THOMAS ADÈS'S "HAPPY PROMISCUITY": INTERPRETING THE *CONCERT PARAPHRASE ON POWDER HER FACE*

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ABSTRACT

This practice-based research project in musical performance, comprising a recital and accompanying thesis, documents a developing interpretation of Thomas Adès's *Concert Paraphrase on Powder Her Face* for solo piano. There is as yet no body of literature on the interpretation of Adès's music, with most existing research largely focusing on the music's compositional techniques with little consideration of musical meaning and its implication for performance. Thus, there is a gap between the developing literature in Adès scholarship and the concerns of the music's potential interpreters which this project makes a preliminary attempt to bridge.

Using Silverman's (2007) suggested tools for building a 'subjective' (as opposed to 'formalist') interpretation, four research questions are formulated to frame a detailed study of the work and to consider how these research outcomes can be used to shape a more 'thickly contextualised interpretation' (Walls, 2002).

Owing to the wide scope of reference in the *Concert Paraphrase* and the opera on which it is based, a 'magpie' methodology (Carter, 2013) is employed. A review of existing sources in historical musicology are used to survey the historical models of operatic piano transcriptions to which the *Concert Paraphrase* alludes, and to build a working taxonomy of different transcription types. Recent research on Adès is synthesised, together with work on postmodernism and surrealism by Kramer (2016) and others, and techniques from post-tonal theory are used to investigate the compositional techniques used in the opera and paraphrase. Theoretical approaches suggested by Abbate (1989) and Klein (2018) are used to investigate the work's unusual narrativity. A first-person documentary account of a masterclass with the composer on some of his other piano music (*Mazurkas, Op. 27*) provides an insight into his thinking and approach to the performance challenges of his music.

The findings of this research are collated using a practice-based methodology to demonstrate how one might translate textual research findings into tools for a performance of the *Concert Paraphrase*, to supplement the live recital and submitted recordings. Finally, some conclusions are offered about the implications of this research for performance practice and pedagogy in the music of Adès and other similarly referential postmodern composers.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BCMG	Birmingham Contemporary Music Group
CBE	Commander of the Order of the British Empire
Concert Paraphrase	*Concert Paraphrase on Powder Her Face*
LH	Left hand
RH	Right hand
RM	Rehearsal mark
UK	United Kingdom of Great Britain

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DECLARATION

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INTRODUCTION

This research project aims to undertake an in-depth study into Thomas Adès's *Concert Paraphrase on Powder Her Face* and to consider how this can inform a developing interpretation of the work. Except for Thomas Adès himself, I was the first and only pianist to perform the work for several years, and I had the opportunity to play the piece for him in 2013. I recall Adès exclaiming that he genuinely did not believe anybody else would ever be able to play it, in the light of the enormous pianistic difficulties it presents. At that time, he was in the process of arranging it for two pianos to lessen the technical burdens. Although my performance was already of a professional standard and the work was committed to memory, it became clear that some special form of research was essential in order to shape my playing into what Peter Walls describes (in the context of historical performance) as a more "thickly contextualised interpretation" – an interpretation richly informed by as much contextual knowledge of the music as possible.[1] The *Concert Paraphrase* is music 'about' other music – specifically, a work with words, characters, and dramatic action; it also draws on nineteenth century compositional and performance models and is written by an exceptionally literate composer with eclectic tastes and influences. As such, the range of reference material that one might be expected to engage with to achieve this is necessarily large and varied in scope.

The question of what it means to create an interpretation, or to deepen one of a work already performed, is of course not straightforward, and has exercised aesthetic philosophers and writers on musical performance since antiquity. In a 2007 article, American music education philosopher Marissa Silverman helpfully summarises the spectrum of debate. She opens by discussing what she terms the *formalist* view:

[1] Walls, Peter, 'Historical Performance and the Modern Reader' in *Musical Performance: A Guide to Understanding* pp. 17-34*,* ed. by John Rink (Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 23

at one end of the spectrum, some scholars, performers and teachers view performing as a situation in which a performer only sounds out a notated score in strict accordance with a composer's instructions. On this view, a performer (or conductor) 'reads' the formal dimensions of a score (e.g. notated pitches, rhythms, dynamics) and produces the written score for the contemplation of an audience. Advocates of this concept of performance emphasize 'letting the score speak for itself'; a performer is merely the 'servant' of the composer.[2]

This 'closed', *formalist* perspective is reinforced by Stephen Davies who said that "performance calls for concentration on the business of sounding the work. The player needs to focus, not to emote and not to simulate experiences she does not have…What, if anything, she feels, or seems to feel, is beside the point".[3]

Silverman contrasts this saying that

at the opposite end of the spectrum is the open or subjective view. Writers, performers and teachers of this persuasion believe performers have 'poetic license' to interpret and realize a score based almost entirely on their unique feelings or desires.[4]

Silverman states that along this spectrum is a number of positions giving balance to one or the other, and that

underlying these intermediate views is the belief that a score cannot contain a composer's full range of intentions (conscious and subconscious), let alone the full range of meanings a work can express. Depending on their views about these considerations, scholars, performers and teachers hold that performers have the right and/or responsibility to interpret a score's instructions, and uncover and communicate

[2] Silverman, Marissa, 'Musical Interpretation: Philosophical and Practical Issues in *International Journal of Music Education Vol. 25, No. 2*, pp. 101-117 (2007), p. 102
[3] Davies, Stephen, 'Once Again, This Time with Feeling' in *The Journal of Aesthetic Education, Vol. 38, No. 2*, pp. 1-6 (Summer 2004), pp. 2 & 3
[4] Silverman (2007), p. 102

its meanings, in accordance with a range of variables (structural, expressive, referential, historical styles and so forth).[5]

Silverman draws parallels between literary critic Louise Rosenblatt's transactional theory of reader response, which discusses interpretation of poetic texts, and interpreting musical scores. Silverman shows how Rosenblatt argues that engagement with, or the reading of, a text is what 'makes' it: a series of printed symbols on a page does not mean anything until the reader recites it (either in their head or aloud). She stresses that music is not a 'thing', but an activity, and therefore that its meaning is only interpreted as a work unfolds in real time. The shortcomings of the printed score, in this sense, is raised by Hamilton, who argues that "the inevitably exact and lifeless notation can never delineate every aspect of that music adequately" and that a piece "might try to give directions that extend to the minutest details of tempo fluctuation and layers dynamics [but still fall] short of what is required to create living breathing music rather than a stiff mechanical sequence of notes".[6] As such, performers who subscribe to the *formalist* expressionist view are still, according to Silverman, required to engage with the music in a transactional way in order that the music be brought to life from its silent notation; they still have to interpret those symbols and actively perform them.

A balanced view with clear *subjectivist* leanings has been perhaps articulated most influentially in recent years by John Rink, who has argued that a musical score might be considered a script which holds meaning through the act of performance, asserting that "what performers do influences music's very content, how it takes shape, and how those who hear it perceive and understand it".[7] He claims that what performers do, through practice and performance, is an analytical process and that "it cannot be denied that the interpretation of music requires decision – conscious or otherwise – about the contextual functions of particular

[5] Silverman (2007), p. 103
[6] Hamilton, Kenneth, *Liszt: Sonata in B minor* (Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 73
[7] Rink, John, 'The Work of the Performer' in *Virtual Works – Actual Things: Essays in Music Ontology*, pp. 89-114, ed. by Paulo de Assis, Leuven University Press, 2018), p. 89

musical features and the means of projecting them".[8] Rink eloquently recognises the value, too, of "informed intuition", but acknowledges that "considerable knowledge and experience generally lie behind it".[9]

As a performer, then, not only do we interpret and communicate, we analyse, and we must 'influence' the music's meaning from the most authoritative position of understanding possible: that of a 'thickly contextualised' reading which interprets in the traditional sense – 'to bring out the meaning of something' – rather than one which 'appropriates' the music, to use Walls' terms.[10] Music appropriation might be regarded as the most extreme of *subjective* views in which the music serves the performer, something which prompted Boulez to comment upon as "truly terrifying" in the context of some nineteenth century performance practices and probably what lead composers such as Ravel, Stravinsky, and Schoenberg to their general scepticism towards 'interpreters'.[11]

In designing a practice-based research project which aims to uncover and communicate the potential meanings (in the broadest sense) of the *Concert Paraphrase*, it has been helpful to imagine Silverman's variables detailed above (structural, expressive, referential, historical styles) as mapping rather neatly on to the four key research questions which were present from the very beginning, and which have guided this project:

1. How might we more precisely categorise the *Concert Paraphrase*? How does it relate to its source material and its historical models?
2. What tools do we need to understand this music, and to assist in developing (or deepening) an interpretation?

[8] Rink, John, 'Analysis and (or?) Performance' in *Musical Performance: A Guide to Understanding*, pp. 35-58, ed. by John Rink (University of Cambridge Press, 2002), p. 35
[9] Ibid., p. 36
[10] Walls, Peter (2002), p. 23
[11] Briscoe, James, *Debussy in Performance* (Yale University Press, 1999), p. 187

3. What meanings might be suggested by the selection, arrangement, and treatment of material in the *Concert Paraphrase*? Adès claims that the *Concert Paraphrase* has its own musical logic, independent of the dramaturgical logic of the opera, but what might this be?[12]
4. What are the implications of any discoveries in relation to questions 1-3 for developing performance practice and/or pedagogy in this repertoire?

