27ROLE117152%27&dsqCmd=Show.tcl>.

18 "2 Oct 1946 Rape of Lucretia, The." Britten-Pears Foundation. February 11, 2014. Accessed February 11, 2014. <http://brittaa1.memset.net/Dserve/dserve.exe?dsqIni=Dserve.ini&dsqApp=Archive&dsqDb=Performance&dsqSearch=PerfCode==%27PERF6844%27&dsqCmd=Show.tcl>.

19 Naomi Sturges, Britten-Pears Archive, email message to author, February 12, 2014.

20 "26 Sep 1947 Concert of English Music." Britten-Pears Foundation. February 10, 2014. Accessed February 10, 2014. <http://brittaa1.memset.net/Dserve/dserve.exe?dsqIni=Dserve.ini&dsqApp=Archive&dsqDb=Performance&dsqSearch=PerfCode==%27PERF6920%27&dsqCmd=Show.tcl>.

Opera in May of that year (again with the English Opera Group), Britten led three performances of *Albert Herring* and a concert of chamber works by Schubert, Ravel, and Bridge at the inaugural Aldeburgh Festival in June. By the end of the year, Britten would conduct four additional performances of others' works.²¹

Frustration contributed to Britten's increasing desire to conduct his own works. In a 1948 letter to Imogen Holst, Britten wrote, "How *essential* good performances are! I have recently heard several performances of my own pieces and I felt so depressed that I considered chucking it all up! Wrong tempi, stupid phrasing and poor technique—in fact non-sense."²² Over the coming years, Britten would continue to expand his repertoire of conducting works, and his reputation as a conductor would continue to grow. His obituary from the London Times sings Britten's praises highly:

Orchestras found him an inspiring as well as practical and proficient conductor, and gradually he began to conduct other men's music, excelling particularly in Mozart, Mahler, and J.S. Bach (he was the presiding genius of the annual weekend Bach Festival at Long Melford).²³

Starting in 1944 with his *Serenade for Tenor, Horn, and Strings*, Britten began a long series of recordings with Decca of his own works, which would continue well into his later years. Decca began compiling these recordings into a series of boxed sets of *Britten Conducts Britten* as his centennial approached.²⁴

Britten's conducting would eventually take its toll, however. In the fall of 1953, a case of bursitis in his shoulder forced him to take some time off from the podium.²⁵

Imogen Holst recalls,

²¹ "List of Performances Conducted by Benjamin Britten."

²² Imogen Holst, "Working for Benjamin Britten", *The Musical Times* 118, no. 1609 (Mar. 1977): 202.

²³ "Benjamin Britten Obituary," *Times (London)*, December 6, 1976.

²⁴ Benjamin Britten, *Britten Conducts Britten: Operas. Vol. 1 "Albert Herring / Billy Budd / Owen Wingrave / Peter Grimes,"* Decca, 475 6020, CD, 2004.

²⁵ Benjamin Britten letter to Eric Walter White, October 1953, Box 23.1, *Eric Walter White: An Inventory of His Papers at the Harry Ransom Center*, Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas.

At the 1953 Aldeburgh Festival, when he was having trouble with his arm as a result of writing too many pages every day, he said: “I’ll have to learn a different way of conducting if I’m to get through this weekend; I suppose it’s because I’m too tense nearly all the time.” Six months later he was saying that he would have to learn to conduct with very small movements, and that it would be a lesson in control, which was what he felt he needed more and more.²⁶

After a London run of *Turn of the Screw* in October, 1954 (the English premier at Sadler’s Wells), Britten, with rare exception, conducted in concert only at his Aldeburgh Festival, with his final performance there coming on June 19, 1972.²⁷

An analysis of Britten’s recordings of his own works shows some consistent (or at least persistent) variations from his scores. As the charts on the individual works will show, Britten rarely follows his own tempo markings. More specifically, he tends to fall on the slower side of what he has written. When he specifies a range for tempo (which rarely occurs), he never approaches the upper end of the range. For example, in Britten’s *Spring Symphony* recording, 16 of a possible 22 tempi are below their marking and only one tempo is more than 2 BPM faster than the marking.

This variation from the written tempo markings contrasts with Britten’s statement about, “Wrong tempi, stupid phrasing and poor technique—in fact nonsense.”²⁸ While many of Britten’s tempo variations are within a few beats per minute (BPM) of the marked tempo (and the margin of error for this analysis), there are many times when Britten’s performances differ significantly from his scores.²⁹ This creates a conflict between Britten’s stated desires and his practice. Perhaps this is a result of Britten’s preference for composing at his writing desk.³⁰ The presence of an orchestra may alter the tempo needed to achieve the desired affect.

26 Holst, 203.

27 “List of Performances Conducted by Benjamin Britten.”

28 Holst, 202.

29 For a description of the methodology used in the tempo analyses for this paper, see Appendix V.

30 Benjamin Britten, *The Making of Peter Grimes*, vol. 2, *Notes and Commentaries* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Britten Estate Ltd. :, 1996), 83.
Holst, 202.

Compounding this disconnect between the composition and performance is Stuart Bedford's commentary on Britten playing his own works at the piano:

Receptive ears could learn an enormous amount from the way he played his own music, even if on some occasions, when he felt pressured by the number of people present, the fast tempos could be somewhat faster than really intended. This happened to an incredulous cast in the early days of *Albert Herring*, when Ben was so keyed up that the velocity became almost preposterous. Fortunately Margaret Ritchie was on hand to defuse the situation. "Ben, dear, can't we have it a bit *faster*?"³¹

In a 1965 *Los Angeles Times* review, Walter Arlen provides an interesting comparison of Britten's recordings of his *Cantata Misericordia* and *Sinfonia da Requiem* with Andre Previn's recordings of those same works:

Where Britten's version is bitingly intense, ruggedly individual and willful (obscuring his musical sources to some extent), Previn often goes melodramatic and sentimental. And because he conducts the letter of the score, he reveals Britten's dependencies more readily (when Brahms lurks, Previn conducts it like Brahms, etc.), which in turn makes the music sound more obvious, conventional, and shallow.³²

Arlen's assessment could be interpreted to place the blame for "obvious, conventional, and shallow" music at feet of Britten's compositional technique, but that would be incorrect and inappropriate. The fault lies rather with Previn's interpretation. Instead of conducting Britten like Britten, he "conducts it like Brahms." All composers show influence of their predecessors, but compositional influences should not trump the actual composer in the performance of a work.

This underlines the importance of the ability of the modern performer to listen directly to recordings of the composer performing his/her own works. A review of the Decca recording of Britten's *Symphony for Cello and Orchestra* calls it, "as near

31 Stuart Bedford, "Composer and Conductor: Annals of a Collaboration", *The Opera Quarterly* 4, no. 3 (Autumn 1986): 63.

32 Arlen.

definitive as could be," and goes on to state that "Rostropovich as the direct inspirer of the piece can almost be considered a joint creator, and he certainly plays like that."³³ An analysis of Britten's recordings bears this out.

Four works will be discussed in detail, comparing Britten's own recordings to his scores: *Spring Symphony: for Soprano, Alto, and Tenor Soli, Mixed Chorus, Boys' Choir and Orchestra*, Op. 44; *Serenade for Tenor, Horn, and Strings*, Op. 31; *Nocturne for Tenor, 7 Obligato [sic] Instruments and Strings*, Op. 60;³⁴ and *Albert Herring*, Op. 39. Britten's compositional prowess and technique will not be discussed except when specifically germane to the interpretation and performance presented. All rehearsal markings refer to the Boosey & Hawkes published scores identified in the bibliography.

While a great many aspects cover the interpretation of music, analysis of the aforementioned works will focus on variation from score markings, especially tempo. Phrasing and style in the vocal lines, especially in opera, can vary dramatically based upon each singer's unique voice. Britten composed all of the above works with the voice of Peter Pears in mind, and he is featured as the tenor on each recording. Therefore, these vocal issues will not be discussed.

SPRING SYMPHONY

Commissioned in 1948 by Serge Koussevitsky, Benjamin Britten wrote the *Spring Symphony*, Op. 44 in four movements for soprano, contralto, tenor, chorus and orchestra. The texts are adapted from a variety of authors:

33 Review of *Symphony for Cello and Orchestra, Op. 68 by Britten, Cello Concerto Inc (Cadenzas by Britten) by Haydn*, by Rostropovich, English Chamber Orchestra, Britten, *The Musical Times* 106, no. 146 (Jan., 1965): 46.

34 The Boosey & Hawkes score and most (although not all) recordings misspell the word "obligato" in the subtitle with only one "b" as printed here. From this point forward, the work will simply be referred to as *Nocturne*. All bibliographic entries use the spelling of the reference cited, regardless of whether it matches the misspelled title.

- Part I
 Introduction (Anon. 16th century)
 The merry cuckoo (Edmund Spenser)
 Spring, the sweet spring (Thomas Nashe)
 The driving boy (George Peele; John Clare)
 The Morning Star (John Milton)
- Part II
 Welcome, Maids of Honour (Robert Herrick)
 Waters above (Henry Vaughan)
 Out on the Lawn I lie in Bed (W. H. Auden)
- Part III
 When will my May come (Richard Barnefield)
 Fair and fair (George Peele)
 Sound the Flute! (William Blake)
- Part IV
 Finale (Beaumont and Fletcher; Anon. 13th century)³⁵

Only one published recording exists of Benjamin Britten conducting the *Spring Symphony*. This studio recording, published by Decca, took place over four days in November, 1960, and features Jennifer Vyvyan (soprano), Norma Procter (contralto) and Peter Pears (tenor) as the soloists with the Royal Opera House Chorus and Orchestra and the Boys Chorus from Emanuel School.³⁶

An earlier, private recording featuring the same soloists (but a different boys' chorus) was made in September 1958, at that year's Edinburgh International Festival, but only exists on reel-to-reel tape in the Britten-Pears Archives.³⁷ Unfortunately, access to the 1958 recording is not yet possible, so only the published recording from 1960 will be analyzed.³⁸

35 Capitalization and spelling of poem titles are taken directly from the score.

Benjamin Britten, *Spring Symphony: For Soprano, Alto and Tenor Soli, Mixed Chorus, Boys' Choir and Orchestra*, Op. 44 (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1950).

