

Art Songs of Charles Ives  
Accessible to Beginning Singers

By

Kathleen Ruhleder

A Research Paper Presented in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Musical Arts

Approved March 2012 by the  
Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Carole Fitzpatrick, Chair  
Ellon Carpenter  
David Schildkret  
Dale Dreyfoos  
Judy May

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

May 2012

## ABSTRACT

The performance of Charles Ives's art songs can be challenging to even the most experienced singers, but to beginning singers, they may be even more so, due to such twentieth-century aspects as polytonality, polyrhythm, tone clusters, aleatoric elements, and quarter tones. However, Ives used previously existing material, often familiar hymn tunes, as the foundation for many of his art songs. If beginning students first are exposed to this borrowed material, such as a simple hymn tune, which should be well within even the most experienced singer's comfort range, they can then learn this tune first, as a more simplistic reference point, and then focus on how Ives altered the tunes, rather than having to learn what seems like an entirely new melody. In this way, Ives's art songs can become more accessible to less-experienced singers.

This paper outlines a method for researching and learning the borrowed materials in Ives's songs that utilize them, and reviews materials already commonly used by voice teachers to help beginning students learn their music. By combining this method, which focuses on the borrowed materials, with standard practices teachers can then help their beginning students more easily learn and perform Ives's art songs. Four songs, from the set "Four Hymn Tune Settings" by Charles Ives are used to illustrate this method.

This paper is dedicated to my beautiful children, Joey and Katja.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many thanks go out to my advisor, voice teacher and friend, Carole FitzPatrick. Thanks also to my committee members, Dale Dreyfoos, David Schildkret, Judy May and Ellon Carpenter. This paper would never have been completed without the assistance of Doug Morrow and the support of my colleagues at Colorado Mesa University. Thanks also to those who helped in less direct ways: Tina Lockhart, Heidi Alexander, Sandy Lawes, Carol Jennings, Ellen Landry, and the numerous other friends and colleagues who supported me throughout the process of writing this paper.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	Page
1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
George Ives.....	5
Horatio Parker/European Influences.....	7
Religious Background/Hymns.....	8
2 IVES AND BORROWING.....	10
Borrowing Techniques (as described by Burkholder).....	10
Four Hymn Tune Settings.....	14
Borrowing Techniques Represented.....	14
Levels of Difficulty.....	15
3 LEARNING IVES'S SONGS.....	16
General Ideas About Learning Songs for the Beginner.....	16
4 NEW METHOD OF APPROACH.....	21
Watchman!.....	21
At the River.....	29
His Exaltation.....	40
Camp-Meeting.....	46

CHAPTER

5 COMBINING NEW IDEAS WITH STANDARD

PRACTICES.....53

Watchman!..... 53

At the River..... 55

His Exaltation.....57

The Camp-Meeting.....59

6 CONCLUSION.....61

REFERENCES ..... 63

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH..... 65

## CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

Composer Charles Ives has been credited by many writers to have created a new style of American music. His compositional style foreshadowed many of the major musical innovations of the 20<sup>th</sup>-Century, including polytonality, polyrhythm, tone clusters, aleatoric elements and quarter tones. Even though this foreshadowing of innovations makes Ives a very important composer with whom singers should be familiar, singers often avoid learning and performing his art songs because of the complexity of the songs. Philip Newman writes of Ives's music:

In many of these works, European traditions in harmony, rhythm, texture, and form, theretofore generally held as basic ingredients by composers in this country, were either totally rejected by Ives or transmuted into something new. Even his approach to the use of musical quotations was highly personal.<sup>1</sup>

Many of Ives's songs can be difficult to learn musically, and even more difficult to understand emotionally, intellectually and dramatically due to the 20<sup>th</sup>-Century

---

<sup>1</sup> Philip Edward Newman, "The Songs of Charles Ives, vol. 1 (1874-1954)" (PhD Diss., The University of Iowa, 1967), 1.

musical innovations which were such a unique part of his style. While the difficulty of much of Ives's music can be dissuasive for vocal performers, especially beginners, Ives's extensive use of borrowed materials can aid singers in making Ives's art songs more accessible. By studying the music of the source materials quoted in Ives's music, performers can facilitate the learning process and create a more enjoyable performance rather than treating everything as if it were brand new music to learn.

If voice teachers take this approach, whereby they encourage students – especially inexperienced ones – to learn the source materials found in Ives's songs before tackling the songs themselves, singers will find Ives's songs more accessible. While the idea of separating elements and tackling them individually during the process of learning songs is nothing new to most voice teachers, with Ives's songs the notion of addressing the borrowed materials as a completely separate element does depart from traditional practice and can make the difference to beginners between their finding them accessible or not.

One way in which Ives experimented was by using borrowed materials and trying to bring something new to them musically and dramatically. Ron Averil, in discussing Ives's view of the materials he borrowed, says "He viewed them as vital, dynamic entities which should be continuously reused and



developed.”<sup>2</sup> Ives borrowed from patriotic songs, popular songs, college songs, popular instrumental tunes, and classical music, but he most frequently used hymn tunes in both his instrumental and vocal music. It is hard to guess the exact source for many of the hymn tunes Ives borrowed. When he died Ives had an extensive collection of hymnals. Clayton Henderson, in *The Charles Ives Tunebook*<sup>3</sup> suggests that most of the tunes were taken from hymnals Ives used in his church positions between 1889 and 1902.

At the time Charles Ives was using hymn tunes extensively in his compositions, these tunes would have been very familiar to most of the people hearing them quoted in Ives’s music, making use of the tunes an effective tool in evoking emotions associated with the original hymn. In the Preface to *The Charles Ives Tunebook*, Henderson gives a good example of how the shared church-going Christian culture of early 20<sup>th</sup> Century America and the public’s familiarity with many hymns allowed people to express their emotions publicly. Henderson describes an experience Ives had on May 7, 1915, after hearing the news of the sinking of the *Lusitania*. While waiting with other

---

<sup>2</sup> Ron Averil, “The Use of Quotation in Twentieth-Century Works by Ron Averil, Charles Dodge and Charles Ives” (DMA diss., University of Washington, 1995), 92.

2

<sup>3</sup> Clayton Henderson, *The Charles Ives Tunebook* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2008), 14.

commuters for the evening trains at the Hanover Square Station in New York City, Ives heard a hurdy-gurdy player playing the hymn tune “In the Sweet Bye and Bye.” Henderson quotes Ives’s description of how people in the crowd began singing along, not “in fun, but as a natural outlet for what their feelings had been going through all day long.”<sup>4</sup> As people boarded one of the trains and the hymn tune faded away, “almost nobody talked – the people acted as though they might be coming out of a church service. In going uptown, occasionally little groups would start singing or humming the tune.”<sup>5</sup>

Since Ives’s contemporaries would have more easily recognized the materials he borrowed than singers of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Ives would have expected most of his musical references to bring to mind the original selections to the performers and listeners. In order for 21<sup>st</sup> Century singers to achieve the same result when they perform the songs as Ives intended, singers must become as familiar with the borrowed tunes as the people were when Ives selected those tunes. They must research the sources of the hymns, and understand the context in which the hymns were written and used by the congregations of the time.

---

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in John Kirpatrick, ed. *Charles E. Ives: Memos*. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1972: 92-92), quoted in Clayton Henderson, *The Charles Ives Tunebook*, (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2008), xi.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

When source material contained verses and refrains, Ives usually used the refrains of the songs, rather than the less-familiar verses, and he was more likely to alter the rhythms of the borrowed materials than the melodies. When mere fragments of melodies are used, it can be difficult to identify the borrowed tune for certain, since many similar musical motives are more clearly defined by their rhythms, and Ives frequently changed the rhythms of the materials he borrowed. Text was often borrowed as well, but sometimes slightly altered. Repeats of material were often added by Ives. Ives often combined materials borrowed from several different sources in one song, frequently without the connection between borrowed selections being immediately evident to the listener. Ives sometimes used borrowed music as the basis for an entire song. At other times melodies appear in passing, with a different melody comprising the main melodic material of the song.