Assessing historical style has meant investigating the ways in which Adès draws upon the tradition of the virtuoso operatic paraphrase. In Chapter 1, we will consider the origins of the genre and its growing popularity with composer-pianists and audiences during the early nineteenth century. Piano transcriptions and operatic paraphrases were a common feature on concert programmes and, as will be seen through reference to previous research, were integral to performing life, being a product of social and economic shifts in European cultural life. It has been surprising as a researcher to find limited in-depth existing material about the varying forms of such works. No existing sources appear satisfactorily to deal with the problem of categorising the different types of transcriptions or investigating what distinguishes them from one another. Charles Suttoni argued that over the course of their heyday the professional and artistic function of operatic paraphrases changed, and composers were fluid in their use of titles, which ranged from *partition de piano*, *paraphrase*, *souvenir*, *réminiscence*, and *fantasy* among many others. According to the literature, there are no universally accepted definitions of these terms, and in order to help contextualise Adès's *Concert Paraphrase*, and understand what type of operatic transcription it is, I set about creating a working taxonomy. Taking a selection of scores as case studies, investigating their various forms and pianistic idiosyncrasies alongside

[12] London Philharmonic Orchestra, *Thomas Adès on Powder Her Face Suite* (4/04/18). Available at https://www.lpo.org.uk/news/thomas-ades-on-powder-her-face-suite.html accessed 7/08/18.

professional motivations has helped me to consider what type of transcriptions composer-pianists were writing across the period in question as well as the different purposes they served.

In Chapter 2, I investigate aspects of style by reviewing and synthesising a number of recent commentaries on Adès the composer, his musical style(s), and influences, and investigate his compositional techniques, drawing on various post-tonal analytical approaches that have proved particularly fruitful in this repertoire. Chapter 3 continues this analytical discussion in the specific context of the opera, *Powder her Face*, and the *Concert Paraphrase*. We consider also how Adès's music both adheres to and departs from certain well-established characteristics of musical postmodernism and surrealism, particularly as outlined by the late Jonathan Kramer.

Adès's attitude towards musical history – its division into neat compartments – is very much a challenge to more traditional notions of historical time as linear, and he regards all music from the past as existing in our contemporary environment. He said:

> *It's not just a pluralistic world that we live in, it's also one where times and eras no longer have to be put in a particular order. In a sense, we live closer to the extreme past than we ever have before because we can hear music from any period at the click of a switch or press of a mouse. These things, the French Baroque or Gregorian chant or Victorian parlour music or whatever it might be, are actually not the past but our environment. Anything you want can be your environment, so with that in mind, one can use any model and still be in the present.*[13]

As such, I was keen to explore exactly what pre-existing musical material Adès has built upon, or indeed dismantled, in the *Concert Paraphrase*. The pianistic difficulties in the work are matched by the challenges of grasping the referential breadth of the music – both on macro- and micro- levels. *Powder Her Face* is profuse with musical allusions and, although in 2013 I

[13] Adès in interview with Andrew Ford in 'The Music Show' for ABC Radio National (9/10/10) Quoted in Wells, Dominic, 'Plural Styles, Personal Style: The Music of Thomas Adès' in *Tempo, Vol. 66, Issue 260*, pp. 2-14 (Cambridge, Apr. 2012), p. 6

was aware of several of them, at first many eluded me. It has been particularly illuminating, in Chapter 3, to attempt to catalogue as many of the quotations and references I could identify in the *Concert Paraphrase* and consider what they might mean.

Special consideration of Adès's postmodern (and surreal) aesthetics – with its resistance of the need for structural and stylistic unity, which is particularly prevalent in the *Concert Paraphrase* – led me to pianist Deborah Bradley-Kramer's 2016 essay on the challenge of interpreting postmodern music, a repertoire that "call[s] into question many time-honoured aspects of classical music pedagogy, which tends to foster an awareness of structure and unity within a master framework".[14] This is presented in contrast to a recent essay by pianist and scholar Ian Pace on the interpretation of Ligeti's *Études* for solo piano, a composer whose technique and aesthetic shares some common features with those of Adès. Finally, in Chapter 5, and by way of conclusion, I summarise how all the material has informed my interpretation of the *Concert Paraphrase* as it is at the end of this research project, and as it will (hopefully) be evidenced in the accompanying recital (discussed below), and I present my findings as a detailed commentary. Having at my disposal a live recording made in 2013, and a commercial recording released in 2018, comparisons between the three versions are made to evidence developing interpretative changes (the two earlier recordings are included in the appendices.)

As will be discussed in Chapter 5, performance researchers are fortunate in being able to draw considerable inspiration from first person accounts of encounters with notable pianist-composers of the past. The masterclasses with Liszt, as recorded by his students (Amy Fay, August Göllerich, Wilhelm von Lenz etc., and documented in literature by Lina Ramaan, Kenneth Hamilton, and many others) have been a source for pianophiles for almost 150 years. I have therefore decided to make my own small contribution to this genre with the inclusion of

[14] Bradley-Kramer, Deborah, 'Postmodern Musings, Postmodern Listening' in Kramer, Jonathan D., *Postmodern Music, Postmodern Listening*, pp. 299-307, ed. by Robert Carl (New York and London, Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), p. 299

an "Interlude" (Chapter 4). This documents a masterclass I had with Thomas Adès on his *Mazurkas, Op. 27* in 2019. As the number of admirers and performers of Adès's music continues to grow, it seemed not only prudent, but also an intrinsically valuable exercise to document the experience in this thesis. Not only will it hopefully provide insight and enlightenment on interpreting Adès's *Mazurkas, Op. 27*, but also his piano music more generally, and his attitude towards it. The masterclass has brought about a number of conscious changes in my interpretation of the *Concert Paraphrase* and has thus become an integral point of reference for me in discussing interpretative choices.

Needless to say, this project is not an hagiography, and it has been important to keep consideration of Adès's reliability as a witness to his music in mind. The *formalist* and *subjective* views on interpretation can also be seen as positions at either ends of a spectrum that debates who has the right to 'meaning-making' when it comes to a piece of music. Is it the composer, the performer, or the listener? In an interesting recent contribution to this debate, published in the project's final stages, Alan Taylor investigates this from a neurological perspective, studying the processes of idea creation. He provides both scientific and anecdotal evidence which suggests it is largely a sub-conscious process, thereby leading him to refute the 'creators' (composers) as occupying a "privileged status as meaning-makers in comparison to performers or audiences".[15] Whether this is indeed provable by these means or not (which arguably, it is not), it affords us to reflect further on who indeed does the interpreting. Jonathan Kramer argues that, in postmodern art with its disunity, references and use of quotation, "each perceiver constitutes the work's experiential unity mentally in his or her own way. The resulting multiplicity of responses suggests that there are as many pieces as there are listeners (or even *listenings*!)". We must understand that performers and audience are 'listeners' alike,

[15] Taylor, Alan, 'Death of the Composer? Making Meanings from Musical Performance' in *Music & Practice, vol. 6* (2020), p. 14

and we must assess what is possible to convey to an audience, and what must be left unsaid for the audience to assemble or answer for themselves. This is also one of the reasons I am particularly sympathetic to Bradley-Kramer who, in contrast to Pace, argues in favour of inventing narrative in order to find meaning and sense in music of this nature, through ourselves.[16]

My approach to this project, my methodology and indeed my writing style, has been "happily promiscuous", to use a term Adès once used when discussing the influences on his music.[17] As an interpreter, rather than an analyst or musicologist, my approach has been voracious and (in some ways) indiscriminate, adopting 'magpieism' as a methodological approach:[18] I have needed to remain open to finding insights into the music from material of every kind, from the journalistic and anecdotal, through to the more traditionally musicological or aesthetic, to hardcore analytical as well as practice-based performance research. Whilst I have argued that I find some sources to be more persuasive than others, essentially, because I am working on an interpretation, there is not necessarily a 'right' answer and as a performer it is important to remain open to all ideas. Because the methodologies employed in each chapter are necessarily different, they will be briefly summarised as short chapter introductions.

As John Rink has highlighted, written material about performing is incomplete without the medium of performance.[19] Consequently, an essential component of this submission is my live recital, which aims to demonstrate my findings and contextualise Adès's music. Deciding upon the repertoire to programme and perform alongside the *Concert Paraphrase* has been shaped by the research and by Adès's own programming. He himself paired the *Concert Paraphrase* with Liszt's *Isoldens Liebestod, S447* – the celebrated transcription from the

[16] Bradley-Kramer (2016), p. 301
[17] Service, Tom, *Thomas Adès: Full of Noise: Conversations with Tom Service* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2012), p. 26
[18] Carter, Susan, 'The Methodology of Magpies' in *International Journal of Research & Method in Education, 37:2*, pp. 125-136 (Routledge, 2013)
[19] Rink (2018), p. 104

closing scene of Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde* (this in itself raises interesting questions about the thematic content of the *Concert Paraphrase*). I have also chosen to incorporate music which reflects the various types of transcriptions studied in this submission – the relatively literal transcription *Mélodie de Gluck* by Sgambati (on a theme from *Orfeo ed Eurydice*), the aforementioned Wagner-Liszt, and the lesser-known *Ramble on Love from Strauss's Rosenkavalier* by Percy Grainger, not only because of the pianism it draws on, but also because Adès himself quotes from the same parent text in the *Concert Paraphrase*. I have also chosen to include Adès's *Mazurkas, Op. 27* alongside the three mazurkas of Chopin he drew inspiration from to contextualise the music and the influences on it. It can also highlight the effect that understanding the models he has built upon can have on the interpretation of his own music. Whilst the consideration of how historical models can inform contemporary examples is one of the concerns in this project, it has been stimulating to contemplate how Adès's music might inform the interpretation of his predecessors' music.

CHAPTER 1

Liszt: *"within the span of its seven octaves [the piano] encompasses the audible range of an orchestra, and the ten fingers of a single person are enough to render the harmonies produced by the union of over a hundred concerted instruments"*[1]

This chapter aims to lay the foundations for understanding aspects of Adès's *Concert Paraphrase on Powder Her Face* by investigating the background of piano transcriptions and the nineteenth century virtuoso operatic paraphrase genre to which the work alludes. It does so through a survey of existing literature considering the social and economic factors – as well as the performance environments – that allowed the operatic paraphrases to flourish. It studies a number of representative compositions and investigates the techniques composers used to arrange orchestral text for solo piano and compares structural features of the different types of transcriptions and paraphrases.