36 2C5.CD0322, ID: 3-9301859, Britten Pears Archive, 3/10/2014.
<http://webhotel.mikromarc.no/bpl/eng/mikromarc/isbd.idc?dbAlias=bpl&UnitId=0&SearchUnitId=0&CopyCount=0&idno=30810>.

37 BPLRR01461-1462, ID: 3-9406003, Britten-Pears Archive, 3/10/2014.
<http://webhotel.mikromarc.no/bpl/eng/mikromarc/isbd.idc?dbAlias=bpl&UnitId=0&SearchUnitId=0&CopyCount=0&idno=37371>.

38 The Britten-Pears Archive is in the process of converting all of their audio/visual recordings into digital formats, however this recording had not been made available as of the writing of this document. For further information, contact the Britten-Pears Archive regarding the listing referenced in footnote 37.

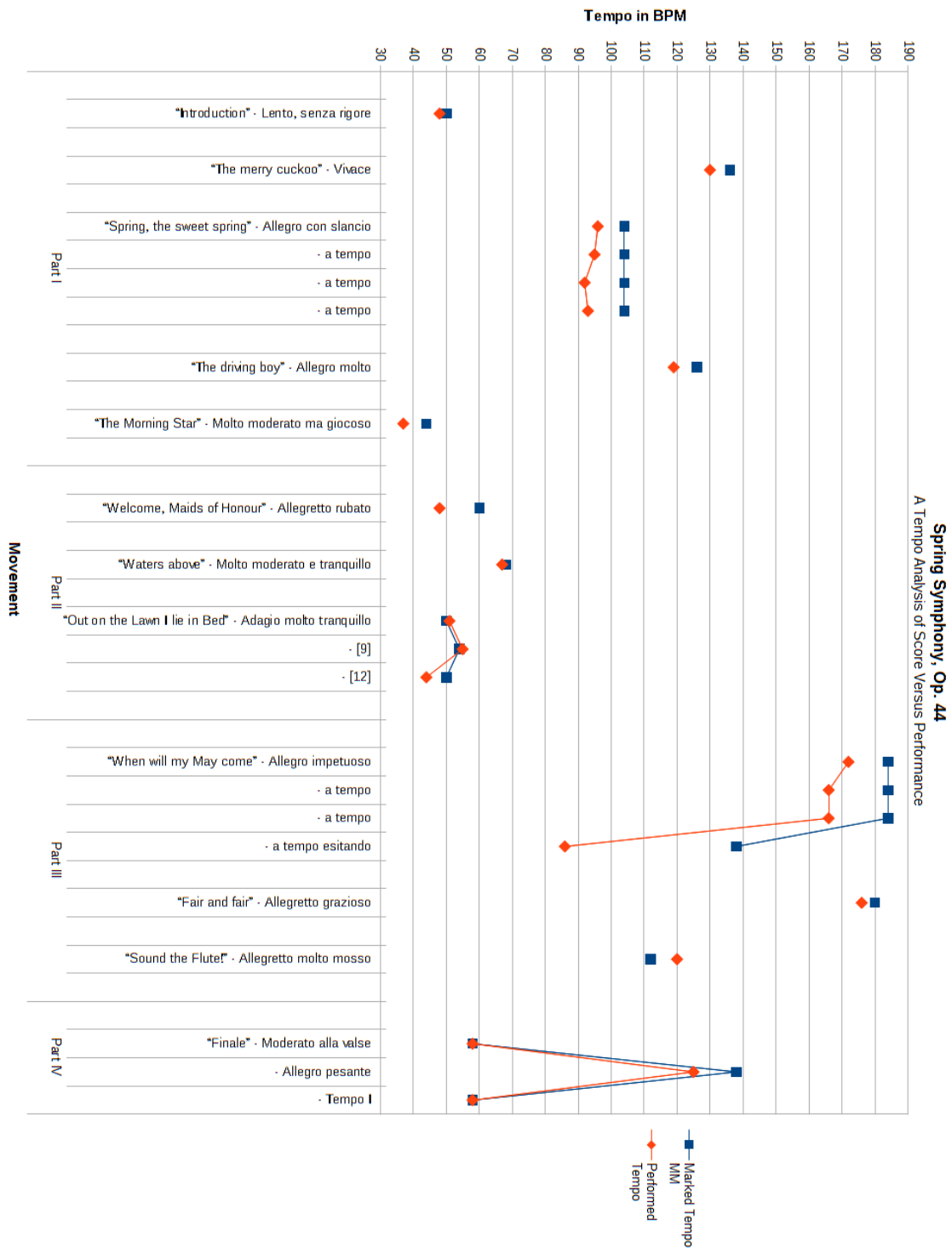


Figure 1: A tempo analysis of the Decca recording of the Spring Symphony, Op. 44.

Britten begins the opening *lento* negligibly slower than the marked tempo—48 instead of 50 (see Figure 1 for complete tempo analysis). Throughout the movement, Britten exercises *rubato*, allowing the music to breathe. This is especially true of the choral and string sections, where the tempo as a whole tends to drop to closer to 46. When the percussion enters however, such as one bar before [5] shown in figure 2, the tempo tightens up, becoming more strict without the *rubato* of the other sections.

“The Merry Cuckoo” sprints through at 130, almost the marked 136. Unfortunately, there is little variance in the actual articulation of the trumpets, despite at least four distinct articulations appearing in the score. The second trumpet does provide

The image shows a page of a musical score for Benjamin Britten's Spring Symphony, Part I. A box labeled [5] is placed above the first staff. The score includes staves for Flutes III and IV, Clarinets I and II, Trombones I and II, Timpani, Percussion (T.D., S.D.B., Gong, B.D.K.), Harp I and II, and Chorus (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass). The percussion section is marked with various dynamics and articulations, including *pp*, *ppp sempre*, and *ppp*. The Chorus is marked with "out!" and "fair sun!".

Figure 2: The percussion entrance before [5] in Part I of the Spring Symphony.

Spring Symphony, op. 44 by Benjamin Britten
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some minor variation in the fifth and sixth bar of [11], especially compared with the following bars. The rest of the accents, *staccati*, and *marcati* sound virtually identical (see Figure 3). “Sweet the Spring” starts on the slow side (96) and gets slower and slower after each cadenza. The final section picks up a single BPM (93 up from 92), but it is almost unnoticeable in the context. “The Driving Boy” and “The Morning Star” are also both under tempo at 119 and 37 respectively.

Part II begins significantly slower than the marked tempo with “Welcome, Maids of Honour,” coming in at 48 BPM, almost 12 BPM below the indicated 60. Even given the descriptive text of *Allegretto rubato*, this is still a dramatic difference. Britten does make extensive use of *rubato* during the string passages, pushing and pulling with the rise and fall of the phrases. The rhythmically complex harp and wind passages tend to be more rhythmically strict.

The image displays a musical score for a passage from "The Merry Cuckoo" in the Spring Symphony. It features a vocal line (T. Solo) and three trumpet parts (Trpts. in C, I, II, III). The vocal line includes the lyrics "Who now.... is com-ing forth with gar -" and "lands crowned:". The score is annotated with various articulation and dynamic markings, including accents (>), staccato (>), marcato (>), and dynamic levels (p, pp, mp, cresc.). A box containing the number "10" is placed above the vocal line. The score concludes with the copyright notice "All rights reserved B. & H. 16904".

Figure 3: A passage of "The Merry Cuckoo" from the Spring Symphony showing the variety of accent and articulation markings used.

Spring Symphony, op. 44 by Benjamin Britten
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 Reprinted by permission of Boosey & Hawkes, Inc.

“Waters Above” keeps a steady pace almost right on its given tempo at 67. The *sul ponticello* shifts occasionally change timbre a note or two late, but they are always there and obvious—this delay may be the result of the time it takes for the players to shift the bows while playing (see Figure 4).

In “Out on the Lawn I Lie in Bed,” Britten gives the text for the tempo in the first bar, but does not provide the metronome marking until bar 5 when the orchestra enters. This seems like permission for the use of *rubato* during the choral opening, yet in Britten's recording, he sets the tempo immediately in bar 1 (within 1 BPM of the marking) without any variation or *rubato*. Britten accurately makes the tempo change at [9], but inexplicably pushes to 60 BPM three bars after [10] when the trumpets and trombones take over. This is made even more perplexing by the marking in the vocal part of *molto sostenuto*, which implies (if anything) a slight slowing of the tempo. When he reaches [12], he pulls back the tempo beyond the original marking of 50 all the way to 44 BPM.

Britten starts Part III's “When Will My May Come” with the quarter note at rapid 184 BPM. Britten comes remarkably close, achieving 172 at the beginning, and 166 after each of the first two fermati in bars 11 and 18. The *a tempo esitando* three bars from the end is very perplexing. No metronome marking is provided; given the presence of a



Figure 4: Three bars before [5] in “Waters Above” from the Spring Symphony showing the changing timbres of the strings.

Spring Symphony, op. 44 by Benjamin Britten
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tempo with the *esitando* one would assume slightly slower than the original tempo (even a 25% decrease would bring the tempo down to 138). Yet Britten seems to disregard the *a tempo* portion completely, slowing all the way to 86, an almost 55% decrease in tempo!

For “Fair and Fair,” Britten intentionally marks the eighth for the metronome marking rather than the dotted quarter to keep the pulse and push of a fast 6 rather than a slow 2 (which would equate to 60 BPM). This relentless drive is borne out in the recording. Britten again almost achieves his runaway tempo, this time reaching a blistering 176 BPM. Britten stays true to his tempi throughout the movement, even honoring the *senza rit.* at the end. “Sound the Flute!” is another set-the-tempo-and-go movement. Here Britten breaks with his tendency to undervalue his tempo, setting off at the American march tempo of 120 instead of the traditional British march tempo of 112.

Britten finishes the symphony with almost no deviation from his score markings through the final movement. He leads the opening *Moderato alla valse* exactly as marked at 58. The *Allegro pesante* at [5] comes in a little more on the *pesante* side at 125 versus the marked 138. When he returns to the first tempo again at two bars before [21], he once more strikes it exactly. Most successfully, Britten holds his tempo steady right through to the last *ffz* chord, not allowing the orchestra to fall into the “softer equals slower” trap. Not taking any time before this chord dramatically intensifies the ending.