The person who may have most heavily influenced Charles Ives's compositional style and tendency to borrow was his father, George Ives.

### **George Ives**

George Ives (1845-1894) was a Civil War bandleader, teacher, musical arranger and inventor of musical instruments. He was fascinated by and experimented with polytonality and polyrhythms. He taught Charles how to play

several instruments, and welcomed Charles's participation in band rehearsals and in providing music for camp meetings, or outdoor religious revivals. George

5

Ives's practice of experimenting by combining consonant sounds with each other to create dissonance is evident throughout his son's music.

An interesting example of George Ives's experimentation in polytonality occurred when he was a bandleader in Danbury, CT, and he had different sections of his band stationed in different sections of the town square. Ives had each section play a different song in a different key, while the audience heard the music from the middle of the square. George Ives also experimented with unusual alternate tunings of his piano.

The piano also figured in an interesting way in Charles's early practice when he was the drummer for his father's band. Charles would practice his drum parts on the piano in order to spare the neighbors the experience of hearing hours of drumming. Loud, large drums would be represented by loud bangs in the lower register of the piano – possibly a precursor to many of the thick, dissonant piano chords heard in many of his songs. Charles Ives said of his father:

Father had a gift for playing. He would take a familiar piece and play it to make it mean more than something just usual. The things he played then

were mostly the things that most bands play, but he put something in them that most band leaders did not.<sup>6</sup>

George Ives influenced his son to transform borrowed materials into something new and fresh, making the musical elements “mean more than something just usual.” Just as his father did, Charles Ives made hundreds of tunes “mean more than something just usual” by applying his unique musical style to pre-existing materials.

Understanding the influence George Ives had on his son can help the singer to truly appreciate Ives’s frequent bitonality and polyrhythms. Sounds that may be perceived by an inexperienced musician as dissonant to the point of unpleasantness can be explained by the fact that Charles Ives was used to them, since he had been exposed to them throughout childhood. By learning the source materials with which Ives experimented, singers can clearly see the difference between a traditional interpretation of the materials and Ives’s interpretation.

### **Horatio Parker/European Influences**

The dissonant sounds enjoyed in the Ives household were not welcomed by Charles Ives’s composition teacher at Yale, Horatio Parker (1863-1919), who was dismissive of Ives’s experimental music. Parker treated many of Ives’s

---

<sup>6</sup> Quoted in Henry and Sidney Cowell, *Charles Ives and His Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1955), 22.

pieces as if they were meant to be jokes. Still, Parker's influence on Ives was substantial. Ives was exposed to the music of all the great composers succeeding in Europe at the time, and his mastering of the styles of German Lieder and

7

French mélodies under Parker's tutelage contributed to the palate of musical colors available to Ives as he created his own unique style. Ives's Lieder and melodies, which are published in *114 Songs*, are quite lovely, and demonstrate how well Ives understood all styles of the genre of art song.

### **Religious Background/Hymns**

George Ives and previous generations of the Ives family also influenced Charles Ives's views on religion and philosophy. These views would play a role in Charles Ives's selection of so many hymn tunes as a basis for his compositions. It is not surprising that Ives most frequently used hymn tunes when he borrowed pre-existing materials. The Ives family studied and discussed religion, philosophy and social justice at home as he was growing up, and Ives believed that there was an "innate goodness of man."<sup>7</sup> Burkholder notes in his book *Charles Ives: the Ideas Behind the Music*:

---

<sup>7</sup> Peter J. Burkholder, *Charles Ives: the Ideas Behind the Music* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), 33.

The Ives family had a long tradition of taking matters of religion and related questions of philosophy, ethics, and social justice very seriously, and most of their reading and their books had a religious focus.<sup>8</sup>

Charles Ives secured his first position as a professional organist at the age of 14, at the First Baptist Church in Danbury in 1888, and was a church musician until 1902. Ives was familiar with all the hymns of his day, and was also familiar with altering them as he played in services, just as organists today vary accompaniments, textures, organ stops and other elements to bring out the meaning of different stanzas of hymns as the congregation sings.

---

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

## CHAPTER 2

## IVES AND BORROWING

**Borrowing Techniques (as described by Burkholder)**

Peter J. Burkholder lists and briefly describes Ives's procedures for using existing music, pictured here in Table One:

TABLE ONE: Peter J. Burkholder's list of borrowing techniques.<sup>9</sup>

1. *Modeling* a work or section on an existing piece, assuming its structure, incorporating part of its melodic material, imitating its form or procedure, or using it as a model in some other way (*Holiday Quickstep; Slow March; the Polonaise; and others, ca. 1887-88*)
2. *Variations* on a given tune (*Fantasia on "Jerusalem the Golden," ca. 1888-89*)

---

<sup>9</sup> Peter J. Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), 3-4.



3. *Paraphrasing* an existing tune to form a new melody, theme or motive (*Fantasia on "Jerusalem the Golden"*, variation 2)
4. *Setting* an existing tune with a new accompaniment (*March No. 1*, ca. 1890-92)
5. *Cantus firmus*, presenting a given tune in long notes against a more quickly moving texture (*March No. 1*, ca. 1890-92)
6. *Medley*, stating two or more existing tunes relatively complete, one after another in a single movement (*March No. 1*)
7. *Quodlibet*, combining two or more existing tunes or fragments in counterpoint or in quick succession, most often as a joke or technical tour de force (sketch, ca. 1892)
8. *Stylistic allusion*, alluding not to a specific work but to a general style or type of music (*Memories*, 1897; *Psalm 67*, ca. 1898)
9. *Transcribing* a work for a new medium (arrangement for string quartet of the second movement of Beethoven's Piano Sonata in F minor, Op. 2, No. 1, ca. 1898)
10. *Programmatic quotation*, fulfilling an extramusical program or illustrating part of a text (*Yale-Princeton Football Game*, ca. 1899)

11. *Cumulative setting*, a complex form in which the theme, either a borrowed tune or a melody paraphrased from one or more existing tunes, is presented complete only near the end of a movement, preceded by development of motives from the theme, fragmentary or altered

11

presentation of the theme, and exposition of important countermelodies  
(*Fugue in Four Keys on "The Shining Shore,"* ca. 1902)

12. *Collage*, in which a swirl of quoted and paraphrased tunes is added to a musical structure based on modeling, paraphrase, cumulative setting, or a narrative program (*Overture and March "1776,"* ca. 1903-8; *Country Band March*, ca. 1905-14)

13. *Patchwork*, in which fragments of two or more tunes are stitched together, sometimes elided through paraphrase and sometimes linked by Ives's interpolations (*Largo cantabile (Hymn)*, ca. 1904-1914)

14. *Extended paraphrase*, in which the melody for an entire work or section is paraphrased from an existing tune (*The Housatonic at Stockbridge*, ca. 1908-19)

While it is extremely important for advanced performers and teachers to clearly understand Burkholder's thorough list of procedures, it would be better to simplify the list when working with a beginning student. To dilute Burkholder's list to the most basic level is justified if the goal is to make Ives's songs less intimidating to younger, less experienced students.

12

My suggested simplified list follows; the numbers following the items on the list refer to Burkholder's list, and which of his procedures I include in each simplified explanation:

1. Modeling a piece or a melody on existing materials ( 1, 3, 14)
2. Variations on an existing tune (2, 11)
3. Making a new arrangement of a tune with a new accompaniment or new instrumentation (4, 9)
4. Changing the rhythm (5)
5. Combining tunes (6, 7)
6. Borrowing from another style (8)
7. Using only a portion of a tune or portions of several tunes to create a certain effect (10, 12, 13)

This simplification is not meant to imply that one can skim over the details of Ives's songs, but is meant instead to explain these procedures in a way that is easily comprehensible to a beginning musician, who may feel intimidated by Burkholder's very detailed description. A simpler, more manageable list enables the beginner to tackle Ives's songs with confidence. A student can return to songs previously learned when the student is more skilled, and use the more detailed list

13

to re-visit the materials in the songs in order to find a deeper understanding of the material.