1.1 Origins of piano transcriptions

Italian composer-pianist Feruccio Busoni, a prolific transcriber, wrote that "every notation is, in itself, the transcription of an abstract idea".[2] He believed that transcription in the sense of music being transferred from one medium to another has, in principle, been around for thousands of years, in that any form of simple instrumental music could be considered an adaptation of the human voice. By way of example, Rian de Waal uses the myth of Apollo and Daphne to draw a comparison between the nature of metamorphosis and musical transcription:

[1] Suttoni, Charles, *Franz Liszt, An artist's journey: lettres d'un bachelier ès musique, 1835-1841* (Chicago University Press, 1989). p. 45

[2] "Jede Notation ist schon Transkription eines abstrakten Einfalls". See Busoni, Ferrucio, 'Sketch of a New Esthetic of Music' in *Three Classics in the Aesthetics of Music*, trans. by Th. Baker (Dover Publications, New York, 1907, repr. 1962), p. 85

Daphne is transformed into a tree to flee Apollo's affections only for him to remain in love with her. The form or surface of something may have changed (sometimes drastically), but the essence is still the same.[3]

Although the performance practice of solo piano and duet arrangements of orchestral works in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was different from that of the virtuoso operatic paraphrase, these media were essential stepping-stones which paved the way towards the genre and they did so as a consequence of vast social and economic change. Cosima Wagner's (1837-1930) diary entries frequently describe her after-dinner *Hausmusik* gatherings at which she would play through the symphonies of Haydn and Mozart with her husband.[4] This had become a widespread ritual throughout households across Europe and North America from the late eighteenth century[5]: the upright piano was a common furnishing in even modest middle-class households (thanks, in part, to the steady economic growth and generally falling prices of goods and services following the Napoleonic wars), and competency at the instrument was held as a symbol of bourgeois status.[6] Philosopher Walter Benjamin described the instrument as "a piece of furniture that functions in the petit-bourgeois interior as the true dynamic center of all the dominant miseries and catastrophes of the household".[7]

The domestic piano, and arrangements for it, were the most important means of the dissemination and performance of orchestral and chamber music, as well as popular operatic potpourri, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[8] By taking music intended for performance by large orchestras in theatres and opera houses into homes, these arrangements had a massive impact on the way in which many enthusiasts could experience music more

[3] De Waal, Rian, *Metamorphoses: The Art of the Virtuoso Piano Transcription* (Eburon Academic Publishers, Delft, 2013). See Chapter 1, *Metamorphoses: An Introduction*
[4] Wagner, Cosima Vol. 1, trans. by Catherine Alison Phillips (New York and London, Alfred A. Knopf, 1930), p. 358. Available at: https://archive.org/details/cosimawagnervoli010400mbp accessed 2/10/16
[5] Christensen (1999), p. 2
[6] Ibid., p. 6
[7] Benjamin, Walter, *Moscow Diaries*, trans. by Richard Sieburth (Harvard University Press, 1986), p. 38
[8] Christensen (1999), p. 2

often. It contributed to the establishment of a masterwork canon of the era as well as both the accelerated self-education of the middle class and the development of their increasing appetite for engaging with music, both at home and in the concert hall.[9] Already by the 1790s there were duet arrangements of many of Haydn's symphonies, and the German publisher Simrock's first release was a four-hand arrangement of Dittersdorf's 1788 opera *Das Rote Käppchen*.[10] Within just a few decades the consumption of duet arrangements of music had encouraged the publication of thousands of works in this format[11] and the practice fuelled the enormous increase in demand for piano manufacturing.[12]

The arrangement of orchestral music for piano (both two- and four-hand versions) was a practice carried out throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries into the present day, principally as a means of increasing music circulation whilst capitalising on the financial fruits it provided. Composers including Mendelssohn, Schumann, Dvořák, Grieg, Saint-Saëns, Tchaikovsky and Ravel all produced four-hand arrangements of their own orchestral music and many publishing houses continued to employ in-house arrangers, as well.[13] Brahms was the most prolific self-arranger, even though during his own lifetime sixty-five arrangers had produced over 350 versions of his works. He arranged almost all his orchestral and chamber music for piano duet and, in his youth, earned experience as an arranger publishing works under the pseudonym 'G. W. Marks'. Among that youthful output is an extensive selection of operatic

[9] Ibid., pp. 3-4
[10] See Fellerer, Karl Gustav, 'Klavierbearbeitungen Haydnscher Werke im Frühen 19. Jahrhundert' in *Festskrift Jens Peter Larsen*, pp. 301-316, ed. by Nils Schiørring, Henrik Glahn, & Carsten E. Hatting (Wilhelm Hansen, 1972)
[11] Christensen (1999), p. 3
[12] For statistics on the number of pianos being manufactured and lessons being sought in Paris, see Ritterman, Janet, *Concert Life in Paris, 1808-1838: Influences on the Performance and Repertoire of Professional Pianists* (PhD thesis, Goldsmiths College, University of London, 1985), pp. 32-33
[13] The use of late nineteenth and early twentieth century composers here shows that duet arranging continued after the height of the operatic paraphrase and sources mentioned justifiably cite wider dissemination as the principal factor. This is relevant later in the project when considering why Adès wrote a paraphrase on his own opera, not of somebody else's.

potpourris.[14]

An understanding of the huge increase in popularity of the piano as a domestic instrument and the mass production of four-hand arrangements at the start of this tradition helps us to see how it contributed to the accelerated self-education of the middle class and stimulated an increased interest in music and, in turn, concert attendance.[15] This played a significant role in creating the circumstances for the solo virtuoso pianist and the operatic paraphrase to flourish as shall be demonstrated.

1.2 Socio-economic changes and the impact on repertoire

Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, the significant developments in European society are richly reflected in the change to the continent's musical life. An increasingly educated public of more varying social class attended purpose-built performance spaces, large numbers of freshly founded music societies recorded rapidly growing memberships, and new cultural publications sprung up across Europe sustaining a healthy body of subscribers. Concert reviews often described the social status of audiences, highlighting that more members of the middle-class were attending concerts than ever before. The fact that by 1808 the Académie Royal de Musique (the Opéra) in Paris appeared no longer to have had the absolute monopoly on controlling concert-giving accorded to it in 1784 meant that there was a sudden boom in concerts across the city. Musicians could perform anywhere, day or night, and audiences did not need to travel so far or pay for expensive theatre tickets as hitherto. The political upheavals of France during this period, beginning with the revolution of 1789, sped up this process. Yet Georgian England, even without the political turmoil of its neighbour, saw

[14] For more information on Brahms as a self-arranger and his relationships with his arrangers, see Katy Hamilton & Natasha Loges, *Brahms in the Home and the Concert Hall: Between Private and Public Performance* (Cambridge University Press, 2014), Chapter 6 "Brahms Arranges his Symphonies", and Chapter 8 "Brahms and his Arrangers"

[15] For statistics on the number of pianos being manufactured and lessons being sought in Paris, see Ritterman (1985), pp. 32-33

major social developments. Musical life was becoming less influenced by aristocratic patronage and public concerts were becoming more numerous. This rise in the number of concerts hosted, attended, and written about, in cultural centres such as London, Paris and Vienna highlights what William Weber calls a "cultural explosion", testifying to the intense social and culturally curious energy of middle-class society.[16]

The largest portion of non-institutional concerts during this time were benefit concerts. These were not charitable performances, but for the sponsoring performer themselves, whether they were local or travelling.[17] There was therefore an immense pressure for these concerts to succeed financially and this had a crucial impact on the structure of concert programmes and the repertoire performed therein. The sponsoring musician often called upon local colleagues to perform alongside them: the extended invitations to pupils, friends and colleagues of the supporting instrumentalists all helped to ensure more tickets were sold, as did a more varied programme. Since pianos were, in the early decades of the nineteenth century, seen as largely unsuitable for solo performance, it was even more important that programmes involved any number of "assisting" instrumentalists and, almost without exception, singers.[18]

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[16] For a more in-depth study of these issues, see Weber, William, *Music and the Middle Class: The Social Structure of the Concert Life in London, Paris and Vienna between 1830 and 1848*, 2nd edn (Ashgate Publishing Ltd., Aldershot, UK and Burlington, VT, USA, 1975, repr. 2004); see also Ritterman (1985), Chapter 1: Paris as a Concert Centre

[17] Weber (1975), pp. 21 & 159. Non-institutional, refers to concerts not presented by organisations such as the opera houses and state theatres.