SERENADE FOR TENOR, HORN, AND STRINGS

The *Serenade for Tenor, Horn, and Strings*, Op. 31 is an eight movement work composed in the early 1940s while Britten was working with the BBC Radio Orchestra. There he met hornist Dennis Brain, who aided Britten in understanding and composing for the intricacies of the horn.³⁹ The “Prologue” and “Epilogue” are for unaccompanied

³⁹ Gail Lewis, *Benjamin Britten's Writing for Horn with Tenor Voice: Serenade Op. 31, “The Heart of the Matter”, Nocturne Op. 60.* (Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Services, 1995), 13.

horn with the latter to be performed offstage. Britten composed these to be performed in the natural style without the use of the right hand to adjust intonation—that is, intentionally out of tune.⁴⁰ The texts of the six middle movements are taken from a variety of English poets.

While the opening of the *Serenade* is for unaccompanied horn, and therefore not conducted, as was the case for the Rostropovich recording mentioned above, the performances of Dennis Brain, for whom the work was written, provide similar interpretive insights as those provided by Britten's conducting. Two recordings of Brain performing the work exist, the original coming in 1944 with Britten conducting.⁴¹ A second recording of the *Serenade for Tenor, Horn, and Strings* occurred in 1953, this time with Eugene Goossens conducting. Although preceded and followed by other recordings of Britten conducting his own works, Britten was forced to take significant time off the podium in 1953 due to bursitis in his right shoulder.⁴² A second recording with Britten at the helm was made a decade later in 1963, this time with Barry Tuckwell performing on horn. Peter Pears performed as the tenor soloist on all three recordings.

The most specific point of interest for performance in the Prologue is the written A in 12th bar. By the time of the second recording, Brain had switched to playing a written B^b on the horn rather than the A in the score. Hornist Gail Lewis states the discussion of this particular note quite well:

Since the thirteenth harmonic [A] sounds a quarter tone flatter and the fourteenth [B^b] sounds almost the same amount sharper than the indicated pitch of A, either overtone is a satisfactory choice in performance. In later performances and on his recordings of the piece Brain changed his mind and

40 Benjamin Britten “[Letter from Benjamin Britten]”, *Tempo* New Series no. 34 (Winter, 1954-1955): 39.

41 Recording occurred on May 25 and October 8, 1945.

Benjamin Britten and Donald Mitchell, *Letters from a Life: The Selected Letters of Benjamin Britten 1913-1976*, vol. 2, 1939-45 (London: Faber and Faber, 1991-2012), 1196.

42 Holst and Eric Walter White Letter

chose the higher fourteenth harmonic, because he said “Ben would have preferred it.”⁴³

A frequency comparison of both of the Brain and the Tuckwell recordings in figure 5 shows the difference between Brain's first recording, when he played the passage as written (~608 Hz), and his second, when he substituted a written B^b—Brain actually pushes the note slightly sharp (~612 Hz). Tuckwell manages to find a landing spot more closely in tune to the actual written pitch (~610 Hz), rather than either of the out-of-tune harmonics, splitting the frequency difference of the two Brain recordings. Unfortunately,

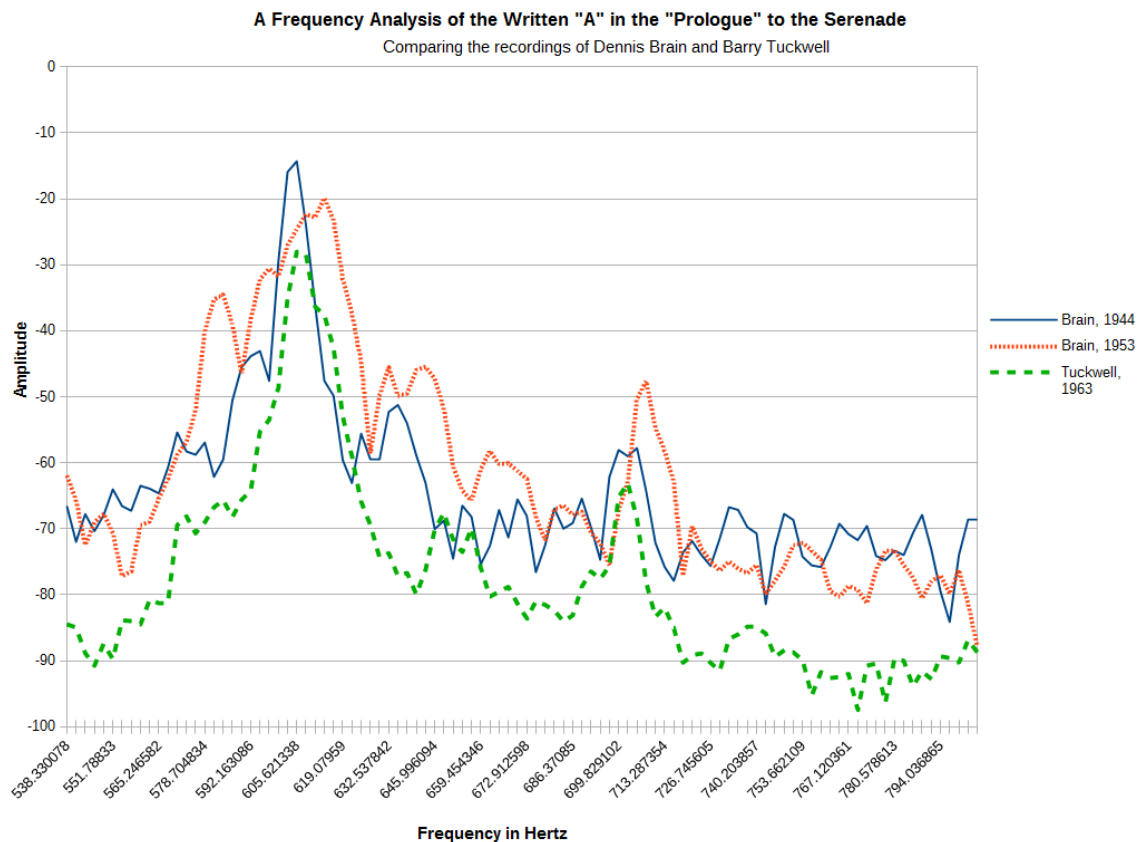


Figure 5: Comparing the pitch frequency in Hertz of performances of the written "A" in bar 12 of the Serenade.

43 Lewis, 18-19.

not only does his pitch seem to waver slightly, it goes directly against Britten's compositional wishes:

In the Prologue and Epilogue the horn is directed to play on the natural harmonics of the instrument; this causes the apparent “out-of-tuneness” of which your reviewer complains, and which is, in fact, exactly the effect I intend.

In the many brilliant performances of his part that Dennis Brain has given he has always I am sure, played it as I have marked it in the score. Anyone therefore, who plays it “in tune” is going directly against my wishes!⁴⁴

Even though Tuckwell nudges the A, the generally desired “out-of-tuneness” is maintained throughout the rest of the movement. For the modern performer, however, “it has become traditional in performance to choose this higher fourteenth harmonic rather than the thirteenth.”⁴⁵

Further careful analysis of Goosens's recording of the *Serenade* reveals an attempt at strict adherence to the tempo markings of the score (see Figure 6 for a complete tempo analysis). A conflict arises, however, with Peter Pears's familiarity with Britten's tempi. In virtually every movement where Britten is slower than his marked tempo, Pears pulls against Goosens's tempo. Given the orchestration of most of these movements, the tenor is afforded the opportunity for fluidity of tempo. Goosens, to his credit, manages the fine line between acquiescence to Pears's tempi and the markings in the score, usually ending up slightly slower than he begins each movement/section, but not quite as slow as Britten's recordings.

This tension can be felt as early as the beginning Lento of the “Pastoral,” but is most obviously apparent in the “Nocturne.” Here, the sustained rhythm of the strings has little choice but to give way to the moving line of the tenor. Goosens starts the movement at the written 88, but Pears immediately pulls it back to the same 84 of Britten's 1944