### **Four Hymn Tune Settings**

One group of songs that illustrates Ives's use of extensive borrowing of hymn tunes are the Four Hymn Tune Settings: "Watchman!," "At the River", "His Exaltation" and "The Camp-Meeting". As the title of the group suggests, each song in the set is Ives's version of a well-known hymn. Not only are the tunes borrowed from hymns, but also the arrangements are all borrowed from Ives's previous instrumental settings of the hymns, in Symphony No. 3 and Violin Sonata No. 4.

### **Borrowing Techniques Represented**

Five of the borrowing techniques in my simplified list of Burkholder's ideas are represented in the Four Hymn Tune Settings. Modeling a piece or melody on existing materials is demonstrated in the vocal parts and piano accompaniments of all four songs. Variations on an existing tune are clearly seen in each song as well. Each song is a good example of making a new arrangement of a tune with a new accompaniment or new instrumentation, and rhythms are often changed throughout the set of songs. All four songs are borrowed from another

14

style: hymn singing, as opposed to the art song setting in which Ives presents them.

### **Levels of Difficulty**

The four hymn tune settings are excellent examples of not only different ways in which Ives used borrowed materials, but also the different levels of difficulty one can find in his songs. This variation in challenge levels can make this group of songs an excellent choice for the instructor wanting to demonstrate to a student how to use borrowed materials to assist them in learning Ives's songs by starting with a very accessible song and moving on to the more challenging songs as the student's skill level improves over time. "At the River" is the simplest setting, with Ives making very few changes in the original hymn

tune. “His Exaltation” also has few changes to the voice part, while “Watchman!” and “Camp-Meeting” are more significantly altered, and are much more difficult to analyze, learn and interpret.

15

## CHAPTER 3

### LEARNING IVES'S SONGS

#### **General Ideas About Learning Songs for the Beginner**

As previously mentioned, most teachers are very familiar with the method of separating elements of a song from one another in order to facilitate fast and accurate learning by their students. It is not unusual for a teacher to ask a student to monologue the text of a song, speak the text in rhythm, sing the melody all on one vowel, or to otherwise isolate separate aspects of the song. Teachers often stress researching the composer or poet, learning about the time period in which a song was written, or exploring deeper meaning to the text of a song.

Clifton Ware, in a section in Adventures in Singing devoted to component study, presents the student with the following list of components listed in Table Two:

16

TABLE TWO: Clifton Ware's list of elements of component study:<sup>10</sup>

1. Text
2. Rhythm, meter and tempo
3. Melody
4. Form
5. Voice
6. Harmony

---

<sup>10</sup> Clifton Ware, *Adventures in Singing, fourth edition* (New York: McGraw Hill, 2008), 109.

17

7. Dynamics, phrasing, musical articulation

While this fairly simple list is designed to be accessible to the beginning singer, it is a good starting point for any singer wanting to be more thorough in preparing repertoire. After a brief discussion of how to practice each of these elements separately, Ware then demonstrates how to bring all the elements together to culminate in a meaningful performance.

Carol Kimball, in Song: A Guide to Art Song Style and Literature, not only isolates certain elements of songs, but also explains how these “components of style” can “help define the way a composer creates the songs’ imagery.”<sup>11</sup> The first element Kimball lists and discusses is melody, which is the element most frequently borrowed by Ives. Her list, shown in Table Three, is more detailed and comprehensive than Ware’s (being written with the more advanced student in mind), with more detailed sub-sections. The bulk of Chapter Five will be dedicated to using Kimball’s list to analyze several of Ives’s songs.

TABLE THREE: Carol Kimball’s elements of style:<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Carol Kimball, *Song: A Guide to Art Song Style and Literature* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2005), 3.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.



1. Melody: melodic contour/phrase shape, phrase length, range and tessitura, chromaticism, motives, vocal articulation (recitative, lyric recitative, melismas, lyric melodies), text painting
2. Harmony: harmonic texture, tonality (diatonic, chromatic, modal harmony, twelve-tone), tonal vs. atonal, dissonance vs. consonance, recurring harmonies, key schemes/modulations/cadences, contrasts of major/minor, text illustration through harmonic means
3. Rhythm: tempo, metric organization (simple meters, compound meters, irregular meters, nonmetric/improvisatory meters), rhythmic patterns, rhythms that unify, ostinato, rhythms that reinforce the text (syncopation and suspension, dotted rhythms, hemiola, polyrhythms/cross-rhythms with the voice
4. Accompaniment: predominant accompaniment figures, prominent sections without the voice (prelude, interlude, postlude), shared material with the voice, use of motives, text illustration in piano patterns – words, mood and atmosphere, accompaniment texture (linear texture, contrapuntal texture), distinctive dramatic effects
5. Poets/Texts: choice of texts, prose settings, treatment of prosody, response to the poem

6. Secondary Factors of Style: unifying elements in a song or song cycle, form (strophic form, modified strophic, through-composed, binary, ternary), other forms (theme and variations, rondo form, palindrome form), influences on the composer
7. Overlap of styles

When songs draw heavily on borrowed materials as many of Ives's songs do, another step in the process of isolating elements must be learning the original versions of the borrowed elements. A student who not only learns the borrowed

19

materials but also analyzes how Ives changed those materials for his songs will gain a much deeper understanding of the songs. This means learning a song – rhythms, melody and words, diction, musicianship, breathing, applying vocal technique and other elements – plus doing a detailed comparison of the borrowed source materials in Ives's songs. Understanding which elements of the borrowed materials Ives chose to alter can offer a great deal of insight as to which portions of the original music or text he wanted to highlight in his songs. This process of comparison may not be exactly the same for each song analyzed; the student must determine early on which elements are most similar and most different between the source and the song, to know where to focus his efforts. The four hymn tune

settings can be used to demonstrate different ways to approach Ives's songs to get to know them well.

20

## CHAPTER FOUR

### NEW METHOD OF APPROACH

This chapter will briefly discuss each of the four hymns being used, and will compare Ives's art songs to the original hymn tunes upon which they are based. Chapter Five will take a second look at the songs using Kimball's list of "components of style" to analyze the songs, incorporating the information gained in Chapter Four.

#### **"Watchman!"**

The first song in the set, "Watchman!," is based on the hymn "Watchman", by Lowell Mason. The original hymn version of "Watchman" was written in

1896. The version printed in Henderson's *Charles Ives Tunebook*, which Henderson believes is likely the version upon which Ives based his art song, follows:

## WATCHMAN

("Watchman, tell us of the night")

SOURCE: *The New Hymnal*, no. 106

John Bowring, 1825

LOWELL MASON, 1830



Watch - man, tell us of the night, What its signs of  
prom - ise are. Trav - 'ler, o'er yon moun - tain's height,  
See that glo - ry - beam - ing star. Watch - man, does its  
beau - teous ray Aught of joy or hope fore-tell?  
Trav - 'ler, yes; it brings the day, Prom-ised day of Is - ra - el.

### EXAMPLE 1: "Watchman" by Lowell Mason<sup>13</sup>

When we compare the original hymn with the art song, the first thing that becomes evident is that the voice and piano parts are not written in the same meter. The piano plays in  $\frac{3}{4}$ , while the voice sings in  $\frac{6}{8}$  creating a hemiola.

---

<sup>13</sup> Henderson, 82

This rhythmic disparity gives the song the feeling of uncertain expectation as the singer asks the watchman to “tell us of the night, what its signs of promise are”. There is a sense of hesitant excitement at not knowing what the response will be. The emphasis Ives places on the text references to the traveler also fits with the rhythmic irregularities, implying that one’s travels to the “promised day of Israel” may not be smooth and easy, but worth the reward at the end of a difficult journey. The one point at which the voice and piano join in the same rhythmic feel is at the end of the song, when the traveler has arrived and can see the “beauteous ray” of the “promised day of Israel”. Once the parts have arrived together, the piano finishes the song with a short postlude in the voice’s old meter of 6/8. Perhaps Ives intended this to convey the beginning of a new journey?