[18] The claim that pianos were considered by so many as unsuitable for solo performance is one Ritterman makes on the basis of well-documented reviews in important publications. She rightly acknowledges that pianos were developing at a considerable rate and that many critics may not have been fully aware or appreciative of these, or that their views were simply outdated. Ritterman demonstrates that this is also one of the several reasons that pianists engaged supporting artists: so that the piano's rather dry and thin sound would be softened by the voice, or the violin (often referred to by critics as the true "king" of instruments). The claim about pianos being unsuitable for solo performance at this time would also appear to be at odds with the consideration that Beethoven, for example, was writing some of his most mature solo piano works, including the *Sonata in C major, Op. 53* (1804) and the *Sonata in F minor, Op. 57* (1806). A brief survey of the performance history of Beethoven Piano Sonatas from this time suggests that the works were not frequently performed, and when they were, often not in their entirety and exclusively in private salons. Liszt overcame tremendous prejudice in the battle to take the piano from the salon into the concert hall and it was many years before the pianos sonatas of Schubert, Beethoven, Mozart and Haydn, for example, became mainstream repertoire for theatres and halls. Liszt performed Beethoven's *Op. 26* and *Op. 27 No. 2* sonatas in 1838, and Clara Wieck performed *Op. 101* in 1843. These were, as William Weber points out, rare examples before the sonatas were performed more frequently in public from the 1850s onwards. See Weber, William, *The Great Transformation of Musical Taste: Concert Programming from Haydn to Brahms* (Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 164-166

Many of these benefit concerts were held in small salons, but more prominent pianists such as Liszt, Moscheles and Thalberg were able to secure the use of larger theatres such as the Salle Favart and Théâtre Italien. Using theatres appeared to have been the preference for pianists hosting benefit concerts, not only for their size, but because there were also resident orchestras available to provide assisting artists and orchestral accompaniment to concertos. This luxury was not afforded to all those who sought it, however; many pianists' requests to perform were declined by several of the large theatres. When they were able to, pianists hosting grander concerts in larger theatres therefore took full advantage of the resources available. In the eyes of the public at that time, pianist-composers (especially those who could improvise on themes called out by their audiences) held a much higher status with their public than pianists who were just interpreters. The chance to include a concerto they had composed themselves (in Loesser's words, "abounding in self-made openings for the kind of tricks at which [they were] best") was always exploited for maximum effect.[19]

Whether given by local or travelling pianists, these concerts were designed to maintain or enhance their reputations and be profitable. Paris in particular was a pianistic mecca, and existing research shows that by the late 1820s, pianists including Hummel, Field, Mocheles, Cramer, Hiller, and Liszt had all come to Paris to seize the opportunities provided by the expansion in concert life, aspiring to build careers.[20] This, in turn, continued to raise the levels of expectation from audiences and pianists had to produce even more of a spectacle if they were to stand out and capitalise on the benefit concerts.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century concert attendees were, by many accounts, noisy and distractible, and many audience members even considered them a "place in which to

[19] Loesser, Arthur, *Men, Women And Pianos: A Social History* (Dover Publications; New York and London, 1953, repr. 1990), p. 175. For more information on orchestral concert programmes and some of the features of improvisations/fantasies, refer to Chapter 10: The Piano in Public

[20] See Alan Walker, *Franz Liszt: The Virtuoso Years 1811-1847* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1983), p. 161 and Ritterman (1985), p. 30

pursue more pressing activities".[21] As Evelina remarked in Fanny Burney's novel "indeed I am quite astonished to find how little music is attended to in silence: for though everybody seems to admire, hardly anybody listens."[22] Despite the social and cultural changes described above, the sustained popularity of Opera was, as James Johnson identifies, the catalyst for developing audiences' committed, serious engagement with music into the nineteenth century. Opera buffa's virtuosity in the singing and its dramatic ensembles, he claims, actively discouraged audiences from talking during performances and to start dutifully observing the spectacle before them.[23]

In the first decades of the nineteenth century, the opera was still mostly controlled by the authorities and the running of them required large and expensive organisations. Opera ticket prices were generally more expensive than those for concerts, and the difficulty to access performances was compounded by the fact that they required large theatres, whereas concerts could be held almost anywhere.[24] Therefore, as Suttoni claims:

> *alternative means were derived for [opera's] dissemination, mostly through the most popular domestic instrument. The repertory of operatic adaptations, of one kind or another, was very large, and used not only for domestic music-making but also at concerts by virtuoso pianists*.[25]

It is therefore not surprising that composer-pianists united their need to present themselves in the most dazzling fashion possible with audiences' appetite for listening to both popular and new operas. Concert programmes from the 1820s to 1840s show that hundreds of operatic paraphrases or fantasies, sometimes composed, sometimes improvised, were presented at

[21]Isacoff, Stuart, *A natural History of the Piano: The Instrument, the Musicians – from Mozart to Modern Jazz and Everything in Between* (Souvenir Press, 2011), p. 60
[22] Quoted in Weber (1975), p. 3
[23] See James Johnson, *Listening in Paris: A Cultural History* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 206-227
[24] See Weber (2008), Chapter 5: Convention and experiment in benefit and virtuoso concerts
[25] Suttoni, Charles, 'Piano Fantasies and Transcriptions' in *Grove Music Online* (2002). Available at https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.O005677 accessed 01/07/18

benefit concerts. Audiences were seduced upon hearing familiar themes or music coupled with dazzling keyboard acrobatics. As Suttoni rightly suggests, the operatic paraphrases were simply "the logical result of the social and musical forces at that time".[26]

In 1830, Czerny wrote in his *School of Practical Composition, Op. 600*:

OF THE FANTASIA ON KNOWN THEMES

Compositions of this kind are now greatly esteemed, and have, for the moment, supplanted many other Pianoforte works. This is easily accounted for. The public in general experiences great delight on finding in a composition some pleasing melody with which it is already familiar, and which it has previously heard with rapture at the Opera: for most melodies acquire their popularity by the fine performance of a human voice and the charm of theatrical effect. Now, when such melodies are introduced in a spirited and brilliant manner, in a Fantasia, and there developed or varied, both the composer and the practised player can ensure great success.[27]

Chopin performed his *Variations on Mozart's "Là ci darem la mano", Op. 2* at his Viennese debut in August 1829, and his *Grand duo concertant sur des thèmes de Robert le diable, B. 70* with cellist Auguste Franchomme for the occasion of his 1832 debut in Paris; Thalberg, when establishing himself in Paris having moved there in late 1835, wrote his *Grande fantaisie sur 'Les Huguenots'* for his recital at the Théâtre Italien in April 1836.[28] In March 1837 aristocratic society bore witness to Liszt and Thalberg competing in the legendary piano-duel for the title of greatest pianist; both pianists played their own operatic paraphrases (Liszt his *Grande fantaisie sur des motifs de Niobe, S.419* and Thalberg his *Fantasia on*

[26] Suttoni, Charles, *Piano and Opera: A Study of the Piano Fantasies Written on Opera Themes in the Romantic Era* (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1973), p. 3
[27] Czerny, Carl, *The School of Practical Composition, Op.600*, trans. by John Bishop (Robert Cox & Co., London 1848), p. 86
[28] Incidentally, the full score for *Les Huguenots* was announced for publication just a fortnight later

Rossini's Moses, Op. 33) to best exhibit their exceptional gifts.[29]

Opera – art for the masses performed by large ensembles with its literary and visual theatrical aspects – still, however, seemed far from the piano's nature: a solo instrument for the lone performer, better suited to performance in salons rather than grand theatres.[30] Perhaps owing to a combination of their love of opera and the general incompatibility of their instrument, pianists worked to create a singing style of playing. Chopin's admiration of the greatest singers of his day and his demand for great *cantabile* playing from his pupils are well documented in his correspondence.[31] Sigismund Thalberg's *L'Art du chant appliqué au piano: transcriptions des célèbres oeuvres des grandes maitres, Op. 70* (1853) – a collection of twenty-four transcriptions from operatic numbers complete with a preface with eleven rules for *cantabile* playing – is clearly a testament to the importance he weighed upon transcribing opera for the cultivation of the singing style of piano playing.[32] This opus is even filed under "pedagogical" in the New Grove Dictionary of Music.[33]

1.3 Development of the piano

It is important to consider that operatic paraphrases on the piano, along with other arrangements of multi-instrumental works, were largely facilitated by the significant developments in the quality of keyboard instruments. Benefit concerts were also being held in piano makers' salons which fuelled the need for makers to produce the best instruments

[29] Hamilton, Kenneth, 'The Virtuoso Tradition' in *The Cambridge Companion to the Piano*, pp.57-60, ed. by David Rowland (Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 57-60

[30] As late as 1837, in a letter to Adolphe Pictet de Rochemont, Liszt still felt that pianos lacked the "essential element of varied sonority", but have "managed to produce symphonic effects that are satisfactory and which were completely beyond the ken of our predecessors". He does, however, lay some of the blame on the weakness of the arrangements themselves and not the instruments. See Suttoni (1989), p. 46

[31] De Waal (2013) pp. 179-180. See also Adam Zamoyski, *Chopin: Prince of the Romantics* (Harper Press, London 2010)

[32] See Hamilton, Kenneth, *After the Golden Age: Romantic Pianism and Modern Performance* (Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 158-159

[33] Wangermée, Robert, 'Thalberg, Sigismond (Fortuné François)' in *Grove Music Online*. Available at https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.27766 accessed 14/07/17

possible to showcase themselves in a hugely competitive market, and to win favour among the increasing number of pianistic giants. Maker Sébastian Érard (1752-1831) was responsible for one of the most important engineering breakthroughs the piano saw during the first decades of the century. He worked to create a reliable escapement and double escapement action for his pianos so that keys could be repeated without first having to return to their natural resting position. Not only did this allow faster repetition and the ability to better control fast trills, it increased control of a fuller dynamic range leading to the ability to grade dense textures and to delineate musical material in an hitherto impossible fashion. Patented in 1821, the new action mechanism was able to create a balance between the richness of tone of the English pianos using heavier hammers and a greater depth of touch, and the lightness found on the Viennese instruments but without the thin and dry sound quality. It was this milestone in piano design which helped enhance the instrument's reputation as one worthy of solo performances and "transformed [it] into a master of musical illusion".[34] It therefore better facilitated arrangements of ever more dramatic and virtuosic operatic transcriptions.

Eduard Hanslick reflected in 1866 that "the enlargement and perfection of the piano"[35] was key to the success of orchestral transcriptions, and Arthur Loesser, in more detail, that it was "the inclusion of metal frames, double-escapement actions, felt-covered hammers and widening of the keyboard to seven octaves that permitted more profitable use of the most extreme human technical abilities".[36] The improvements in the quality of the instruments made it possible for performers and composers to write more virtuosic and colourful music; the broader pitch range, better pedal mechanisms and dynamic possibilities meant that orchestral sonorities could be better replicated than hitherto. Henri Herz described the piano as:

[34] Walker (1983), p. 165
[35] Leipziger Allgemeine Musik-Zeitung, No. 43 (24/10/1866), p. 346. Quoted in Christensen (1999), p. 262
[36] Loesser (1953), p. 358

embracing the whole extent of the musical ladder, it is of all instruments the most proper to take the place of the orchestra; and consequently, to retrace the remembrance and reproduce the effects of dramatic compositions.[37]

Liszt, who was at the forefront among pianists at the time and was working directly with Erard, said that the piano was able to reproduce the audible range of an orchestra, and that is might be compared to an engraving in relation to a painting, reproducing at least the light and shade, as we saw in the epigraph at the head of this chapter.