44 Britten letter to *Tempo*.

45 Lewis, 19.

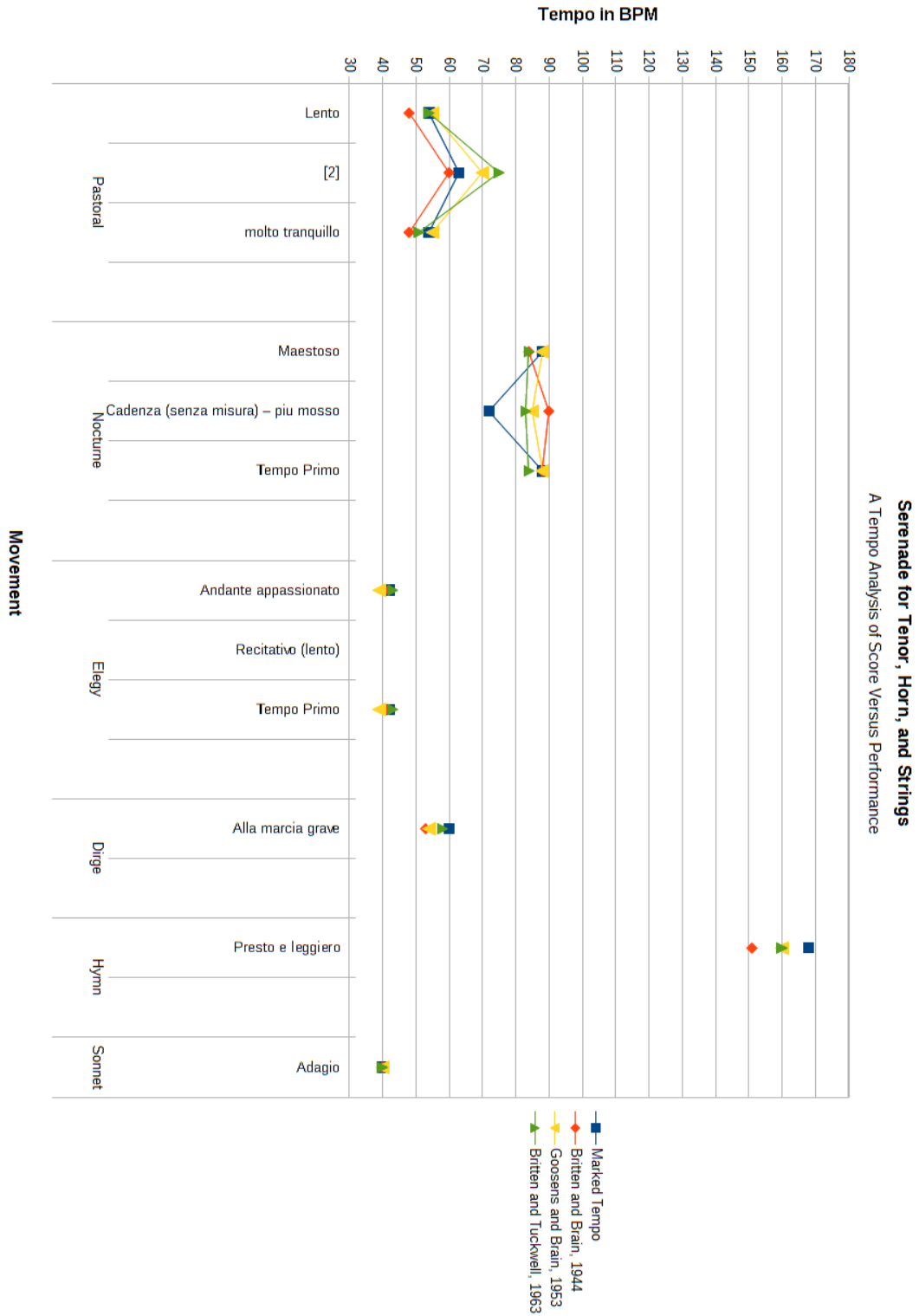


Figure 6: A tempo analysis of three recordings of Britten's Serenade for Tenor, Horn, and Strings.

recording. In general, Goosens's tempi are faster than the 1944 recording. The primary exception to this is the “Elegy,” where Goosens stays at a fairly comfortable 39 BPM, while Britten sits at the marked 42 in the 1944 recording and pushes slightly to 43 in the 1960.

One place where Tuckwell surpasses Brain is at the end of the “Elegy.” Britten has swells to stopped notes written in the horn (see Figure 7). Tuckwell manages to attain a more consistent volume than Brain—Brain's stopped notes are still noticeably softer than his open notes despite the dynamics marked.

Britten's 1944 recording is slower than the 1963 recording with two major exceptions. First at the *Cadenza (senza misura) - piu mosso* of the “Nocturne,” the tempo actually increases to 90 BPM, rather than the marked 72. The numbers do not paint an accurate picture, however, because of the shift from the quarter as the pulse to the half. This section is designed to increase the speed and tension from the framing *maestoso*. Since this recitative-like section simply sustains the string tremolo under the call and response of the horn and voice, the soloists control the tempo, rather than the conductor (see Figure 8). Brain and Pears increase the tension further than the score indicates. This rush is contagious, however, as Britten conducts the *Tempo primo* at [5] at 88 BPM, rather than the 84 of the opening *maestoso*. In the 1963 recording with



Figure 7: The stopped horn passage from the end of the “Elegy” in the Serenade.

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Tuckwell, the *Cadenza* section is still faster than the marking at 83 BPM, but pulls the pulse back from the surrounding sections, conducted at 84 BPM.

The second major exception to the generally slower tempi of the 1944 recording occurs in the middle of the “Pastoral,” flipping the position of the two recordings. Here, Britten marked a minor tempo change at [2] (without any accompanying descriptive text) shifting the eighth note from 54 BPM to 63 BPM. In the 1944 recording, Britten, although slower than the markings, changes from 48 to 60 BPM and back again, a proportionally similar shift to what is notated in the score. The 1963 recording opens the work at the marked 54 BPM, but at [2], jumps a full 21 BPM over the marking to 75 BPM, almost 20% faster than the marked tempo. When the *Tempo primo* arrives, Britten pulls

The image shows a page of a musical score for Benjamin Britten's Serenade, op. 31, specifically the 'Nocturne' section. The score is for a vocal soloist and a string quartet. The vocal line is in the top staff, with lyrics: 'cataract leaps... in glo - ry: Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes'. The tempo marking is 'Cadenza (senza misura) - più mosso (♩=72)'. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, accents, and dynamic markings. The string quartet parts (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabasso) are in the lower staves, with dynamic markings like *ff* and *ppp*, and a 'poco a poco cresc.' instruction. The score is marked with a box containing the number '4' at the beginning of the Cadenza section.

Figure 8: The recitative-like Cadenza (*senza misura*) of the Serenade's "Nocturne."

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back beyond his original tempo to 51 BPM. Britten's reasons for such a dramatic change are unclear, but it is worth noting that Goosens also increased the tempo of this section beyond the score marking, albeit only to 70 BPM.

NOCTURNE

Britten's *Nocturne*, Op. 60 continues the compositional ideas of the *Serenade*, again setting texts of English poets. In this work, however, instead of setting each text as its own movement, Britten joins them together in a through-composed work. Here he also uses seven different solo instruments in duet (and occasionally trio) with the voice, rather than just the horn: Flute, English Horn, Clarinet in B^b, Bassoon, Horn in F, Timpani, and Harp. The texts as listed in the score (with their respective rehearsal numbers) are:

<i>Prometheus Unbound</i> (Shelley)	[Beginning]
<i>The Kraken</i> (Tennyson)	[3]
<i>The Wanderings of Cain</i> (Coleridge)	[8]
<i>Blurt, Master Constable</i> (Middleton)	[13]
<i>The Prelude (1805)</i> (Wordsworth)	[15]
<i>The Kind Ghosts</i> (Owen)	[20]
<i>Sleep and Poetry</i> (Keats)	[25]
<i>Sonnet 43</i> (Shakespeare)	[35]

In addition to his Decca recording of the *Nocturne* from Walthamstow Assembly Hall in September, 1959, two video recordings of Britten conducting the work exist. The first comes from the Canadian Broadcasting Company, Vancouver (CBC) from a telecast on April 29, 1962. It not only includes footage of Britten and Pears performing the work with the CBC Vancouver Orchestra, but over 30 minutes of rehearsal footage.

The second video recording features Britten's home ensemble, the English Chamber Orchestra (ECO), in a broadcast from Christmas, 1964, that also includes a

performance of Britten conducting Mozart's Symphony No. 40. Since these two recordings were live performances, they contain some idiosyncrasies that are inherent in live performance. These will be mentioned during the analysis when they occur only if they affect the interpretation. The rehearsal footage will be discussed independently of the performance analysis to focus on Britten's rehearsal and manual technique. All three recordings again feature Peter Pears as the tenor soloist.

Unlike the other concert works reviewed, the *Nocturne* fits together as a single, long movement. Each of the sections within the work is joined by a recurring theme, with which Britten also opens and closes the work as a whole. The opening section is the only one of these iterations to specify a metronome marking at 48 BPM. All of the restatements of this motive simply reference “As at the start,” or in two cases, “as before.” As indicated in figure 9, Britten opens each recording faster than his marked tempo, slowing the motive down during the middle repetitions, then bringing the tempo back up for two sections before slowing down again for the finish. Although potentially influenced by the tempi surrounding each iteration, Britten's consistency in this pattern among all three performances provides some indication of his desired effect for this ritornello.

“The Kraken” begins at [3]. Britten comes very close to his metronome marking of 69 in the first two recordings, reaching 72 and 71 BPM respectively (see Figure 10 for a complete tempo analysis). He is a little faster on the Christmas concert, coming in around 76 BPM. In the CBC performance, Britten adds a breath before the cello entrance four bars before [7] that is not present in the other recordings. In all three recordings, Britten allows the music in this section to breathe and move, letting the beat length vary ever so slightly with the accents, pulses and swells.

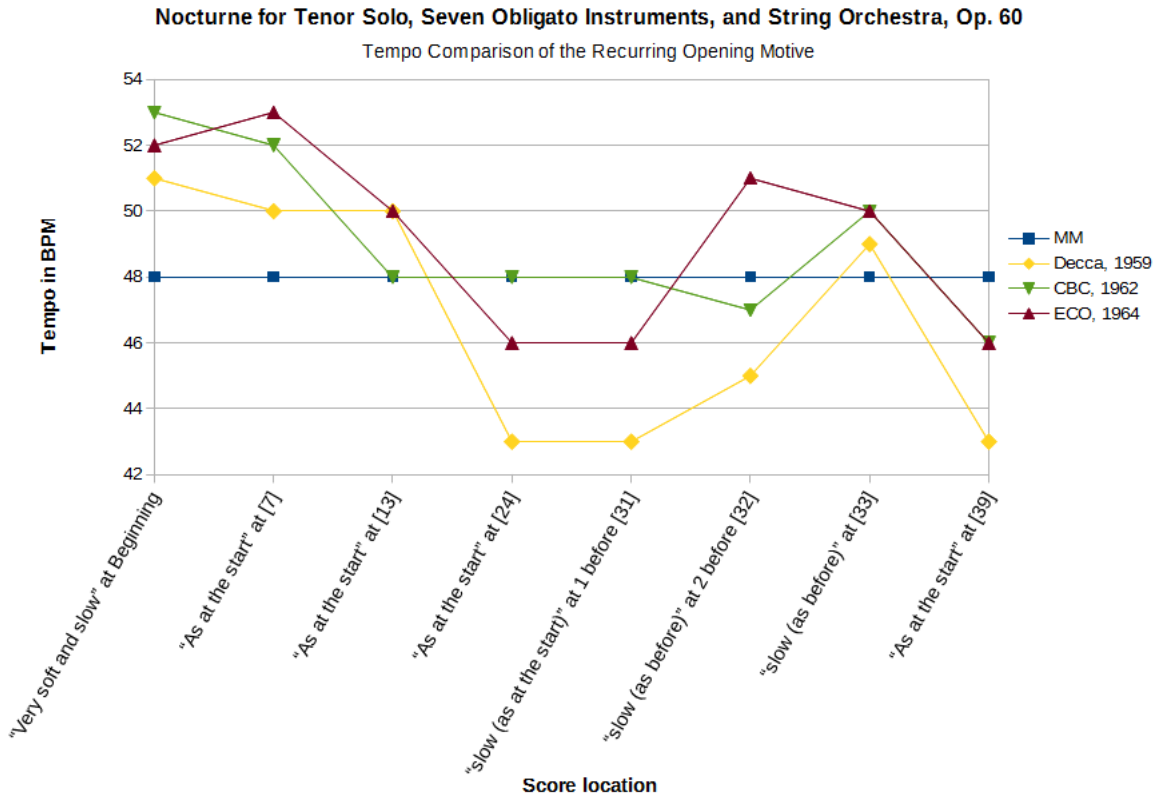


Figure 9: Tempi of the multiple iterations of the opening motive in Britten's Nocturne.