When advising a student singer on how to approach this song, the teacher must address Ives’s treatment of the rhythms. Since many beginning singers are not musically skilled enough to watch and understand the rhythms in the piano while executing the rhythms in the vocal line, they will probably need to examine the accompaniment separately. Counting while clapping the rhythms of the highest notes of the right hand of the piano part can be a good way for the student to experience the feel of the  $\frac{3}{4}$  meter they will be hearing beneath their vocal line in 6/8. The reason that I suggest the highest notes of the right hand of

the piano part is that this is the musical line that a beginning singer is most likely to be able to hear clearly and focus upon once she has her own line securely learned.

Once the singer has experienced the feel of the  $\frac{3}{4}$  in the accompaniment, she may want to master speaking her own rhythms rather than combining singing notes and rhythms together. This is an important step as Ives includes some unexpected, unusual rhythms, which differ from the original hymn tune, beginning in measure seven with some syncopation. It is especially important for the singer to understand the piano part, which can be a useful tool for the singer trying to work out the rhythm.

(Lowell Mason)

Watch - man, tell us

*mp*

of the night, what its signs of prom-ise\_ are: Traveller, o'er yon

*mp*

EXAMPLE 2: mm. 3-9 of “Watchman!” by Charles Ives<sup>14</sup>

The rhythms in measure 15 through 22 are not what one might expect. Ives uses two measures consisting of just an eighth rest. A breath mark or a rest within a measure would be more typical. The singer will need to be especially secure with measures 15 and 22, both containing only an eighth rest, so as to be able to lead the pianist at these points in the song.

<sup>14</sup> Charles Ives, *114 Songs* (New York: Associated Music Publishers; New York: PeerInternational Corporation; Bryn Mawr, PA: Theodore Presser Company, 1922), 93.



The switch of the vocal line to  $\frac{3}{4}$  in measure 23 should be manageable to the singer who has spent the time exploring the piano part earlier in the song, as the vocal line now merely switches to match the piano, rather than going to an unfamiliar meter. If the meter feels familiar to the singer, the challenging syncopated rhythms in measures 24 and 25 may feel less intimidating than they might have had the singer not familiarized herself with the feel of the  $\frac{3}{4}$  earlier in the process.

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Watchman!" by Charles Ives. It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is two sharps (D major or F# minor), and the time signature is 3/4.

**System 1:** The vocal line begins with the lyrics "joy or hope? Travel - ler, Yes! Travel - ler Yes! Traveller yes; it". Performance markings include *piu ven.* (more vivace), *(ten.)* (tenor), and *piu moto* (more motion). The piano part features a complex texture with chords and moving lines, marked with *p* (piano), *l.h.* (left hand), and *(ten.)* (tenor).

**System 2:** The vocal line continues with "brings the day, Prom-ised day of Is - ra - el. Dost thou see its beau-teous". The tempo marking changes to *piu animato* (more animated). The piano part continues with dense harmonic support.

**System 3:** The vocal line concludes with "ray? Travel - ler, See!". Performance markings include *piu rit.* (more ritardando), *rall. e dim.* (rallentando e diminuendo), and *ppp* (pianississimo). The piano part features a triplet of eighth notes and ends with a final chord.

EXAMPLE 3: mm.14-28 of "Watchman!" by Charles Ives<sup>15</sup>

By focusing on only one musical element of her own line (the rhythm), the singer is then freer to listen to the piano part when the two are put together; putting the notes to the vocal part should wait until after the rhythms start to feel comfortable and natural. When the singer can enjoy the rhythmic disparity and

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 94.

can start to execute appropriate word stress within the text, then she can start putting the notes into the equation. This final step should be easy if the singer has previously learned the hymn tune, “Watchman”, as most of the tune is quoted note-for-note by Ives in his setting. If the rhythms are being executed comfortably and accurately, the focus can then shift to the areas where the melody takes a different direction than the original hymn. The first change occurs in measure seven, where there is a different rhythm than the original tune. A beginning singer trying to master both elements changing at once might find it takes longer to master both changes simultaneously than it would to learn separately the rhythmic and melodic differences.

There is new melodic material (based upon the original hymn tune) from measure 16-18, and again from measure 20 to the end of the vocal line. If the singer is secure rhythmically in these sections, learning a new melodic line will be considerably easier than learning everything all at once. Starting by understanding the rhythmic elements of “Watchman!” is a good method to accurately and quickly learning the song. “Watchman!” is an excellent example of how rhythmic disparity can create an entirely new piece out of a simple, familiar melody.

## **At the River**

There are rhythmic alterations in all four of the hymn tune settings. The second song in the set, “At the River”, has interesting rhythmic elements as well, which can be dealt with systematically like the ones in “Watchman!” to facilitate easy learning. “At the River” can also be used as an example of how something as simple as Ives’s choice to repeat or alter some of the text also can be effective in challenging the listener to find something new in this familiar tune.

The hymn tune “Beautiful River”, written by preacher, editor, composer and professor of literature Robert Lowry (1826-1899), was published in 1864 in *The Baptist Praise Book*. Lowry wrote a number of popular hymns, but he was not particularly fond of “Shall We Gather at the River?” He thought it not one of his best efforts, but was pleased to think that through the hymn’s popularity people were being uplifted in their faith.

**THE BEAUTIFUL RIVER**  
 ("Shall we gather at the river")

SOURCE: *The Baptist Praise Book*, no. 1045

Robert Lowry

ROBERT LOWRY, 1864

Shall we gath-er at the riv - er, Where bright an - gel feet have  
 trod;— With its crys - tal tide for - ev - er Flow-ing  
 Refrain  
 by the\_\_ throne of\_\_ God? Yes, we'll gath - er at the  
 riv - er, The beau - ti - ful, the beau - ti - ful\_\_ riv - er;  
 Ga - ther with the saints\_\_\_ at the riv - er  
 That flows by the throne of\_\_\_ God.

EXAMPLE 4: "The Beautiful River" by Robert Lowry<sup>16</sup>

To briefly put the song into a historical context, one should remember that in 1864, America had been embroiled in a horrific civil war for three long years. Many people in the United States had thought that the war would be over

---

<sup>16</sup> Henderson, 20-21

in a matter of weeks or months. Both sides of the conflict were ill-equipped to deal with years of the country being torn apart by the war. The thought of a “beautiful river” may have provided a welcome image of calm amidst the horrors of Americans killing Americans across the nation.

Ives’s vocal arrangement of “The Beautiful River” is based upon a previous arrangement found in his Violin Sonata No. 4, in the third and final movement. The subtitle for the sonata is *Children’s Day at the Camp Meeting*, and Ives’s own notes on the final movement of the sonata set the stage: “as the boys get marching again some of the old men would join in and march as fast (sometimes) as the boys and sing what they felt, regardless – and thanks to Robert Lowry – ‘Gather at the River.’”<sup>17</sup> The knowledge that this hymn tune setting is supposed to depict “children’s day”, the day of special services devoted to children at an outdoor revival meeting, can explain some of the dissonance and rhythmic irregularities Ives used. There would have been a great deal of noise and activity at such a meeting, with sounds from different areas of the meeting blending together to create the same dissonance and rhythmic interplay created by Ives in his song.

---

<sup>17</sup> Charles Ives, *Notes on Fourth Violin Sonata* (New York: Associated Music Publishers, Inc. 1942), 1.

A comparison of the setting of “The Beautiful River” in the violin sonata with the setting in “At the River” shows only slight differences between the violin and voice parts. The piano parts are also almost identical. By comparing the sonata to the art song and finding the settings so similar, we can compare the art song to the original hymn without having to analyze an additional incarnation of the hymn tune in a previous version.

There are few melodic differences between the original hymn and the art song setting. The first noticeable difference is that the original hymn tune was written in 4/4, with dotted eighth/sixteenth note rhythms throughout. Ives preferred to use 12/8 and a quarter/eighth note pattern.