Through the assemblage of information set out above, we can see a clear trend of pianist-composers performing operatic fantasies to help establish their careers throughout the early decades of the nineteenth century. Czerny pointed out that "several great and celebrated Virtuosi have particularly distinguished themselves in this class of composition"[38] and that "Grand Fantasias of this class are specially intended to present Virtuosi with the opportunity of displaying their talent in performance, and in the bravura style".[39] Loesser claimed that "to a considerable extent, the piano music of the years 1825-1875 was a dependency of the opera".[40] Although this may appear true in that the relationship between opera and the piano repertoire at the time was arguably symbiotic, it might be more accurate to say that much of the piano music being performed was a consequence of the broader social, political, economic and cultural circumstances at that time in the ways that have been delineated above.[41]

[37] Herz, Henri, *New and Complete Piano School*, 1st American edn (John F. Nunns, New York, 1844), p. 9
[38] Quoted in Herz (1844), p. 9
[39] Ibid., p. 87
[40] Loesser (1953), p. 361
[41] See Chambers, Kenneth, *Sigismund Thalberg: The Three-Hand method and Piano Techniques of his Operatic Paraphrases* (University of Houston, 2004), Appendices I & II. Although far from exhaustive and lacking in composition dates, the tables give a good indication of the number of paraphrases being written by pianists such as Alkan, Chopin, Cramer, Henselt, Herz, Liszt, Thalberg etc. Ritterman (1985) is more exhaustive in demonstrating, through reproductions of concert programmes, how frequently such works were performed in public concerts, though without such a list of compositions. Hamilton also provides a compelling account of the development of concert repertoire and public response. See Hamilton (2008), Chapter Two: Creating the Solo Recital

1.4 Nomenclature of transcriptions

Having treated other composers' music in almost 400 works (that we know of), Liszt can certainly be considered the greatest contributor to the genre of piano transcription and his output displays a great many bedrock features of it.[42] Henselt transcribed works or movements of over thirty pieces, twelve of which have their origins in opera, and Thalberg based forty-eight of his compositions, or movements thereof, on works of other composers, forty-three of which were of operatic origin. Composers assigned a rich variety of titles to these compositions ranging from *Transcription*, *Fantaisie*, *Impromptu*, *Divertissement, Souvenir*, *Caprice*, *Pensées musicales*, *Illustrations*, *Paraphrase* and *Réminiscences* – the latter Liszt himself invented.[43] Dominik Rahmer says, "in Liszt's case, the general term 'piano arrangement' covers a broad spectrum, from virtuosic variations and free fantasies on opera themes to arrangements that are faithful to the original to the point of being almost piano reductions".[44] Moving into the 1840s and beyond, many transcriptions, especially those by Liszt, became less about the pianistic pyrotechnics and pianists' self-promotion. Examples show that many became about communicating, and even providing a précised account of the opera, its themes, their relationships to each other as well as their function within the opera.

Authorities are not always in complete agreement as to nomenclature when assessing piano arrangements and transcriptions. The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians describes that:

> *The word 'arrangement' might be applied to any piece of music based on or incorporating pre-existing material: variation form, the contrafactum, the parody*

[42] Chopin, who had positive things to say about very few composers, once quipped about Liszt that "he is an excellent binder who puts other people's work between his own covers". De Waal (2013) p. 15
[43] Sitwell, Sacheverell, *Liszt* (Faber and Faber, 1934), p. 80
[44] Wagner-Liszt: *Isoldens Liebestod*, ed. by Dominik Rahmer (G. Henle Verlag, Munich 2013), p. iii. See also Suttoni (1989), pp. 46-47, in the 1837 letter to de Rochemont in which Liszt clearly refers to his as-literal-as-possible arrangement of Berlioz *Symphonie fantastique* as a *partition de piano*. He also says that he had, by that point, already transcribed the first four Beethoven symphonies. He goes on to bemoan that "arrangements" are usually "derangements" and that titles of such works should properly be distinguished separately as the "infinite number of 'caprices' and 'fantasies' that inundate us".

mass, the pasticcio, and liturgical works based on a cantus firmus all involve some measure of arrangement. In the sense in which it is commonly used among musicians, however, the word may be taken to mean either the transference of a composition from one medium to another or the elaboration (or simplification) of a piece, with or without a change of medium. In either case some degree of recomposition is usually involved, and the result may vary from a straightforward, almost literal, transcription to a paraphrase which is more the work of the arranger than of the original composer. It should be added, though, that the distinction implicit here between an arrangement and a transcription is by no means universally accepted.[45]

In The New Harvard Dictionary of Music, *paraphrase* is defined as:

In the 19th Century, a solo work of great virtuosity in which popular melodies, usually from operas, were elaborated (as in Liszt's Paraphrase de Concert sur Rigoletto*, 1859); such pieces could also be called* Fantasia *or* Reminiscences *and were distinguished from works attempting to be faithful transcriptions*.[46]

Alan Walker employs two broad categories in discussing Liszt's arrangements of other composers' works: (1) paraphrases and (2) transcriptions. He says that:

in a paraphrase the arranger is free to vary the original and weave his own fantasy around it. A transcription, on the other hand, must be a faithful re-creation of the original. Liszt's paraphrases of operas by Mozart, Bellini, Donizetti and Verdi sometimes encapsulate an entire act in a 15-minute concert piece, juxtaposing and combining the themes en route. A well-known example occurs in his paraphrase of

[45] Boyd, Malcolm, 'Arrangement' in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Vol. 2, 2nd edn, ed. by Stanley Sadie (2001)
[46] Sherr, Richard, 'Paraphrase' in *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music*, ed. by Don Michael Randel (The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1986), p. 632

Bellini's Norma, whose coda combines two of the opera's main themes – 'Deh! non volerli' and 'Ite sul colle'.[47]

Confusion can lie here in that Walker refers to the *paraphrase* of Bellini's *Norma*, yet Liszt himself called it a *Réminiscences*, and there must be identifiable differences between the nomenclature. The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians does not supply definitions for either of these despite the prolific use of them by composers, and writers on the subject appear to use them interchangeably. There seems to be no universal standard definition for the types of piano transcription beyond a literal arrangement and a free paraphrase, yet the large variety of forms found within these genres cannot possibly be categorised or understood in this way. To satisfactorily identify the form of Adès's *Concert Paraphrase*, and to draw parallels with similar models, differences need to be identified between a transcription, paraphrase, fantasy, réminiscense, and so on, in the context of operatic transcriptions. It has therefore been necessary to create a working taxonomy, which is set out below.

1. Arrangements and literal transcriptions: addressing pianistic idiosyncrasies[48]

In an arrangement, in the traditional sense of the word, no or very few changes are made to the original text. Alterations are purely borne out of technical considerations, be they in consideration of the instrument and/or the structure of the human hand. A literal transcription represents the original music in as pure a fashion as possible, facilitated by the transcriber. A

[47] Eckhardt, Maria, Mueller, Rena Charnin & Walker, Alan, 'Franz Liszt §10: Arrangements' in *Grove Music Online*. Available at https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.48265 accessed 22/07/17

[48] My commentary below on technical considerations stems principally from my experience as an active pianist, which exceeds twenty years. I have studied/played all the examples given below and publicly performed most of them. Matters concerning technical challenges or whether a piece of music is idiosyncratically written for the piano are largely issues of physiology and kinaesthetics. They are consequently personal and unique to every performer. My comments are therefore by no means a claim of absolute authority, but rather observations with which I am confident many experienced pianists would agree. These are matters on which no amount of theorising could possibly draw any conclusions, as an understanding of how idiosyncratically a piece of instrumental music is written for its instrument can only be truly judged by those well-versed in the use of that instrument. I am drawing on my understanding of the acoustical nature of the modern grand piano, its mechanics as well as my understanding of piano technique and performance in a broader sense. The music examples which follow are not given chronologically by date of composition, but rather according to their nature.

relevant parallel to draw with literal transcription is linguistic translation: with transcriptions the music is being transferred from one instrumental medium to another, and linguistic translation sets about communicating the message of text in another language. In both instances the intention is to retain the original meaning. However, to make the music or text idiomatic in the new form, it is often necessary to make small alterations since instrument- or language-specific idiosyncrasies do not always work in a direct translation.[49]

An example of a literal transcription would be Giovanni Sgambati's *Mélodie de Gluck*. In Fig. 1.1b, we can see that Sgambati adheres very closely to the parent text shown in Fig. 1.1a. The registers of the parts, the key of D minor and almost all the notes are retained as in the original. His use of three staves makes it clear for the interpreter to differentiate the separate components of the text: bass line, inner accompanimental material and the melody. The up/down stemming system in the central stave employed by Sgambati indicates which hand plays which notes. Whilst in principle it would be possible to notate everything from Gluck's score, the violin material would acoustically become too dominant on the modern piano with the inner repeated notes on the second and fourth semi-quavers on each beat of bb. 1, 3 & 4 etc.[50] Even with the double escapement action on the modern piano, the balance challenges remain present owing to the large stretches found throughout the piece and the need to break these quickly. Sgambati has therefore supplied pedal indications and avoided repeating those inner notes to reproduce the balance between the parts as closely to a performance of the orchestral score as possible. The effect is an imitation of the original which considers the demands on both the performer and instrument.