The first two recordings of the next section, at [8] marked “slow waltz,” come in very under tempo at 68 and 70 BPM respectively compared to the marked 76 in the score. In the ECO video, Britten conducts at the marked tempo. The performances of the “slow waltz” tend to be a little more strict in their tempos than the earlier section, most likely due to the rhythmic nature of the harp.

When the opening gesture returns at [13] significant variation occurs among the recordings. While the Decca recording maintains a fairly straight 50BPM, the CBC performance allows for *rubato* approaching [15] with the rising vocal gestures on “mew!” The ECO recording features a moment of “that’s live performance” when the horn misses (completely omits!) the second 8th note of his solo in the second bar of [13]. Unfortunately the video was focused on the horn player at that moment and not Britten,



Figure 10: A tempo analysis of the three performances of Britten's Nocturne.

as it would have been intriguing to witness his reaction. From the length of the first eighth note, it appears that the horn player misjudged the tempo, assuming it to be slower than Britten was taking it. He corrected himself immediately for the third and subsequent notes.

“The Prelude (1805),” marked as a “steady march,” is anything but. In each of the recordings, Britten starts the section at the marked tempo of 72BPM, but begins pushing the tempo as soon as the voice enters. By the time the section reaches a high point at [18], he is up to 10 BPM faster than he began. Musically, this works well, helping build the energy, but it goes directly against his score marking. When he reaches [19], he only has to bump up a few more ticks to reach “animated.” This short segment holds steady until the big climax three before [20].

The three bars of transition into “The Kind Ghosts” at [20] are marked “strictly in time,” but only in one recording does Britten hold to that. In the Decca and CBC recordings, he ritards through the chords, changing the transition from the dotted quarter becoming the new quarter into a straight quarter to quarter relationship. Only in the ECO recording does he perform the transition as written.

Britten holds to his “slow and regular” tempo of 40 BPM after [20]. Subtle variations occur in the first two recordings (not even enough to call rubato), but in the third, with the ECO, Pears takes some performance liberties, stretching certain phrases. Britten follows him with ease, but the strings seem to be caught off guard and occasionally sound as if they are stuttering.

After another revisit of the opening gesture at [24], this time slower than the previous interjections, Britten launches into a quick flute and clarinet exchange for “Sleep and Poetry.” He consistently holds his tempos steady in all three recordings throughout this section allowing the flute and clarinet to dance off each other seamlessly,

although the Decca recording is slower than the marked tempo at 112 BPM. The video performances are much closer to the specified 120 BPM, at 118 for the CBC and 122 with the ECO.

When the opening motive comes back, first as a single beat (expanding on the fermata in the bar before [30]), then as a full bar, the exact tempo is not as crucial as the recall gesture. Britten is dramatically slower on the Decca recording of the single beat before [31], but right on target in the CBC and only a fraction slower in the ECO. All three recordings come within 3 BPM (45-51BPM) in the full bar before [32]. In all cases, the gesture is conveyed effectively and the suddenness of the change captured by the strings. When the full motive returns at [33], Britten is only 1-2 BPM faster than the original marking. Another interesting case of “that’s live performance” occurs in the ECO recording at [31] when Pears begins the line from [32] instead. He catches himself mid-phrase, however, correcting the second half and continuing on. With the camera focused on his face at the time, Pears appropriately shows nothing to betray his error, and we are unable to witness Britten’s reaction.

The final segment, set to Shakespeare’s “Sonnet 43,” has three distinct interpretations. In the Decca recording, Britten exercises almost no rubato at all throughout, an occasional stretching of the last eighth of a bar the primary exception. The CBC recording features slightly more rubato than the Decca, granting Pears a little more flexibility. The ECO recording features the most rubato of the three, and can be easily witnessed in Britten’s baton on the film, constantly stretching and pushing beats. All three recordings possess a general ebb and flow of tempo with the energy, culminating in an increase in tempo building into the climax at [38]. Following a similar pattern to the rubato, in the Decca, Britten pushes from 85 to about 95, while in the CBC, he starts slower at 82 BPM but reaches a peak of 104 BPM before the climax. In the ECO

recording, going along with the additional rubato, Britten, while beginning at about 88 BPM, varies all the way between 80 and 112 BPM, which he reaches at [38]. The final reprise of the opening motive returns at or matching its slowest tempo of the piece, bringing the work to a close.

Britten's manual technique is very smooth and small, with minimal shoulder movement and keeping his elbows relatively tight to his sides, most likely stemming from his injury in 1953. He preps well and makes good eye contact with musicians when giving entrance cues. Occasionally eye contact alone suffices for cuing an entrance. Britten does slightly slump at the shoulders and tends to rock and bob his head with the beat—perhaps another side effect of his bad shoulder. This does not detract from the clarity of his impulse, however.

The first time Britten stopped the orchestra during the rehearsal was to address the strings during the opening section. Unfortunately, the announcer takes over as soon as Britten halted them, so the point of his address is unknown. When Britten proceeded into the second section, he stopped again, this time to address the trill in the bassoon at six bars before [3] as shown in figure 11. The bassoon player was beginning the trill immediately on the marked note. Britten requested that the player start the trill, "more slowly and build with the crescendo." When he resumed, the player does just that. Britten continued on, but not before acknowledging the change and asking for the same on the next trill.

Britten dictated the *ffz* pizzicato chord on the upbeat in the violins four before [3] (again, see Figure 11) and again two before [3]. This shift in pattern establishes the style and place in the beat for the chords. Once the tempo is firmly established at [3], he resumed a standard four pattern, allowing the chords to spring from the downbeats in the bassoon and double bass in the style already shown.

The image shows a musical score for Benjamin Britten's Nocturne, op. 60. The score is arranged in a system with six staves. From top to bottom, the staves are: Voice, Bassoon Obligato, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Double Bass. The Voice staff has the lyrics "i - ty!". The Bassoon Obligato staff features a trill marked with a fermata and a crescendo hairpin, with dynamics *ppp* and *ff*. The Violin I and II staves are marked "unis. without mutes" and "pizz." with a dynamic of *ff*. The Viola and Double Bass staves play a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The time signature is 4/8.

Figure 11: The bassoon trill and pizzicato string chord in the Nocturne six bars before [3].

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He paused briefly at [4] to request that the basses make a smooth transition with as little separation as possible on the crescendo into the downbeat at [4]. As he continued after [4], he called out brief instructions to the musicians, such as reinforcing the *pp* four before [5], and "now violent" to the strings two bars before [5] (incongruously stated in Britten's calm demeanor).

Britten calls out to add simple suggestions and corrections to the orchestra without stopping. He does, however, stop and address things that are either more significant, or do not get corrected with a simple call out. Around the seventh bar of [5], he stops to address issues with the strings: the note length needs changed to ensure full value; the trills on those notes last for the entire duration, until the next entrance; and that the trill be performed "as quick as possible."

Britten continues in this manner through the rest of the rehearsal. It proves to be an effective rehearsal technique, and the musicians appear to respond well to his method. It also shows that Britten is very clear not only in how he hears the work in his head, but also in how he communicates that to the orchestra. Many of these issues, such as the bassoon trill and bass crescendo, can be seen as points of interpretation as they are not specifically noted in the score.

Britten's then-assistant conductor, Steuart Bedford corroborates this rehearsal method:

I remember being surprised at how little Ben seemed to be concerned with the occasional pitch problem or rhythmic inaccuracy. In the latter case, when he did want to make a correction, it would invariably be in oblique terms that led the singer naturally back to the printed note values, a process that had the distinct advantage of showing *why* he wrote it that way, not simply, "I wrote this."⁴⁶

ALBERT HERRING

Albert Herring, Op 39 is an English chamber opera for 12 singers, 12 musicians, and a conductor/pianist in three acts. Throughout the satirical comedy, Britten deftly balances caricature and comedy.⁴⁷ Britten uses musical parody to help delineate and exaggerate the characters, for example, "Lady Billows" as Wagnerian, "Miss Wordsworth" as Bel Canto, Victorian Hymns for the "Vicar," and English Music Hall for "Mum."⁴⁸ Britten's snapshot of Turn of the Century life in a small English country town is laced with myriad social, political, spiritual and cultural layers of "musical mockery."⁴⁹

46 Bedford, 61.

47 Patricia Howard, *The Operas of Benjamin Britten: An Introduction* (London: Barrie & Rockliff the Cresset P., 1969), 51.

48 Conversations with music director William Reber and stage director Dale Dreyfoos during a production of the opera at Arizona State University, Fall 2012.

49 Brian Young, "The Performance of Pastoral Politics: Britten's 'Albert Herring'", *History Workshop Journal* 55 (Spring, 2003): 207

A full tempo analysis chart of the opera is in Appendix IV. The following analysis focuses on areas where Britten deviates or applies interpretations not present in the score, which go beyond simple tempo variations. He often fails to provide metronome markings in this opera, and his use of English descriptors for tempo, while not as standardized into specific ranges as the traditional Italian descriptors have become, does aid in understanding his desires, especially when applying these descriptors to the vocal line. Although Italian markings appear in parenthesis under the English (see Figure 12), these appear to be written as a courtesy for the German language version included in the score; it is unknown how much if any influence Britten had on this. This does, however,

LADY BILLOWS (off) (draussen)
ff
 Tell the mid-wife! - She's not to...!
 Die - se Heb - am-me...! Sie darf nicht...!

FLORENCE
mf
 Ve - ry good, mi - la - dy!
 Ja, ge - wiss, Mi - la - dy!

She continues dusting and tidying.
 Sie fährt fort mit Abstauben und Zimmerrichten.

1 Quick, as before
 (Allegro, come sopra)

f
f
f
f very marked
f very marked

Figure 12: The Italian text's presence underneath the English tempo description presumably accompanies the German translation of the libretto as shown in the vocal line.

Albert Herring, op. 39 by Benjamin Britten
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add increased importance to the value of his recording of the opera as a reference. The score indicates that the piano accompaniment to the recitatives should be played by the conductor. Although Britten performed and recorded the opera in this way, it is acceptable to separate the two roles.