The change in meters should be discussed with the student learning the song. How do the meters feel different? Does the singer notice that the short notes in each pattern feel more relaxed and less jaunty in 12/8? Having a beginning singer describe their impression of the different meters can be an important step in getting her to think more deeply about the music.

Often young, inexperienced singers do not trust that they can comprehend quite a bit about the music just by being willing to share their own impressions and feelings about what they are hearing and singing. This song can be a starting

point for young singers to feel more confident discussing what they are thinking and feeling about the music they are learning.

In measure 11 of the song, Ives suddenly takes some liberties, making the melody rise rather than following the original tune. At the same time that Ives changes the melody, he also changes the rhythms to move the word stress to emphasize the word “flowing” and delaying resolution on the word “God”.

EXAMPLE 5: mm. 9-15 of “At the River” by Charles Ives<sup>18</sup>

A good way for the singer to work on this tricky spot would be for her to go back and forth between the original hymn tune and these two measures of the art song. This should make the shift of text emphasis very clear, and again the

---

<sup>18</sup> Ives, *114 Songs*, 95-96.



teacher should encourage the singer to ask why Ives would shift the word stress. The rhythms in these two measures would also be easier to comprehend if they were looked at as alterations to an existing simple rhythm rather than a complicated syncopated rhythm coming out of nowhere.

Ives inserts words from another part of the hymn, “gather at the river” in measure 18, with an unusual rhythmic setting which emphasizes the word “the.” This is the first occurrence of a duple rhythm in the melody, followed by a fermata. One may speculate that Ives trying to make the text imply a question which is then answered emphatically in measure 14 by “Yes, we’ll gather at the river”.

This would be a good point in the song to employ the technique used in “Watchman!” where the singer learns the rhythms separately from the melody, and combines the text spoken in rhythm with the piano part before putting all the elements together. In this way, the singer can see how the duple feel is strongly reinforced by the piano in measure 13, and how the single low Ab on beat one of measure 14 allows the singer’s “yes” to emphatically stand alone in answer to the question posed in the previous measure. Once the rhythms are secure, the singer can change her focus to pitch accuracy.

In measure 18, Ives changes the text, leaving out the reference to gathering with the saints found in the original hymn. In measure 20, Ives again changes the shape of the melody and adds some accidentals. At this point, a comparison between measure 11-12 and 20-21 is more valuable than comparison to the original melody, as they are the same except for the delay of the arrival on Eb in measure 12.



EXAMPLE 6: mm. 20-22 of “At the River” by Charles Ives<sup>19</sup>

Ives finishes the piece by adding music and text, asking “Shall we gather? Shall we gather at the river?” in measure 23. The rhythms for this last line are syncopated, making the singer sound hesitant when asking the question. Since these final lines are added by Ives, there is no material with which the singer can compare the music in the art song. The syncopation here can be very difficult to work out, but here the piano accompaniment can be

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 96.

helpful. The piano plays on almost every beat in this phrase, creating a steady rhythmic anchor to which the singer can cling while trying to line up the vocal line with the piano part.

The image shows a musical score for the song "At the River" by Charles Ives. It consists of two staves. The top staff is the vocal line, written in treble clef, with the lyrics "Shall we gath-er? shall we gath-er at the ri-ver?". The bottom staff is the piano accompaniment, written in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The piano part features a steady, rhythmic accompaniment. The dynamics are marked as *mp più rit.* (mezzo-piano, more ritardando) and *a tempo* (at the original tempo). There is a fermata over the final notes of the piano part.

EXAMPLE 7: mm. 23-25 of “At the River” by Charles Ives<sup>20</sup>

This added ending is one of the most interesting spots in the song to discuss with the student learning the song. Why is this added? Why is it written in the way Ives wrote it? Carol Kimball describes the added music as having “dislocated rhythm in the vocal line” and as adding “a hesitant cadence that seems loathe to accept the invitation implicit in the text”.<sup>[14]</sup> She notes, “This technique creates an unfinished quality, a suspension of mental flow for listeners that requires them to finish the phrase or ‘create’ an ending”<sup>21</sup>, one of the most significant changes to the borrowed hymn tune.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Carol Kimball, *Song: A Guide to Art Song Style and Literature* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2005), 260.

Timothy A. Johnson, in his article “Chromatic Quotations of Diatonic Tunes in Songs of Charles Ives”<sup>22</sup>, gives an excellent theoretical analysis of the differences between the hymn tune and the art song, which might be interesting further reading for the teacher and student working on the song.

All the similarities between the original tune and the art song can prove helpful to the singer learning the song. Putting the melody together with the accompaniment may be the more difficult step in the process of preparing the song, since the piano part is not very helpful in guiding the singer to the right notes. The accompaniment is consistent in its rhythmic movement, with something being played on almost every beat of the piece, but the strongest rhythmic emphasis in the piano does not always correspond with the strongest rhythmic moves in the voice, nor does the piano always support emphasis of natural word stress. This dearth of support from the piano part can inform the singer to spend more time securing the notes and rhythms of the melody than they normally might before combining her part with the piano part.

Once the work of identifying similarities and differences between “Beautiful River” and “At the River” has been completed, the singer can use what she learned to answer the most important question which arises when studying a

---

<sup>22</sup> Timothy A. Johnson, “Chromatic Quotations of Diatonic Tunes in Songs of Charles Ives” *Music Theory Spectrum* 18 no.2 (1996): 246.

vocal work: What does the song mean? How can the information we learned in researching and analyzing a song make the performance of the piece more meaningful? We can try to figure out what Ives intended the song to mean by answering a series of questions.

How can knowing the background of the hymn help the singer? Knowing that “Beautiful River” was written during the Civil War may add to the intensity of the performer’s longing to gather at “the beautiful river”. The character being portrayed may have such an intense longing that it could come close to desperation at some point during the song. Might this intense longing also explain the changes in the melodic structure of the song when Ives takes the tune up instead of letting it come to a calm resolution in measures 11 and 20? Understanding Ives’s use of this arrangement of “Beautiful River” as depicting an outdoor camp meeting - with all the sounds of the outdoors, boys and men trying, sometimes unsuccessfully, to march and sing together – may help explain why the accompaniment is not supportive of the melodic line throughout the song. Music scholar Greg Harris describes “At the River” as depicting one voice calmly praising God while the craziness of the world rages all around<sup>23</sup> -

---

<sup>23</sup> Greg Harris, interview by author, Phoenix, AZ, October 10, 2009.

just like the singers at Ives's camp meeting, breaking into song with the rest of the noises of the event going on around them.

Why did Ives first set the tune for violin, and later, the voice? There might not be much more of an answer to this question, other than the fact that Ives consistently used the same borrowed materials in often unrelated musical works. It is also possible that the imagery of the flowing river seemed to fit well with the long legato lines possible on the violin. When performing the song, singers may want to try to make the melodic line as smooth and sustained as possible, emulating a violin. It is interesting that when setting the melody for the violin, Ives sets it in a comfortable range for most voices to sing, implying that Ives never lost sight of trying to depict the voices of everyday people singing at the camp meeting.

What about the differences between the original hymn and the art song? The different meters are interesting. Did Ives change the meter to 12/8 to more easily depict the smooth flowing of the river? A possible explanation for the rhythmic irregularities in the song may be that they are there to depict the group of marching men and boys losing step with each other momentarily. It could also be that Ives would really like the listener to focus on

the words at that point. Someone familiar with the hymn would surely listen more closely when the rhythms suddenly dramatically changed from what they expected. Another attempt to draw in the listener may be represented when Ives repeats the text “Yes, we’ll gather at the river” in measure 18, when the listener familiar with the hymn would be expecting something else. The added text at the end of the song leaves the listener with a question – “Shall we gather at the river?” – almost as if Ives is challenging the listener to make the question personal.

Because all four songs in this set are based upon hymn tunes, a similar process to the one used for “At the River” can be employed when learning the other songs in this set.