[49] For details on linguist Roman Jakobson's distinctions of translations (intralinguistic, interlinguistic and intersemiotic translations) and their comparison to different types of musical transcription see De Waal (2013) p. 63. Pianist Sean Chen also touches upon these issues in his article *A Look at Transcriptions: Liszt's Concert Paraphrase of Wagner's Overture zu Tannhäuser* for the American Pianists Association blog. Available at https://seanchenpiano.com/pianonotes/2017/08/14/overture-zu-tannhauser/ accessed 10/11/17

[50] The modern piano has remained largely unchanged since the 1850s. See Rowland, David 'The Piano Since c.1825' in *The Cambridge Companion to the Piano*, ed. by David Rowland (Cambridge University Press 1998), p. 45; Ritterman (1985), pp. 116-117; Loesser (1953), Section 4, Ch. 10: The Modern Piano Evolves

Fig. 1.1a: Gluck, ‘Dance of the Blessed Spirits’ from *Orfeo ed Eurydice*, Act 2 Scene 2, bb. 1-5

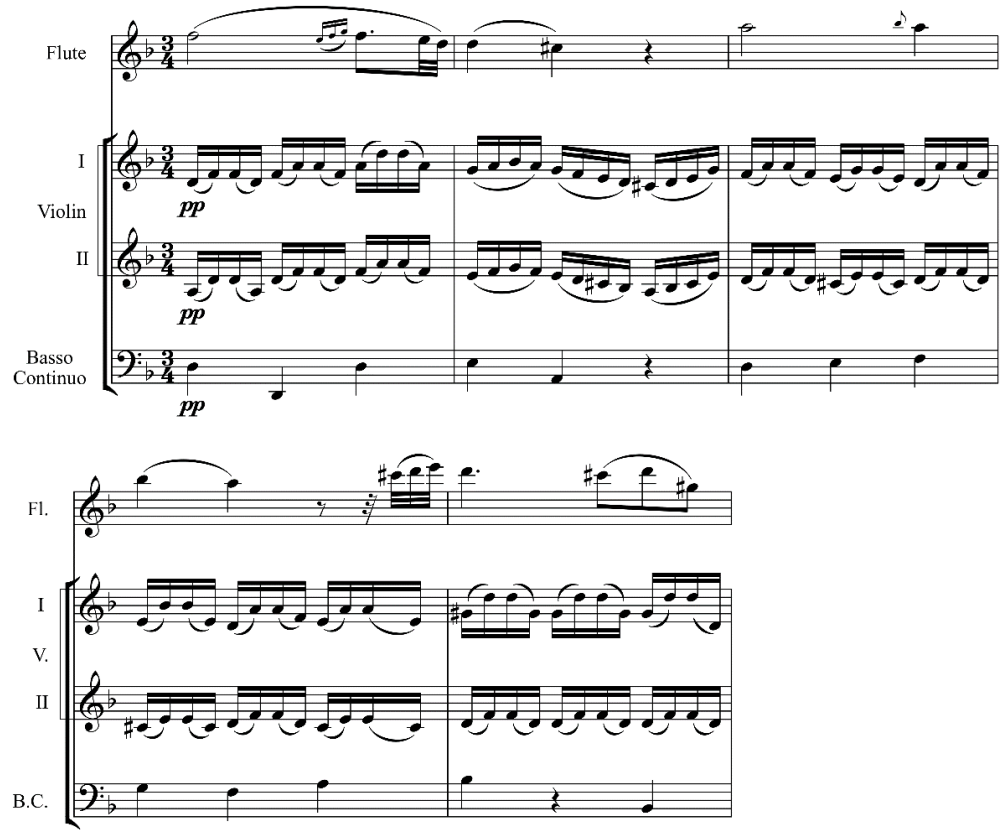
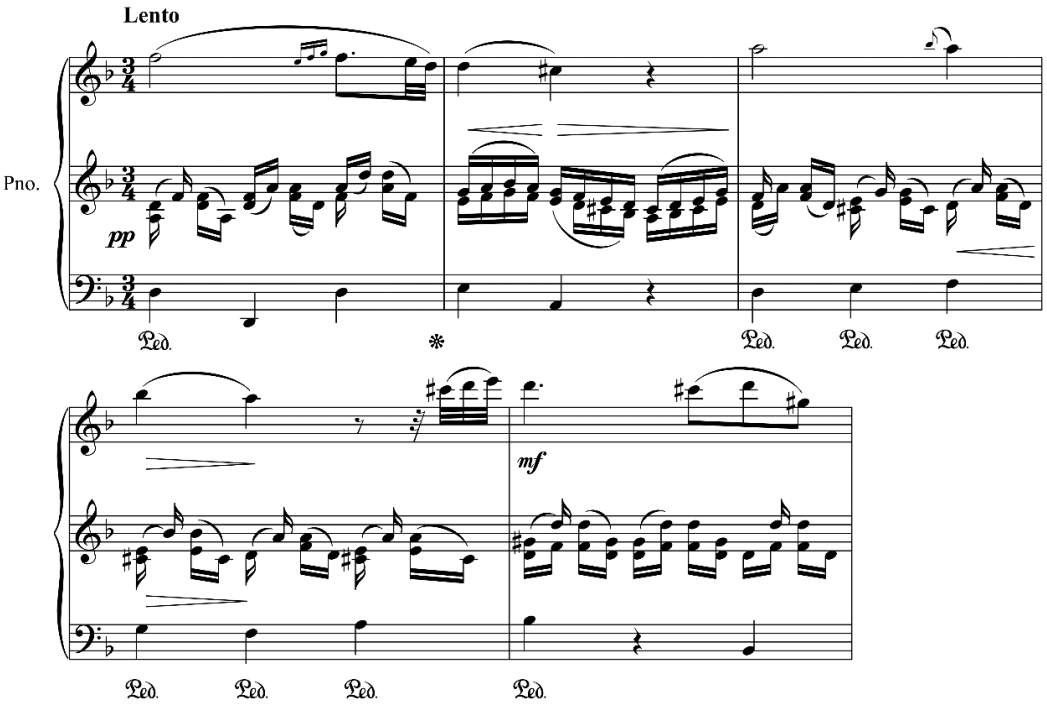


Fig. 1.1b: Sgambati, *Mélodie de Gluck*, bb. 1-5



Other examples of similarly literal examples include many, but certainly not all, of the transcriptions Liszt made after the years during which he was actively performing, including the Wagner transcription. Rather than exploiting the music and instrumental possibilities for his own professional gain, as was highlighted to have frequently been the case among pianists earlier in the century, Liszt exploited his own fame as a pianist and gifts as a composer to promote and help disseminate Wagner's music. In fact, in a letter to Breitkopf & Härtel in 1876, Liszt said that "such transcriptions served only as humble propaganda…for Wagner's sublime genius".[51] Certainly the transcriptions from *Tristan and Isolde* and *Tannhäuser* became well-known before the operas themselves, and indeed were instrumental in getting those operas performed more frequently.[52] His transcription of *Isoldens Liebestod, S. 447* (from *Tristan and Isolde*, most likely written in 1867 and published 1868), for instance, gives the impression of a mostly literal transcription of the scene in question.[53]

The tremolandi in Fig. 1.2b, imitative of the lower strings in Fig. 1.2a, are thinned out: there are just two notes rather than the full four-note chord plus the bass in the original. Even on the modern piano, it can still be difficult to control fast tremolandi at hushed dynamic level, especially in the bass register where 'noise' can easily accumulate when the pedal is being used. By writing it as he has, Liszt has been able to help the performer retain the quiet dynamic and balance between the parts in Wagner's score.

[51] Kregor, Jonathan, *Liszt as Transcriber* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 149
[52] De Waal (2013) pp. 209-210
[53] In considering the indeterminacy of the opening bars, Liszt created an introduction of four bars taken from the 'Liebe-heiligstes Leben' theme from Act 2 of *Tristan und Isolde*.

Fig. 1.2a: Wagner, ‘Vorspiel und Isoldens Liebestod’ from *Tristan und Isolde*, bb. 112-115