Britten opens the opera "Quick and heavy" with a dotted quarter value of 144 BPM indicated. His recording almost achieves this tempo, coming in at 140. The second half of this opening aria, Britten adds a bit of stretch every third bar under the word, "oh." One reviewer complained of the premier performance that "Anybody could tell that Gladys Parr [as "Florence"] was earnestly attending to the articulation of the words in her opening soliloquy; but the loquacious words were audible only now and then."⁵⁰ Although the reviewer blames Britten the composer for his combination of the heavy orchestration coupled with the low tessitura of the vocal line ("There are operatic composers who manage to give full life to their music without doing this as often as Britten does."), this issue does not seem to affect the recording at all.

The "heavy march" of "Lady Billows's" entrance, marked at 52, successfully straddles the line between eight and four beats per bar at 54 BPM. Five bars after [20], the percussion and flute interjection, supposed to represent the chiming of the clock, should come in at 60 despite its lack of metronome marking. Britten rushes through it slightly at 68.

Britten deftly manages the transitions between piano and conducting in the next passage, although at times, it feels that he cuts the piano short slightly in order to secure the orchestra entrances. The orchestral interjections with "Florence Pike" consistently run at 104. When "Lady Billows" interjects at [33], Britten matches his marked tempo of 82 BPM. This exemplifies the inconsistencies inherent in his use of English descriptors,

⁵⁰ W. McN., "Opera at Glyndbourne", *The Musical Times* 88, no. 125 (Jul., 1947): 234.

as the previous section which he conducted at 104 uses the same descriptor as this section, "Quick and agitated." Britten also adds slight *rubato* through this section, stretching slightly on "Florence's" interjections of support.

Britten comes very close to the mark for "Superintendent Budd's" solo at 132 versus the marked 136. At [38], the cello exercises an unusual stylistic choice. The eighth notes in the first two bars are lifted off the preceding note rather than leading into the following note (see Figure 13). This interpretation may be inferred from the slurs on the eighths in the following bar, but is not specifically indicated. The "Vicar's" solo lags behind its mark of 60 at 52 BPM, but still manages to maintain forward momentum and not feel as if it were dragging.

Britten pushes the opening section of the Act I Interlude beyond his marked range (one of the very few times he specifies a range) to 109. The "Lively!" at [53] bumps

38 Slow and sad (tempo rubato)
(Lento mesto e rubato)

Flo. LADY BILLOWS
I'm a ve - ry dis - ap - point - ed
Hab' schon al - ler - hand er - le - ben

VI. II 38 Slow and sad (tempo rubato)
(Lento mesto e rubato)

Vla. **4**
ppp express.

Vc. **4**
pp very expressive
cresc.
> p

Db. ppp express.

B. & H. 19405

Figure 13: Cello solo from Act I of Albert Herring.

Notice the accents on the 8th notes in the first two bars and the slurs in the third.

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up to 112, but by adding a *rallentando* to the end of the preceding section, the sense of change is more dramatic. Britten also tends to stretch on the breath marks in this section as shown in figure 14. At [60] he maintains the 112 of [53] as opposed to the marked tempo at [48], despite the return to the melodic gestures of the earlier section. Britten picks up after the recitative at eight before [68] at about 100 BPM. These short interludes are more shaped rather than in a strict tempo. A metronome marking is finally provided at [68] of 132 BPM, but Britten again comes in under tempo at 124.

Although [76] is marked "a tempo" (referring back to the previous 60 BPM), Britten here pushes the tempo to 68, showing the changing mood in "Albert's" soliloquy. The *pizzicato* string chords in the accompanied recitative that follow 16 bars later are very deliberately placed to match the vocal line (see Figure 15). Each chord is right on its mark save one under the word "punnets" which is a mere two sixteenth notes late. Pears pushes his tempo in the bar leading up to this, increasing the difficulty of exact placement. The section passes by so quickly, however, it would be virtually unnoticeable to an audience.

The texture shifts seventeen bars before [77] when the strings shift to sustained tremolo chords. Pears dictates the tempo here, starting under the marked 48 BPM at 45, but gradually pushes throughout the section, reaching 60 BPM by the time [77] arrives. The "Fast" interjection at [77] successfully breaks the tension running through at 140 BPM.

During "Sid's" description of the ceremony at the opening of Act II, Britten allows for some freedom within the vocal line, but keeps the tempo generally steady. Later, when "Miss Wordsworth" is leading the children through their rehearsal, Britten does an excellent job of keeping the tempo steady, both during the full bar of rest in the fifth bar

of [11], then in the partial bars when the children are listing the foodstuffs starting at [12].

As each member of the ensemble cast enters, Britten adequately harkens back to the appropriate previous music for each character, although his tempi tend to be slower

The image displays a musical score for the Act I Interlude of Albert Herring. It features two systems of staves. The first system includes Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet in B-flat (Cl.in Bb), Bassoon (Bsn.), Horn in F (Hn.in F), Violin I (VI. I), Violin II (VI. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Double Bass (Db.). The second system includes Clarinet in B-flat (Cl.in Bb), Horn in F (Hn.in F), Violin I (VI. I), Violin II (VI. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Double Bass (Db.). The score is marked with various dynamics such as *ppp*, *pp*, *p*, *f*, and *pp*, and includes performance instructions like *lively (animato)*, *cantabile*, *smooth*, and *poco cresc.*. A double bar line is present at the end of the eighth bar of the first system.

Figure 14: An excerpt from the Act I Interlude of Albert Herring.

Britten tends to exaggerate the breath mark at the end of the eighth bar.

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than the original metronome marking. This is especially true of “Superintendent Budd” and “Mum.” When the children sing their full welcome at [23], Britten adds phrase-ending stretches in the style of Johann Strauss. These complement the accented eighth notes on the last beat and a half in the eighth bar and five before [24]. Britten adds a slight accelerando at the end of “Harry's” solo three and four bars before [25] to complement the accelerated rhythmic values in the winds. “Emmie's” number, while

Determined (Risoluto) *sf* very marked and freely

Yes! Mum's un - com - mon keen a - bout the
Ja, Mamm' ist furcht - bar streng und a - ku -

p *cresc. molto* *mf* *cresc. molto* *f* *arco* *ffz* *ffz* *f* *sec.* *pizz.* *f* *sec.* *f* *sec.* *f* *sec.* *f* *sec.*

3
4

Timp. *glissando* *p*

need of liv - ing chaste and clean in word and deed. For what?
rat, dass brav und rein man lebt in Wort und Tat. Wo - zu?

B.&H. 19405

Figure 15: Britten deliberately and accurately places the string chords under the vocal line during “Albert's” Act I Soliloquy.

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strict in the tempo Britten sets, does not quite live up to the marking of "Quick," sitting at 112 BPM. For "Cissie's" debacle, Britten is not only slower than his marked tempo, but also stretches on the bars when the horn changes notes. This allows for "Cissie" to stretch the vocal line as well. Britten also adds a slight push to the tempo starting in the 13th bar, increasing the tempo as the tension of the characters increases.

In the conversational crowd recitative after [27] shown in figure 16, Britten allows enough repetition for each line to have an opportunity to step into the foreground. He does not, however, wait for the children to enter on "Coo!" before bringing in the other voices, as notated in the score. In the recording here, Britten allows the individual lines to rise above the textural din once each. While deftly handled on the recording, this overlapping recitative is difficult to manage in performance. In later works, Britten worked to compositionally improve this conversational structure, settling on the much more effective and performance-friendly system with his invention of the Curlew Sign which he introduced in *Curlew River*.

"Lady Billows" is allowed recitative-like freedom under the sustained chords nine bars before [28] with Britten only firmly establishing the tempo during the rhythmically active passages such as [28] and [29]. After the tempo increase at [31], Britten maintains the newer, faster tempo through the section at [32] as well.

Britten follows his tendency to be under tempo for the rest of the scene. At [43], he specifies a metronome marking of 88 BPM for the half note in the score, along with the request that the new quarter note equal the preceding eighth note, despite not having provided a metronome marking at the previous tempo change. In his recording, the equality of the rhythmic values takes precedence over the specified tempo, resulting in a tempo of 75 BPM.

* Recit.

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in Bb

Bsn.

Hn. in F

Perc. Timp.

Harp.

MISS WORDSWORTH
That was ex - cel - lent chil - dren. Sit down quiet - ly.
Es war wun - der - voll Kin - der. Setzt euch ru - hig.

Lady B.
EMMIE, CIS & HARRY
Al - bert, come on my right hand!
Al - bert, setz dich ne - ben mich!

NANCY
Cool! I'm jol - ly hun - gry!
Hu! Bin mach - rig hung - rig!

MUM
Oh! I must stay and lis - ten. This - 'll be fun!
Oh! Ich muss al - les hö - ren. Das wird ein Spass!

FLORENCE
Where d'you think I'd be? I'm the King's Mum.
Wo komm' ich denn hin? Wo ist mein Platz?

ALBERT
Food comes af - ter speech - es. Vi - car... you start!
Erst spricht ein paar Wor - te der Herr Pfar - ter!

MAYOR
Won't some - bo - dy take this for me? I don't know what to do with it!
Halt nie - mand mich hier wohl he - raus? Ich kenn' mich hier doch gar nicht aus!

SID
This me? Where d'you think his Wor - ship sits?
Und wo? Ist der Platz des Stadt - vor - stands?

VICAR
Chin wag - ging! What an aw - ful lot of rot!
Al - les Schwätz! Welch ein Kud - del - mud - del hier!

SUPERINTENDENT
Just a few words of in - tro - duc - tion. That will be most suit - a - ble!
Ja, die Ein - lei - tung sprech ich ger - ne. Hal - te das für mei - ne Pflicht!

Recit.
O - ver here, Mis - sus Her - ring! Next to me!
Bit - te hier, Mis - sis Her - ring! Hier bei mir!

VI. I

VI. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

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Figure 16: Overlapping conversational recitative in Act II, Scene 1 of Albert Herring.

For the second scene of Act II, Britten rarely deviates from his score markings, tempos notwithstanding, with two primary exceptions. First, in the second half of the Interlude, starting at the "Slow and quiet" at [60], Britten, while maintaining a base tempo of the marked 76 BPM, ebbs and flows from 66 to 80 BPM, moving with the music. Second, leading into [91], Britten adds a *ritardando* in the bar before on the descending quarter notes, stretching them smoothly into the new half note. Despite this, the quarter note pulse at [91] matches the quarter note pulse from before the *ritardando*, as marked in the score in figure 17.