### **His Exaltation**

The third song in the set, “His Exaltation”, is a setting of the hymn tune “Autumn”. Ives based his song on a version by Robert Robinson, which was an arrangement of the original by François-Hippolyte Barthélémon.

## AUTUMN

("For the grandeur of Thy nature"—2nd stanza)

SOURCE: *New Laudes Domini*, no. 470

Robert Robinson  
(2nd stanza preferred by Ives)

arr. from FRANÇOIS-HIPPOLYTE BARTHÉLÉMON, 1785

For the gran - deur of Thy na - ture Grand be -  
yond a ser-aph's thought; For the won - ders of cre - a - tion;  
Works with skill and kind - ness wrought; For Thy prov - i-dence that  
gov - erns Thro' Thine em - pire's wide do - main— Wings an  
an - gel, guides a spar - row, Bless - ed be Thy gen - tle reign

### EXAMPLE 8: "Autumn" by Robert Robinson<sup>24</sup>

Ives took his text from the second stanza of the hymn, and felt free to leave out portions of the text. Rhythmic changes encourage the listener to reevaluate the meaning of the text, even though the changes Ives makes are not too drastic.

<sup>24</sup> Henderson, 18-19



Much of the more unusual, experimental material occurs in the piano part in the first half of the song. There is not a readily identifiable melody in the first section of the song, but we do hear hints of the hymn tune. The shape of the upcoming vocal melodic lines and the steady rhythms of the left hand of the piano part supporting the singers are foreshadowed, providing a smooth transition from the more soloistic piano music at the beginning of the song to the entrance of the voice.

While this song can easily be performed by a solo singer, Ives marks in the score that he prefers it to be sung by a unison chorus. He then provides optional notes for the chorus to split into two parts. Perhaps Ives would want “the grandeur”, “the wonders of creation” and “Thine empire’s wide domain” expressed through the use of multiple voices instead of just one. The original version from which Ives was working designates 3/2 as the meter, but the meter changes slightly throughout to accommodate the text. We see Ives employing this technique frequently to create the textual emphasis that he desires, so one can imagine that this hymn would have already suited his tastes quite well.

There are subtle changes to the rhythms throughout the piece. At many points Ives adds notes, almost like ornaments, to continue the descent of some vocal lines. In “His Exaltation” we also sometimes see octave displacement of

the original melody. Some changes appear in every line of the melody throughout the song, unlike the previously discussed songs, which had sections where the melody and rhythm appeared very much like the original source material.

In measures 12-15, Ives shifts the beginning of the melody from two pick-up notes to starting on beat one of measure 12, and changes the rhythms slightly throughout the first two phrases. Measure 15 also shows us the first ornamentation of a line by continuing its downward motion with four extra notes.

In measures 16-19, we see slight rhythmic alterations, extension of the end of a phrase with a downward scale, and octave displacement of the melody (in measures 18 and 19).

In measure 20, when the text reads “Through Thine Empires wide domain...”, Ives has skipped a portion of the original melody and left out the text “For Thy Providence that governs”. This omission is another good point at which to solicit an opinion from the singer. Why would Ives leave out that portion alone from the text? The song then finishes with more rhythmic alteration, the end of a phrase extended downward, and melodic displacement an octave down.

(Autumn)

*ff* For the grandeur of Thy na - ture, grand be-yond a se-raph's  
 (preferably for a unison chorus.)

thought For the won - ders of Cre-a-tion, Works with skill and kindness

wrought; Through Thine Em - pires wide do - main *ad lib.*

Blessed be Thy gen - tle Reign

EXAMPLE 9: mm. 11-21 of “His Exaltation” by Charles Ives<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Ives, *114 Songs*, 98.

“His Exaltation,” while containing some triplet figures that may be challenging for a less-experienced singer, is the easiest of the songs in this set to learn. The rhythmic changes can all be explored in the same manner, by comparing Ives’s version with the hymn tune and noting the differences. The thick chords in the piano might be the biggest challenge for the singer. One way to try to ease the temptation by a singer to be distracted from their part by the accompaniment is for the pianist to play only the right hand of the piano part for the first few run-throughs with the singer. The rest of the piano part could then be slowly added in, allowing the singer to become more and more comfortable with any dissonances created by the piano joining the voice part.

An additional benefit of gradually adding the accompaniment is that the piece is quite big and grandiose, and a singer could easily fall into the trap of over-singing and straining or tiring the voice. By allowing the voice to slowly get used to the piece as it slowly grows in volume over time, vocal problems may be avoided. A singer may also consider asking other singers to form a small chorus when singing this song, as Ives suggested. This could also help the singer feel able to sing at a comfortable volume instead of pushing, while adding to the grandeur of the text and the piece. Forming a small chorus of various voice types

can also be helpful in navigating the extensive range of the vocal line, which covers an octave and a sixth.

### Camp-Meeting

William Batchelder Bradbury, who wrote the hymn tune “Woodworth,” was a very successful composer, well known for his work in children’s music and for his hymns.

#### WOODWORTH

(“Just as I am, without one plea”)

SOURCE: *The Baptist Praise Book*, no. 65b

Charlotte Elliott, 1836

WILLIAM BATCHELDER BRADBURY, pub. 1849

Just as I am, — with - out — one plea, But that Thy blood was  
shed for me, And that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee, O  
Lamb of God, — I come! I come! —

#### EXAMPLE 10: “Woodworth” by William Batchelder Bradbury<sup>26</sup>

One of the difficulties for the pianist in these four pieces is that Ives was not only borrowing hymn tunes when writing the songs, he was actually

<sup>26</sup> Henderson, 87

borrowing the settings from his own previously composed instrumental works. The Camp-Meeting was originally part of Symphony no. 3. Transcribing orchestral music for a piano reduction is quite challenging under ordinary circumstances, but when Ives does it, he often creates a piano part that is impossible to play. Ives admitted that some of the music he wrote was unperformable because of its difficulty level, and he was just writing it for his own enjoyment, to imagine what the possibilities might be. One possible solution to the problem of the difficulty of the piano part to “Camp-Meeting” might be to have two pianists create a four-hands piano part and accompany the song together.

Of the four hymn tune settings being discussed, “Camp-Meeting” has the most challenging piano part combined with the simplest unaltered statement of a hymn tune to close the piece. The tune “Woodworth”, by William Bradbury, is presented almost exactly as the original was written, beginning at the pickup to measure 22. Ives labels the tune with its name and composer in the score, and doubles the voice line in the left hand of the piano so there is no chance the performer or listener will miss it. This final section might be a good place for the singer to begin when learning the song, because it so strongly emphasizes the

source material upon which the whole song is based. The singer could start by combining the voice part with only the left hand of the piano part, in order to learn the original hymn tune well.

(Woodworth-Bradbury)

The image displays a musical score for the song "Camp-Meeting" by Charles Ives. It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major/D minor) and the time signature is 4/8. The score includes various performance markings such as *ten.* (tension), *p* (piano), *pp* (pianissimo), *loco l.h.* (left hand), and *più ten.* (more tension). The lyrics are: "ing, yeild - ing to His love. Just as I am with - out one plea, But that Thy blood was shed for me, and that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee, O Lamb of God,". The piano part features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth-note runs.

ing, yeild - ing to His love. Just as I am with -

out one plea, But that Thy blood was shed for me, and

that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee, O Lamb of God,

EXAMPLE 11: mm.21-28 of "Camp-Meeting" by Charles Ives<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Ives, *114 Songs*, 101-102.



Once this final section is learned by the singer, the full accompaniment can be added, either all at once, or with the pianist gradually adding more and more of the piano part. This process can be guided by the singer's comfort level as more accompaniment gets added.

When the singer returns to the beginning of the vocal line at measure 10, separating elements of the song is once again a valuable approach. With the constant shifts between several different meters, the rhythms are again a good starting point. The 7/8 meter in measures 16 and 19, and the 10/8 meter in measure 21 should be discussed with the student before any attempt is made to execute them. If a student tackles the difficult meters and rhythms before intellectually understanding them, she runs the risk of learning them incorrectly. Speaking rhythms accurately and with sensitivity to the text before adding pitches is again recommended.