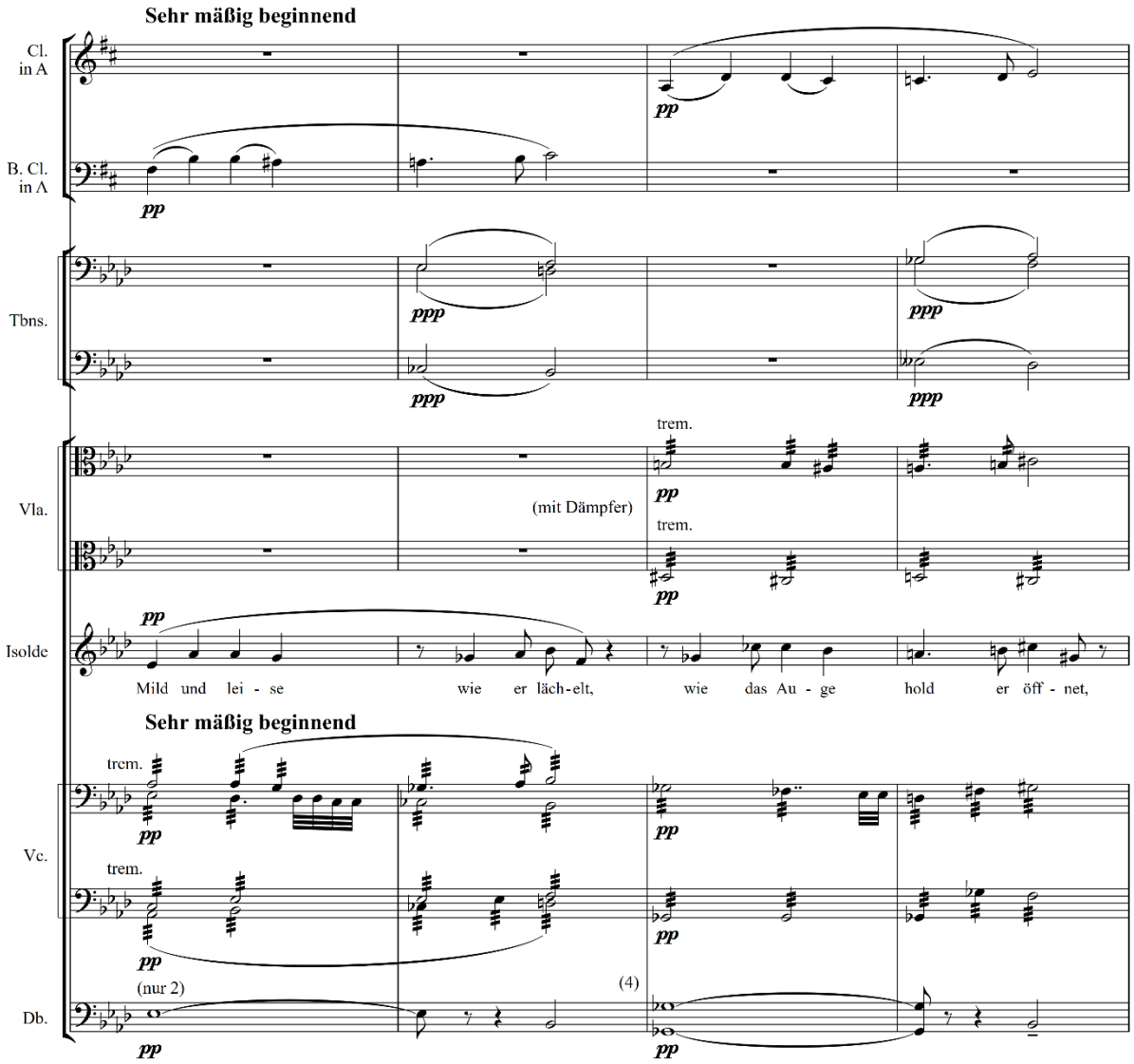


Fig. 1.2b, Liszt, *Isoldens Liebestod, S. 447*, bb. 5-8

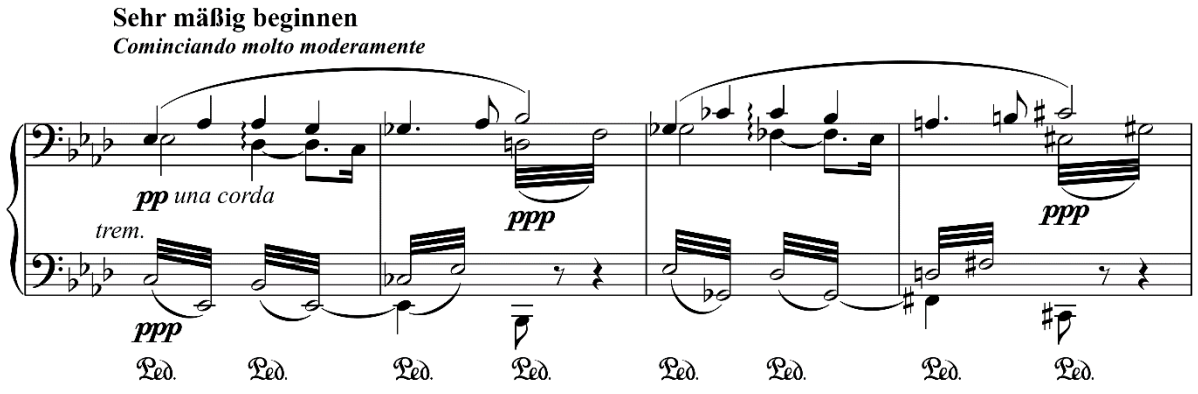
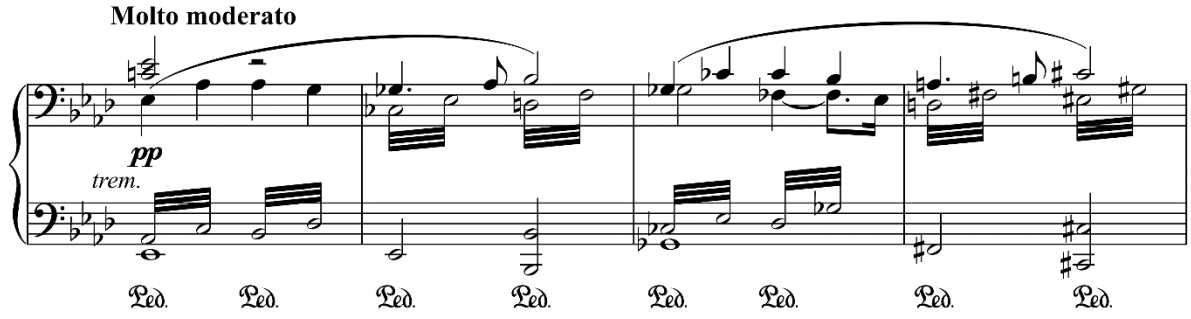


Fig. 1.2c: Moszkowski, *Isoldens Tod* bb. 23-26



As we can see in Fig. 1.2c, Moszkowski keeps the left-hand tremolandi closer to the original score (Fig. 1.2a) in terms of their placement in his transcription, however, unless they are performed with exceptional control, the long bass notes would soon disappear beneath them given the inherent decay in sound on the piano.[54] In Fig. 1.2c, the bass notes occur just once or twice per bar, versus the several dozen notes against them in the tremolandi part by Liszt shown in Fig. 1.2b. It is also physically easier to play a rotary tremolo (between two notes when the wrist can be employed to rotate/shake), rather than just between the fingers (as in Moszkowski's, where the 5th finger needs to be held down whilst the upper fingers must alternate very quickly, unaided by the wrist). Liszt opted to include the bass notes in those tremolandi, thus giving the impression that they are sustained as in the double bass part. This is an example of how a transcription bends the principle of literality to give the acoustical illusion of the original better, whilst also keeping the material physically simpler to play.

Liszt's version continues to maintain a fairly faithful realisation of Wagner's score, whereas Moszkowski occasionally embellishes the text, as can be seen by comparing the two corresponding passages shown in Figs. 1.3a and 1.3b. We can see that Liszt has given prominence to the cello line (marked individually *espressivo*) and the grace notes in the left hand supply the bass line and harmonic support sustained with his pedal indications; the right-

[54] Moszkowski solved the problem of starting the 'Liebestod', by writing a twenty-two bars long introduction based closely on material from the opening prelude of the opera

hand realises the upper strings tremolandi. Moszkowski's equivalent material in Fig. 1.3b is arguably less successful in capturing the musical tension: the right-hand filigree, whilst clearly attempting to emulate the harp part (marked ***pp*** by Wagner), gives the passage a rather salon-music-like air about it, especially with the chromatic passing note A in the penultimate beat of the second bar. The sustained intensity of the string tremolandi (marked *molto crescendo* by Wagner) has been removed in favour of the brilliance of the right-hand writing in Moszkowski's realisation.

Fig. 1.3a: Liszt, *Isoldens Liebestod, S. 447* bb. 13-14

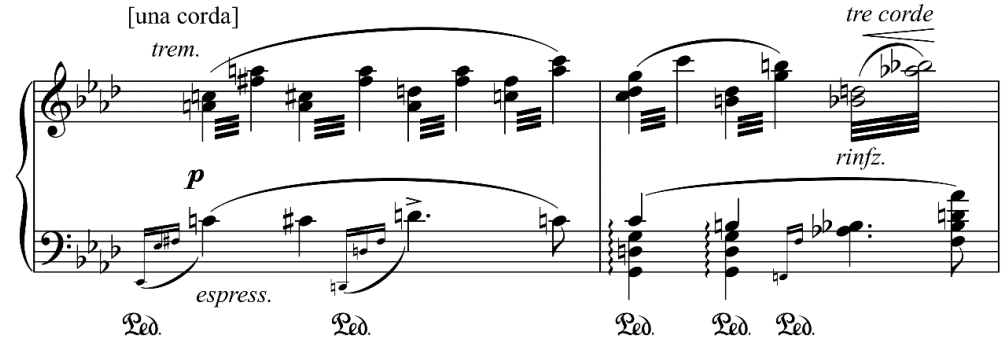
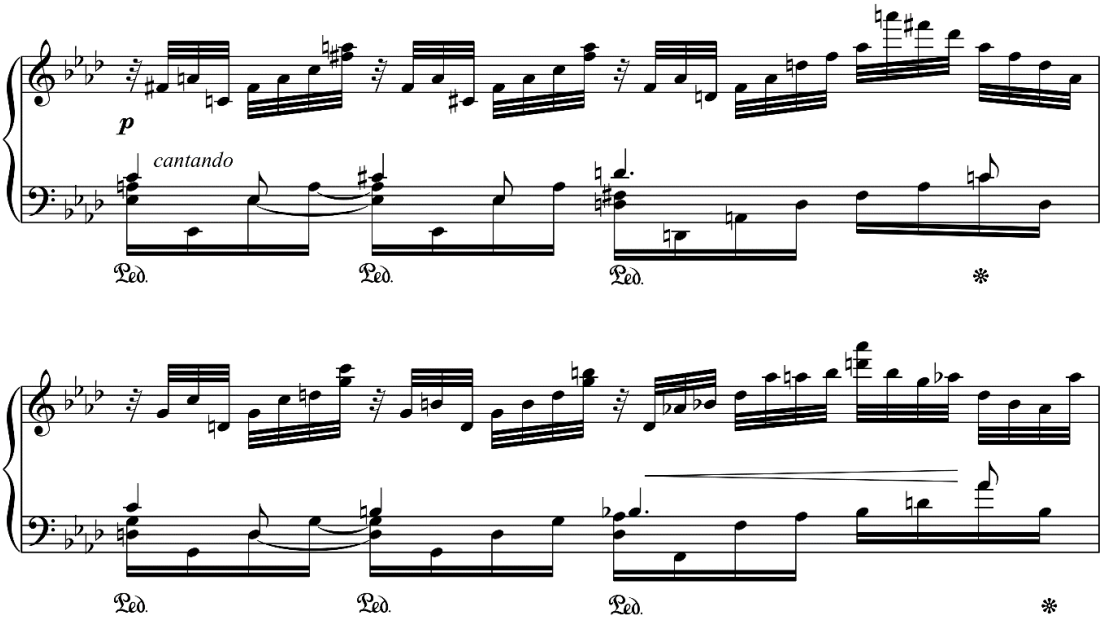


Fig. 1.3b: Moszkowski, *Isoldens Tod*, bb. 31-22



Liszt does, however, make a variety of further alterations throughout the piece as seen

in the corresponding material below, in which Liszt alters the Violin II part in beats 2 and 3 of the first bar of Fig. 1.4a. By doing so, he avoids repeating the C-natural melody note on the fourth beat, thus providing a natural decay to the sound imitative of that produced with the general diminuendo of the orchestral score.