Bedford again provides additional insight into Britten's desires for "Albert's" monologue in Act II, Scene 2:

I was intrigued by the way he conducted a section of Albert's act 2 monologue, taking it in two from figures 92 to 93 and beyond. . . . Ben had made many points on performing the title role: Albert is tipsy; so all the tempos marked "as before" need to be slightly steadier than before, as when one is inebriated the thought processes are slowed down. This also has the benefit of allowing Albert to stress each eighth note on the words "good" and "reign."

Ben wanted me to give Albert time through the section "With enormous care." At the words "Pretty name, Nancy! Pretty name!" the second "name" changes the tonality by going to a C#; Ben particularly wanted this note to be sung short as marked, so as to avoid anticipating the A major of the following section.⁵¹

In Act III, the snare drum *ritornello* which underscores the anxiety of the search for Albert only fluctuates by about 4 BPM through its various iterations, ranging from 106 to 110 with the only exception its final occurrence at [45] right before the Threnody where it falls to 102. This *ritornello* creates a bit of a conundrum for conductors, as often the snare drummer enters at his own tempo while the orchestra or singers are performing something completely different, such as at [36] shown in figure 18.

⁵¹ Bedford, 71.

Fl. *f sempre piu* *ff*

Ob. *f sempre piu* *ff*

Cl.in Bb *f sempre piu* *ff* **3/4**
2/4

Bsn. *mf cresc* *f sempre piu* *ff*

Hn.in F *f sempre piu* *ff*

Albert
white - head-ed boy!
war / ich ein Tier!

[91] Always animated
(Sempre animato)

Fl. *p sust*

Ob. *p sust*

Cl.in Bb **3/4**
2/4 *p sust*

Bsn. *p sust*

Hn.in F *p sust*

Perc. Timp. (wooden sticks) *f* *f*

Harp **3/4**
2/4 *ff* *ff*

Albert *ff*
Al - bert the Good! / Al - bert who Should! / Who -
bert ist gut, / bert ist schlecht. / Recht

[91] Always animated
(Sempre animato)

VI. I *ff* *sim*

VI. II *ff* *sim*

Via **3/4**
2/4 *ff* *sim*

Vc. *ff* *sim*

Vb. *ff* *sim*

B. & H. 19405

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Figure 17: The transition at [91] in Act II of Albert Herring.
 Britten maintains the overall pulse as indicated with the quarter to quarter
 equivalency, but adds a smooth ritard in the bar before [91], changing the immediate
 quarter into the half.

The Mayor appears at the window and excitedly beckons the Superintendent and Sid, who tip-toe out. Mum doesn't notice.
Der Bürgermeister erscheint am Fenster und winkt aufgeregt dem Polizeichef und Sid, die unbemerkt von Mrs. Herring auf den Zehenspitzen hinausgehen.

The musical score for Act III, page 36, features five staves: Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Percussion (Perc.), Harp, and Mum. The Flute and Oboe parts are marked *pp sempre*. The Percussion part is marked *ppp* and includes a snare drum (S.D.) motif that overlaps with the other instruments. The Harp part is also marked *pp sempre*. The Mum part includes the lyrics: "pains, all, all that re-mains, all, all, all, all, all, - bar! Nur - das hab ich noch, nur - das, - nur - das, - das! -".

Figure 18: Albert Herring's Act III snare drum motive often overlaps with other music in the voice and orchestra.

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For “Nancy’s” aria at [22], Britten allows substantial vocal freedom through the first five bars, only setting tempo when “Nancy” moves with the orchestra. This pattern continues through the rest of the aria.

“Superintendent Budd’s” scathing critique of “Lady Billows” disregards the equivalency marking in the score, slowing substantially from 110 BPM to 76 BPM, in direct contrast to the end of Act II, where the equivalency takes precedence over the metronome marking. In the following section at [32], Britten starts a hair faster than the marked tempo at 65 BPM before settling back to 62 BPM for the 9/8 at [34]. He then pushes to 76 BPM at [35], aiding the increase in dramatic tension with the tempo before settling back to 68 BPM at [36] (here the snare drum counters the orchestra as previously mentioned).

Britten's composition allows for minor amounts of vocal freedom for Lady Billows at [42]. She sings as in an accompanied recitative, moving as she desires while the orchestra maintains a steady tempo whenever it plays.

When the Threnody begins at [51], Britten stretches beat 4 of each bar (there are tenuto marks in the vocal lines, but only accents in the orchestra), especially for the first three bars. This stretch lessens once the solos begin in the sixth bar, but the weight is maintained. Britten adds an *accelerando* for three bars into the *a cappella* section at [57], which, marked “animated,” comes in at a brisk 73 BPM.

The snare drum *ritornello* returns on more time, this time full of anger instead of dread, yet Britten pulls it back again, here to only 100 BPM. Britten comes close to matching his tempo equivalency at [61], only a little on the high side at a dotted quarter of 58 BPM (where 50 would have been a true equivalent).

The only alteration Britten makes to the remainder of the work is to pull the tempo back at [76] to 80 BPM to greater exemplify the trepidation of the children. His final tempo almost matches his tempo from the same music at the beginning of Act II, only 10 BPM slower at 126, still close enough to draw the parallel and fast enough to reach the end.

CONCLUSION

When studying interpretation and performance practice of recent works, the modern performer finds him or herself with a wealth of primary source material available. Such is the case with the works of Benjamin Britten. By combining the composer and conductor (performer) together, two sides of the composer-performer-listener triangle are aligned, creating a direct line between the composer and the listener.

His recording contract with Decca provides ample opportunity for insight into the aural desires of the composer.

An analysis of Britten's recordings of four of his works has shown his own willingness to vary from his printed score. Some of these variations are consistent among the recordings, such as his tendency to place his tempi under his metronome markings (despite his complaints that other conductors and performers do not follow his scores). Other times, such as during the CBC and EDO performances of the *Nocturne*, the recordings bear witness to the idiosyncrasies of live performance.

Certainly, however, there are many elements present in Britten's own recordings that either are not present in or move beyond the written score. Moments such as the added *ritardando* at [91] in Act II of *Albert Herring*, the not so “steady march” setting of Wordsworth's “The Prelude (1805)” in the *Nocturne*, and the use of a written B^b instead of the A in the “Prelude” to the *Serenade* stand out as examples of intentional deviation from the score by the composer. Yet in other places Britten follows his scores with great precision, as in his performance of the final movement of the *Spring Symphony*. These variations show the importance of these recordings in understanding both Britten the conductor and Britten the composer.

The ultimate decisions of interpretation lie with the performer and the performance, and are influenced by myriad factors, including (but not limited to) ensemble size and quality, performance space, soloists, etc. The score of any composer's work, Britten's included, is the premier source and point of departure for creating an informed interpretation for performance. Britten's recordings, however, are an essential source of information for the contemporary performer to aid in understanding the composer's intentions, especially when preparing one of his works for performance.

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APPENDIX I

TEMPO ANALYSIS OF BENJAMIN BRITTEN'S *SPRING SYMPHONY*, OP. 44

Spring Symphony					
Section	Measure	Marked Tempo Text	Note Value	MM	Performance
Part I					
Introduction	1	Lento, senza rigore	Q	50	48
The merry cuckoo	1	Vivace	Q	136	130
Spring, the sweet spring	1	Allegro con slancio	Q	104	96
	13	a tempo	Q	104	95
	25	a tempo	Q	104	92
	38	a tempo	Q	104	93
The driving boy	1	Allegro molto	Q	126	119
The Morning Star	1	Molto moderato ma giocoso	Q.	44	37
Part II					
Welcome, Maids of Honour	1	Allegretto rubato	Q.	60	48
Waters above	1	Molto moderato e tranquillo	Q	68	67
Out on the Lawn I lie in Bed	1	Adagio molto tranquillo	Q	50	51
	35		Q	54	55
	55		Q	50	44
Part III					
When will my May come	1	Allegro impetuoso	Q/Q.	184	172
	11	a tempo		184	166
	18	a tempo		184	166
	68	a tempo esitando		138	86
Fair and fair	1	Allegretto grazioso	E	180	176
Sound the Flute!	1	Allegretto molto mosso	Q	112	120
Part IV					
Finale	1	Moderato alla valse	H.	58	58
	81	Allegro pesante	Q	138	125
		Tempo I		58	58

APPENDIX II

TEMPO ANALYSIS OF BENJAMIN BRITTEN'S *SERENADE FOR TENOR, HORN, AND
STRINGS*, OP. 31

Britten Serenade	Measure	Marked Tempo Text	Note Value	MM	Britten and Brain, 1944	Goosens and Brain, 1953	Britten and Tuckwell, 1963
Pastoral	1	Lento	Q	54	48	55	54
	29		Q	63	60	70	75
	44	molto tranquillo	Q	54	48	55	51
Nocturne	1	Maestoso	Q	88	84	88	84
	10	Cadenza (senza misura) – piu mosso	H	72	90	85	83
	12	Tempo Primo	Q	88	88	88	84
Elegy	1	Andante appassionato	Q/Q.	42	42	39	43
	18	Recitativo (lento)					
	25	Tempo Primo	Q/Q.	42	41	39	43
Dirge	1	Alla marcia grave	Q	60	53	54	58
	1	Presto e leggiero	Q	168	151	160	160
Sonnet	1	Adagio	Q	40	40	40	40

APPENDIX III

TEMPO ANALYSIS OF BENJAMIN BRITTEN'S *NOCTURNE*, OP. 60

Britten Nocturne	Location	Tempo Description	Note Value	MM Notes	Decca, 1959	CBC Video, 1962	ECO Video, 1964
Prometheus Unbound	Beginning	Very soft and slow	.E	48	51	53	52
The Kraken	[3]	Majestic (slightly faster)	E	69	72	71	76
	[7]	As at the start	.E	48 MM not given	50	52	53
The Wanderings of Cain	[8]	Slow Waltz	H	76	68	70	76
Blurt, Master Constable	[13]	As at the start	.E	48 MM not given	50	48	50
The Prelude (1805)	[15]	Steady march	Q	72	79	72	73
	[19]	in time (animated)		No MM given	88	86	85
The Kind Ghosts	3 before [20]	strictly in time	Q	60	64	60	60
	[20]	Slow and regular	Q	40 Q = . Q of preceding	39	41	40
	[24]	As at the start	.E	48 MM not given	43	48	46
Sleep and Poetry	[25]	Quick	Q	120	112	118	122
	1 before [31]	slow (as at the start)	.E	48 MM not given	43	48	46
	[31]	quick (as before)	Q	120 MM not given	118	120	116
	2 before [32]	slow (as before)	.E	48 MM not given	45	47	51
	[32]	quick (as before)	Q	120 MM not given	118	120	118
	[33]	slow (as before)	.E	48 MM not given	49	50	50
Sonnet 43	[35]	Slow	E	72-80	85	82	88
	[39]	As at the start	.E	48 MM not given	43	46	46

APPENDIX IV

TEMPO ANALYSIS OF BENJAMIN BRITTEN'S *ALBERT HERRING*, OP. 39.