The comparison of the melody from mm.10-14 with the hymn tune will serve the singer well. An excellent discussion of how Ives contracts and expands melodic intervals, as well as reverses the order of some intervals when altering borrowed material, can be found in the periodical *Music Theory Spectrum*, in Timothy Johnson's article "Chromatic Quotations of Diatonic Tunes in Songs of

Charles Ives". His analysis is very in-depth and clear; in the following section from this article he discusses the song "Camp-Meeting":

From an intervallic perspective Ives's chromatic alterations to diatonic tunes arise from three different compositional procedures. In some cases, Ives *contracts* certain intervals of the original tune while retaining others, tightening the melodic scope of the original tune without distorting it beyond recognition. Elsewhere, Ives *expands* certain intervals, extending the melodic scope of the tune. Finally, by combining the techniques of interval contraction and expansion, Ives sometimes *reverses* the order of two particular intervals, distorting the melodic flow of the original tune while retaining its intervallic content.<sup>28</sup>

By using Johnson's observations about Ives's use of *contraction*, *expansion*, and *reversal* of intervals, a singer can more easily approach the first section of "Camp-Meeting" with confidence; the singer merely needs to identify when the intervals are contracting, expanding or are in reverse order. Johnson guides us further:

...from an intervallic perspective the first half of the chromatic quotation retains most of the intervals from the original tune with only one contraction and some rearranged notes, whereas the second half of the quotation expands many of the intervals, in some cases radically.<sup>29</sup>

The singer's next task should be to find the contraction and the rearranged notes, beginning in measure 10.

At the pick-up to measure 15, the singer should make note that the melody is now mimicking what was just sung in measure 10, again with some expansion

---

<sup>28</sup> Johnson, 244.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

of the intervals. The setting of the text “Exulting, exulting, in the power of God!” resembles the melodic shape Ives used in measure 13. The setting of “Exalting Faith in life above by humbly yeilding, yeilding, yeilding (sic) to His love” beginning at the pick-up to measure 19 can be considered an extension of the downward motion at the end of the previous phrase in measure 18, extending the phrase in order to make the appearance of the original tune in measure 22 more dramatic.

While merely accurately executing the alterations to the hymn tune before measure 22 could be very challenging for the singer, once the accompaniment is added in, the difficulty level rises considerably. The technique of gradually adding portions of the piano part should be employed to ensure that the singer continues to do her part correctly. Should the singer decide to use two pianists for this piece, separate rehearsals with each could easily help facilitate this process of slowly incorporating all the notes in the piano part. The separate rehearsals might also make it more clear on which part the singer will chose to focus in order to find pitches throughout the song.

## CHAPTER 5

### COMBINING NEW IDEAS WITH STANDARD PRACTICES

We will now return to Carol Kimball's list of "components of style" quoted earlier in this paper. Once the process of analyzing and learning the vocal lines (and sometimes the piano accompaniments) is well under way, the singer should also be encouraged to work through Kimball's list to more fully understand the music she is learning. Let us take one more look at the four hymn settings with Kimball's list in mind.

#### **Watchman!**

Melody: The phrase shape is consistently the same as the original hymn, with the addition of "Dost thou see its beauteous ray? Traveller, See!" at the end of the piece moving in a slightly different direction. Phrase lengths again are the same as the original hymn, making all the phrases manageable. The range expands past what it was in the original hymn by the final phrase, but should still be appropriate for all but the lowest untrained voices. The tessitura is very mid-range for most voice types. Chromaticism does not appear as extensively in this song as in the others in the group, and the motivic material is fairly predictable. The articulation is lyric, and the text painting is lovely, especially in

spots like measures 16 and 17, with the appearances of the exclamation “yes!” set apart from what leads up to them.

Harmony: The harmonic texture is very thick, as it is in much of Ives’s music, with a good deal of chromatic harmony and much dissonance. There are recurring harmonies and many places in which a key is clearly established, and the harmonies definitely contribute to Ives’s idea of how the text should be illustrated.

Rhythm: The tempo is very relaxed, but, as discussed earlier, the metric organization is unusual, with the voice and piano spending much of the song in different meters. The eighth/quarter note pattern is certainly unifying, and reinforces the text well. The cross-rhythms in the piano part certainly add to the drama and the effect that Ives wants to create.

Accompaniment: The prominent cross rhythms throughout the song are one of the most noticeable and unique elements of this song. The prelude, although only four measures long, seems quite extensive due to the tempo and the 4/4 meter. The mood of the prelude is different from that of the song when the voice enters, creating a challenge for the singer trying to connect the prelude to the rest of the song dramatically. The postlude is more similar in mood to what

comes right before it. Material is not shared with the voice, but there are predictable motives, with the accompaniment adding to the mood of the piece. The texture is linear.

Text: The choice of text was inspired by Ives's background as a religious person and church organist, as well as his desire to bring deeper meaning to familiar texts. The text setting closely follows the successful text setting modeled in the original hymn.

Secondary Factors of Style: The form is roughly as follows: Introduction, AABA, Coda. There are unifying melodic and rhythmic elements. Influences on the composer were discussed in the previous section.

Overlap of Styles: There is definitely an overlapping of a very traditional style of hymn tune with Ives's more complicated rhythms and harmonies.

### **At the River**

Melody: As with "Watchman!", the melodic contours, phrase length, range and tessitura are quite similar to the original hymn tune, making them all very manageable for most singers. There is chromaticism, but nothing that radically changes the shape of the melody. There are repeated sections of the melody, and the articulation is lyric. The text painting is excellent, especially the final added line "Shall we gather? Shall we gather at the river?"

Harmony: The harmonic texture is thicker than the accompaniment for the original hymn tune, and more chromatic, but still tonal. Dissonance is evident throughout the piece, but the key remains the same throughout. There is text illustration through harmonic means.

Rhythm: The tempo is relaxed, making it easy for the singer to be expressive with the text, and there are no meter changes to negotiate. There are places where Ives's setting differs from the original rhythms, with these places reinforcing how Ives viewed the text. The flowing dotted-quarter and quarter-eighth rhythms unify the piece.

Accompaniment: The accompaniment strongly supports the singer, playing on every beat of the piece until the downbeat of measure 21, when the singer comes to the word "God". The prelude is short, and there is only one measure after the prelude in which the singer doesn't sing (measure 22); there is no postlude. The piano doesn't double the voice, but does contribute to creating the mood of the piece.

Text: The text setting is similar to "Watchman!", with Ives communicating a new way of thinking of this text through his setting. He chose to omit some text and add in some at the end of the song.

Secondary Factors of Style: The form is as follows: Introduction, A, B, Coda.

Overlap of Styles: There is once again an overlap of the very straightforward style of the traditional hymn tune with Ives's very chromatic harmonies and syncopated rhythms.

### **His Exaltation**

Melody: The melodic contour is that of two long phrases starting mid-range, peaking earlier than halfway through, and then ending extremely low in the voice. The phrase lengths can be quite long if performed by a more advanced singer or an ensemble, but can also be made to work in shorter sections by a singer who needs to breathe more frequently. The range is extensive, with a tessitura which may be low for many singers, and there is some chromaticism. There are no familiar motives for the voice, and the articulation is more marcato than the previous two songs.

Harmony: The harmonic texture is very thick and chromatic, with much dissonance. There is not a strong sense of a defined key, or predictable cadences. As usual, Ives does use harmonies to illustrate the text.



Rhythm: The tempo is slow; the metric organization is in 3/2, and stays constant throughout the piece. There are not any major unifying rhythmic patterns, although the rhythms do reinforce the text. The singer must be confident in her rhythms, because there are often contrasting rhythms in the accompaniment.

Accompaniment: The rhythms in the piano include many half and quarter notes, with occasional triplets and quadruplets. The piano prelude comprises the entire first half of the song; in the second half of the song the voice joins the piano, and the two continue together until the end of the song. The piano and voice do not double each other. The accompaniment is very important in illustrating the grandeur described in the text.