Movement	Location	Page	Tempo Description	Note Value	MM	Notes	Performance Tempo	Performance Notes
ACT I								
Scene I	Beginning	1	Quick and Heavy	Q	144		140	
	[10]	21	passionate	Q	144		140	Dramatic rallentando every third bar under the voice "oh"
	[12]	30	Heavy march	Q	52		54	
	[16]	45	Lively (H quicker than Q of preceding)	H	52	No MM given	63	
	[17]	46	Q = Q of preceding	Q			126	
	[20]	51	a little slower	H			62	
	[21]	11 after [20]	53 slowly animating	H			78	
	[21]	56	lively	H				
	5 after [21]	57	quietly	H		Although no tempo is specified, the percussion is sounding like the chimps of a clock, therefore it should approximate 60.	68	
	[22]	59	Quick and agitated	Q			104	
	[33]	74	Quick and agitated	H	82		82	Stretches slightly on Florences interjections
	[37]	97	Very quick	Q	136		132	
	[38]							
	[39]	102	Easily moving	Q	60		52	Interesting use of accent on 8th notes in cello solo - lifts instead of leading into next note
	[41]	108	Very quick and vigorous	Q			140	
	6 after [41]	110	very lively	Q	166		158	
	[46]	120	Slow (Q = H of preceding)	H	83		72	
Interlude	[48]	127	Very moderat but rhythmic	Q	96		109	
	[53]	133	Lively!	Q			112	
Scene II	[60]	140	At the same speed (moderate)	Q	96		112	
	[64]	147	with spirit	Q			120	
	[67]	155	Very much slower	Q			50	
	13 before [68]	158	Fairly quick	Q			100	
	[68]	159	more lively	Q	132		124	
	[69]	161	with a swing	H	52		47	
	[72]	169	With movement	Q	76		72	
	[73]	171	Easily moving	H	60		60	
	[76]	176	a tempo (animated)	H	60		68	Very deliberate in the placement of the string chords. All are right on the marked note of the vocal line except for "punnets" which is only two 16-note
	17 before [77]	179	Slow and quiet	H	48		60	Starts at 45, but gradually increases tempo throughout the section until the bar before [17]. Interesting conundrum since there's no rhythmic movement in the strings.
	[77]	181	Fast	Q			140	
	[78]	184	As before	H	48		58	Immediately jumps tempo 8 bars before [80] to 70 with no score indication.
	[80]	187	Very moderate (Q slower than Q of preceding)	Q	104		91	Pushes tempo to 104 by [81]. Continues to push slightly with building dramatic tension, reaching 112 by [83]
	8 before [84]	193	A little slower	Q	96		96	Heap chords pull back ever so slightly to around 92. Picks back up with the string entrance 7 bars later. This trend continues through this section. Slight stretch on the high Bb in the fourth bar of [88] facilitated by the rest on beat 5 in the harp and perc.
	[89]	207	Moderate but heavy	Q	112		120	Britten adds an accel 2 before [89].
	[95]	217	Very animated	Q	132		132	
	[97]	221	A tempo, fast	Q	132		150	Sprint to the finish

Movement	Location	Page	Tempo Description	Note Value	MM	Notes	Performance Tempo	Performance Notes
ACT II								
Scene I	Beginning	223	Very Quick	Q	144		136	
	[3]	230	Very Quick	Q			130	
	[6]	236	Slow and dignified	Q	56		55	Freedom with the vocal line – but not too much
	[8]	242	Fast	Q	88		74	No rubato at all in the rests under the kids' food comments. The 74 rest in the 5 th bar of 11 is also perfectly in time.
	[19]	257	Majestic	H			74	
	[20]	258	Tempo as before	Q	88		75	
	4 before [21]	259	Tempo as before	Q	136	From [37] in Act I	118	
	[21]	259			112	From [87] in Act I	98	
	5 after [21]	259	Majestic	H			64	
	6 before [22]	260	quicker	Q	130	From [3] in Act II	128	
	2 before [22]	260	Majestic	H			64	
	[22]	261	quietly	H	60	From [39] in Act I	58	
	[23]	263	Majestic (Q = H of preceding)	Q			87	Rit @ end of 8 th bar and 5 before [24]
	[24]	269	Moderate	Q			85	Accelerates the last two bars
	[25]	271	quicker	Q			112	
	[26]	272	Fairly quick	H	42		34	Stretches on the bars where the horn changes notes, then begins to accelerate in the 13 th bar to about 42.
	[27]	274	Majestic as before					Doesn't wait for the children's first "Cool" before the entrance of the others in the overlapping recit. Each character/group does take its own turn coming out of the texture, with the children first 98 (albeit on their second iteration).
	9 before [28]	277	Broadly	H	60		60	Britten allows the vocal line freedom over the sustained chords, setting a firm tempo only in the rhythmically moving sections,
	[31]	289	very animated	H			78	Maintains the new tempo at [32]
	9 after [32]	284	Very quick	Q	184		180	
	[35]	300	Gently moving	Q	56		49	
	[37]	304	Moderate but with spirit	Q	104		95	
	[39]	307	Very moderate	H	50		45	
	[41]	310	Lively	H			70	
	8 before [43]	313	With spirit	Q			50	
	[43]	314	Broadly	H	88		75	Maintains the E=Q to sacrifice the MM

Interlude	[47]				H.	92			78	
	[60]		325 Very quick and gay		E	76				
Scene 2	[63]		340 Slow and quiet		H.				76 Ebbs and flows from 66-80	
		1 before [65]	342 As before		H.				70	
	[66]		344 Slower		H.				47	
		4 after [67]	346 Rather quick		Q.				60 Pushes to 72	
	[71]		347 Slow as before		E				73	
	[72]		350 Quietly as before		E				72	
	[74]		351 as before		H.				67	
	[76]		354 Slowly, beginning quietly		H				48	
	[78]		356 A little more movement		H	76			64	
	[79]		358 Rather quick		Q	108			105	
			359 Slower		Q.				60	
		1 before [80]	302 Slow		Q				60	
	[80]		302 Rather Quick		Q	108			104	
	[82]		365 Slower		Q				88	
		5 after [83]	366 Animated		Q				113	
	[86]		368 Agitated		Q				132	
										Adds a rit into [91] slowing the quarter into the half. He flows smoothly, making the new quarter the same as the old (pre rit)
	8 before [90]		373 Very animated		H.				59	
	1 before [96]		381 Rather quick		Q.				88	
	12 after [96]		382 Slow		H				38	
	[97]		363 Rather quick as before		Q.				70	
	[99]		386 Slow and quiet		E				72	
	[100]		387 a little more movement (slower than at the start)		E				120	

Movement	Location	Page	Tempo Description	Note Value	MM	Notes	Performance Tempo	Performance Notes	
Act III	Beginnin	389	Very fast	H.	112		109		
	[21]	405	as before	H.	112		108		
	[22]	406	Rather slow	H.			55	Very free through first 5 bars. No set tempo until then. Whole aria follows same pattern.	
	[25]	413	Quick and heavy	Q.	112		106		
	[28]	419	Very fast	H.	112		108		
	[29]	420	Slow, as if recitative	Q.			62		
	[30]	421	Very fast	H.	112		110		
	5 after [31]	424	Broadly (Q = H, preceding)	Q.	112		76		
	[32]	425	Less movement	Q.	63		65	Settles into 62 at [34], then pushes to 76 at [35], settling back to 65 68 at [36]	
	[37]	431	At the same speed	Q.	63		65		
	[42]	441	Very animated	Q.			87	Britten allows for minor freedom in the vocal line throughout this section.	
	[45]	445	As at the start	H.	112		102		
	Threnody	[51]	455	Slow	E	56		56	Slightly stretches the fourth beats, especially in the first 3 bars before the solos. Adds an accelerando into the a capella section [57], marked animato, coming in at 73.
		[58]	470	Majestic (Q = Q)	E	56		65	
[59]		474	Much quicker (4 in a bar)	E			144		
[60]		475	Very fast, as at the start	H.	112		100		
[61]		479	Much slower (E = previous H)	Q.			58		
[63]		485	Slow	E			85		
[64]		486	Starting slowly (Q = previous E)	Q			102		
10 before [68]		494	Quick	Q			120		
1 before [69]		497	Fast (H = preceding H/H)	H.	168		150		
[71]		501	Amiable (very moderate)	Q	52		49		
[74]		506	Lively	Q			142	Pulls back to 80 at [76]	
[77]		509	Quick	Q	144	From Act II Entre'act.	126		

APPENDIX V

METHODOLOGY

Tempos for the analyses used in this paper were calculated by the author using a combination of a metronome, stopwatch, and calculator. Tempos were tapped into a metronome, which was then played back with the work to verify accuracy. Some sections were also timed with a stopwatch and the tempo calculated mathematically, again verified with a metronome against the recording. Whenever possible, the calculation was taken over a minimum of 8 beats, although some short sections and those featuring *rubato* necessitated shorter spans for calculation. Smaller subdivisions of the beat were usually measured (i.e. eighth notes when the quarter note held the pulse) to improve accuracy (except for tempos in excess of 120BPM which made that impractical) then adjusted to the given rhythmic value in the metronome marking. The estimated margin of error for these calculations is ~3%.

APPENDIX VI

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March 31, 2014

Walter Sterneman
Arizona State University
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