Text: Once again Ives has chosen not to set the entire text as he knows it, but to leave out few words to achieve the desired effect.

Secondary Factors of Style: The song is through-composed.

Overlap of Styles: The traditional hymn tune is combined with Ives's chromaticism and unusual rhythms. This time the overlap of styles is not as equally matched as in the previous songs, but has experimental elements appearing more prominently.

## **The Camp-Meeting**

**Melody:** The melodic lines tend to peak in the middle of each phrase, and cover a wide range. Phrase lengths could be extremely long or more manageable, depending on the singer's breathing choices. There is extensive chromaticism, but some motives which repeat. The articulation is lyric. There is text painting, especially in measure 20-21, when the voice repeats the word "yeilding" (sic) on a repeated motive dropping from Eb to C.

**Harmony:** The harmonic texture is extremely thick and very chromatic. There is not a clearly defined key until the presentation of the unaltered hymn tune beginning in measure 22. Rather than the text being illustrated through the harmonies, the scene of the camp meeting is clearly illustrated through harmonic means.

**Rhythm:** The slow tempo can be very challenging for the singer trying to sing long phrases. The meter changes between 6/8, 9/8, 7/8 and 10/8. The rhythmic figures throughout, especially in the accompaniment, are complicated and challenging, and the voice and piano are often at odds rhythmically.

**Accompaniment:** The entire first page of the song is piano prelude. There is a short interlude before the final statement by the voice in measures 33 and

34. The piano doesn't reinforce what the voice is doing strongly until the statement of the hymn tune beginning in measure 22. The accompaniment is very dramatic in portraying the bustle of a camp meeting.

Text: The first half of the song is written by Charlotte Elliott, while the second half is a quotation from the hymn tune "Woodworth" by William Batchelder Bradbury.

Secondary Factors of Style: The form is roughly this: Introduction, A, bridge, B, coda.

Overlap of Styles: The styles of the simple hymn tune and Ives's experimental music are once again combined in this piece, with Ives's style by far more prominent than in the other hymn tunes settings.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

Most singers are already familiar with the approach of separating elements of the songs on which they are working in order to help expedite the accurate learning of the material. Whether using a simple list of elements like the one presented by Clifton Ware in his textbook for beginning singers, or a more detailed and complex list like the one Carol Kimball presents, a singer will often find that the fastest, easiest way to learn a song is to tackle some of the components separately from others, or at least to analyze what is going on with the different elements before beginning the process of learning notes and rhythms. Knowing the background information on text sources is helpful in understanding a song text. Singers may think that taking these steps is adequate when learning the songs of Charles Ives, but they are not.

Since most art music is the original work of a composer, perhaps inspired by a previously composed piece or modeled on it, singers might not think to look for exact quotations of songs or texts within an art song. When working on a song by Charles Ives, it is important to take the additional step of researching any borrowed material in order to adequately appreciate how Ives takes existing material and makes something new and different out of it. Once the singer

understands what Ives has chosen to change or keep the same, the singer can get a clear picture of the dramatic effect for which Ives might have been searching. After understanding the intent of the original composer and then of Ives, the singer can be fully informed when forming his own interpretation of the song.

Charles Ives's choices for and treatment of borrowed materials in his art songs are essential elements for a singer to study to fully understand the art songs. Performing the songs without understanding the source materials will usually result in a less than complete experience for the performer and audience. Understanding the borrowed materials and the intent of the original composers and lyricists should be a standard step in learning Ives's songs, as it can shed such light on Ives's intent when choosing and setting these materials. Ives's art songs can be sung beautifully without taking the time to fully research and learn the borrowed materials, but the deeper insight gained by the singer during the process is sure to make a dramatic difference in his presentation of the songs.

By examining how Ives changed hymn tunes when he used them in his songs, one may discover which portions of text Ives found important, or whether he felt that the text or creating a certain mood was most important.

## REFERENCES

- Averil, Ron. "The Use of Quotations in 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Works by Ron Averil, Charles Dodge and Charles Ives." D.M.A. Diss., University of Washington, 1995.
- Burkholder, J. Peter. *All Made of Tunes*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995.
- Burkholder, J. Peter. *Charles Ives: the Ideas Behind the Music*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985.
- Cowell, Henry and Sidney Cowell. *Charles Ives and His Music*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1955.
- Eskew, Harry. "Bradbury, William Batchelder". *Oxford Music Online*. <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com:80/subscribe/article/grove/music/03802> (accessed January 7, 2012).
- Eskew, Harry, and Carol A. Pemberton. "Lowell Mason". *Oxford Music Online*. <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com:80/subscribe/article/grove/music/17984pg1> (accessed January 7, 2012).
- Gilman, Janet Lynn. "Charles Ives-Master Songwriter: The Methods Behind His Madness." Ph.D. Diss., University of Southern California, 1994.
- Henderson, Clayton W. *The Charles Ives Tunebook*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2008.
- Henderson, Clayton Wilson. "Quotations as a Style Element in the Music of Charles Ives." Ph.D. Diss., Washington University, 1969.
- Hitchcock, H. Wiley. "Ives's 114 [+15] Songs and What He Thought of Them." *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 52, no. 1 (Spring 1999): 97-144.
- Ives, Charles. *The Complete Songs of Charles Ives, vol.3*. William Sharp, baritone and Steven Blier, piano. Albany Records, U.S. TROY079: CD, 1991.
- Ives, Charles. *114 Songs*. New York: Associated Music Publishers; New York: PeerInternational Corporation; Bryn Mawr, PA: Theodore presser Company, 1922.

- Johnson, Timothy A. "Chromatic Quotations of Diatonic Tunes in Songs of Charles Ives." *Music Theory Spectrum* 18 no.2 (1996): 236-61.
- Kimball, Carol. *Song: A Guide to Art Song Style and Literature, revised edition*. Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2005.
- Newman, Philip Edward. "The Songs of Charles Ives (1874-1954)." Ph.D. Diss., The University of Iowa, 1967.
- Pemberton, Carol A. (Carol Ann). *Lowell Mason: a bio-bibliography*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1988.
- Rossiter, Frank R. *Charles Ives and His America*. New York: Liveright, 1975.
- Starr, Larry. *A Union of Diversities: Style in the Music of Charles Ives*. New York: Shirmer Books, 1992.
- Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, seventh edition*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2007.
- Ware, Clifton. *Adventures in Singing, fourth edition*. New York: McGraw Hill, 2008.
- Zaslaw, Neal, and Simon McVeigh. "Barthélémon, François-Hyppolyte". *Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com:80/subscribe/article/grove/music/02147>. (accessed January 7, 2012)

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Kathleen Ruhleder has appeared as a soloist with the Phoenix, Tucson, Mesa and Scottsdale symphonies, and with The Phoenix Chorale, The Valley Art Chorale (Phoenix) and The Valley Chamber Chorale (Phoenix). As a member of the Phoenix Chorale for ten seasons, she sang on the Grammy Award-winning Spotless Rose CD, and participated in tours across the United States. Ms. Ruhleder was a member of the Arizona Opera Chorus and the Phoenix Opera Chorus, and served as the Phoenix Vice Steward for the American Guild of Musical Artists. Ms. Ruhleder has performed in three school tours with the Arizona Opera Outreach Program, and performed several operatic roles with ASU's Lyric Opera Theatre. She has also been an active performer of Broadway repertoire. Her favorite roles have included Domina in *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (Arizona Broadway Theatre), The Mother/The Witch in *Hansel and Gretel* (AZ Opera Outreach) and The Mother Abbess in *The Sound of Music* (Broadway Palm West, 2005 and 2011). Ms. Ruhleder is a graduate of California State University at Northridge and Arizona State University, and teaches voice at Colorado Mesa University in Grand Junction, Colorado, where she has appeared as a soloist with the Western Colorado Chorale and the Grand Junction Symphony.