Fig. 1.4a: Wagner, *Vorspiel und Isoldens Liebestod*, bb. 128-129

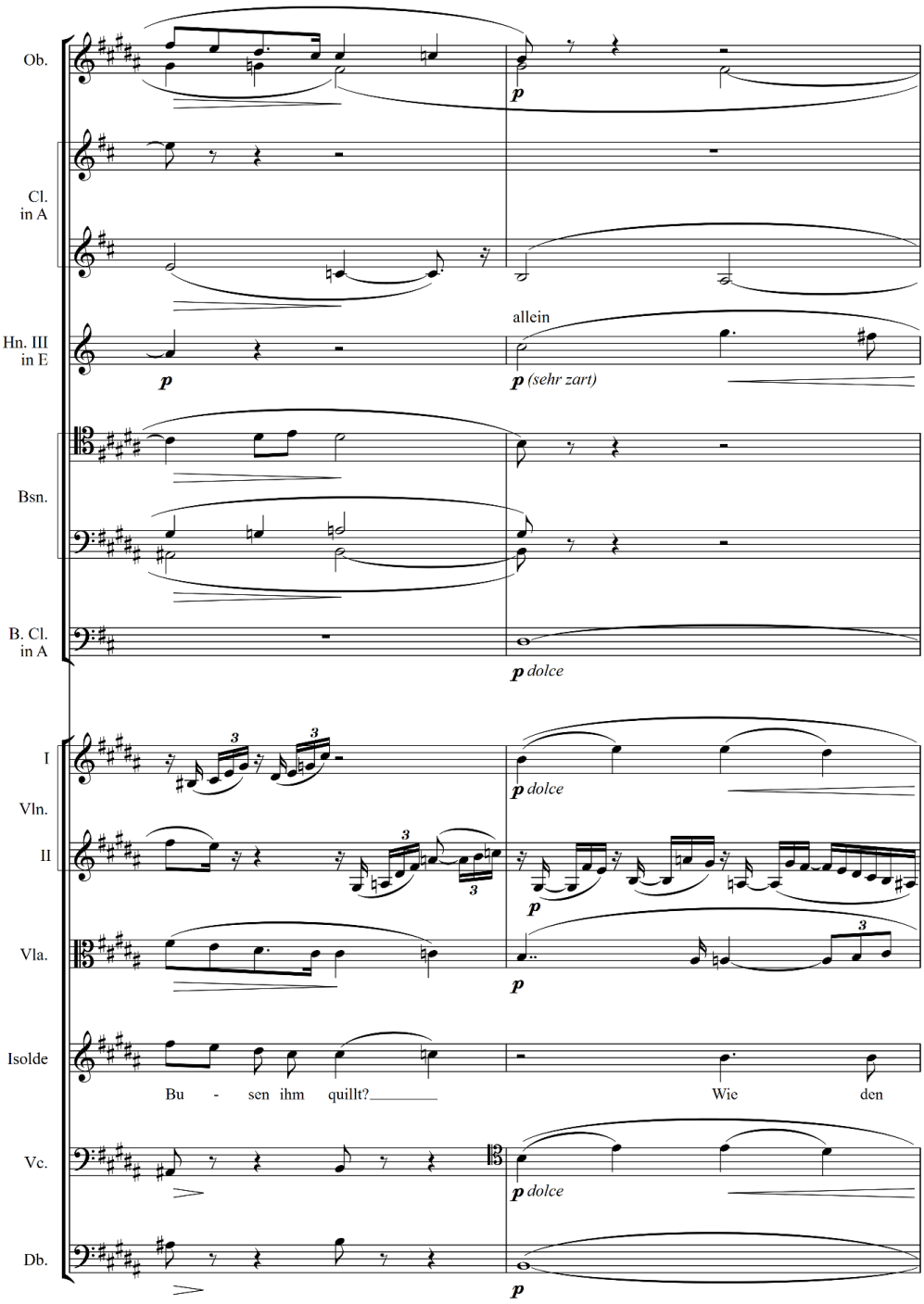
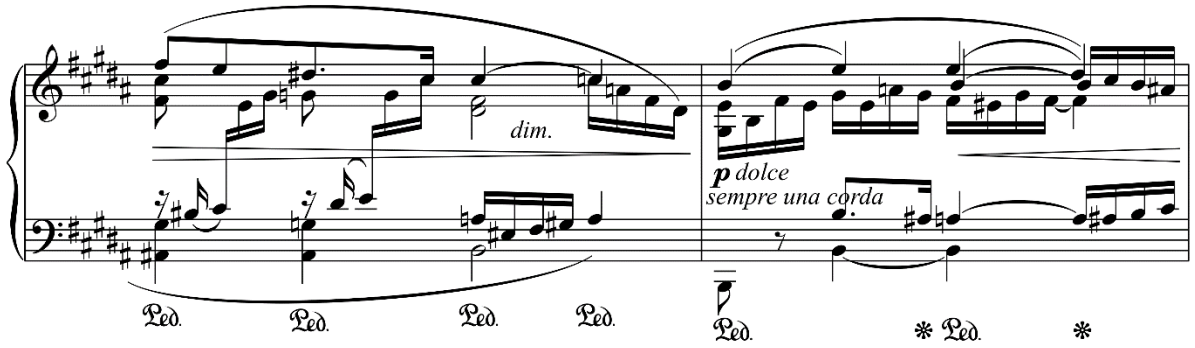


Fig. 1.4b: Liszt, *Isoldens Liebestod*, *S. 447*, bb. 21-22



By drawing comparison between Liszt's and Moszkowski's transcriptions of the same musical material, we can see that both have taken minor liberties with the text in order to facilitate realisations suited to the piano. The difference between them is that Liszt's are subtler and appear to best suit a more faithful imitation of Wagner's original when played on the modern piano. It is noteworthy that throughout both Liszt's and Moszkowski's transcriptions, the majority of the solo vocal part from the original is omitted altogether and is occasionally just alluded to. When preparing a concert version of the opening Prelude (which Wagner referred to as the *Liebestod*) and the closing scene (*Verklärung* – "*Transfiguration"* – not *Isoldens Liebestod* as Liszt calls his transcription), Wagner himself suggested that it be performed without the vocal part altogether.[55]

2. Paraphrases

Taxonomising the different types of transcriptions that go beyond the idiosyncratic adjustments found in literal ones, or in such arrangements as those highlighted above, brings about several challenges. Aside from the plethora of titles employed by composers, transcriptions are varied in their construction and degree of freedom from the original material.

[55] De Waal (2013), pp. 223-4. It is noteworthy that in the premiere performances Adès gave of his *Concert Paraphrase* he performed Liszt's *Isoldens Liebestod* alongside it. Adès himself omits much of the vocal part in his own *Concert Paraphrase*'s 3rd movement, which shall be highlighted later in the project.

Walker relegates this issue to a footnote, saying that the difference is simply that a "paraphrase, as its name implies, is a free variation on the original. The transcription, on the other hand, is strict, literal, objective; it seeks to unfold the original work as accurately as possible".[56] As has already been demonstrated, and will be shown further still, this is not strictly true. Suttoni felt it best to abandon a strict etymological classification of *fantasies* – in fact, calling it futile – and instead to create a more descriptive approach.[57] Given the lack of consistency in the historical use of the title *fantasy*, this would be a reasonable conclusion. However, we are concerned with works not only titled *fantasy*. Rather than taxonomising the titles in strict categories, by assessing observable trends it is possible to create a scale of transcription from literal to extremely liberal, whilst bearing the various forms in mind. This will allow individual works to be assessed on their own terms, whilst still understanding and seeing them in relation to other works in the same genre.

As we have already seen, Czerny wrote in 1830 in his *School of Practical Composition* that performers could be sure of popular success when performing virtuosic works which incorporated familiar melodies from operas.[58] Advising on the construction of this type of *Fantasia*, he went on:

> *Two or three favorite themes are first selected which differ from each other in respect to their time, character, and degree of movement. The leading idea for the Introduction may then be taken from one of these themes, and be more or less developed. Original ideas and melodies may also be interwoven in the same.*[59]

However, before studying opera transcriptions which incorporate several themes as Czerny discusses, we can observe composers writing their own extended introductions based on material found from the original text when writing embellished transcriptions of just one

[56] Alan Walker (1983), p. 167
[57] Suttoni (1973), p. 35
[58] Refer to page 32
[59] Czerny (1848), p. 86

scene. In his *Paraphrase de concert sur Rigoletto, S. 434* Liszt opens with an introduction of 17 bars. It is freely composed in an improvisatory fashion but founded upon melodic gestures from the parent text and in the alienating key of E major (see Figs. 1.5a/b/c).[60] Although focused on music from a single scene in Verdi's opera (*Bella figlia dell' amore* from Act III) and largely traceable bar by bar to the original, it features many more liberties with the text than we have seen in his transcription of *Isoldens Liebestod*. He also concludes with a highly virtuosic coda instead of the whispered conclusion in Verdi's original score.[61]

Fig. 1.5a: Liszt, *Paraphrase de concert sur Rigoletto, S. 434*, bb. 1-2

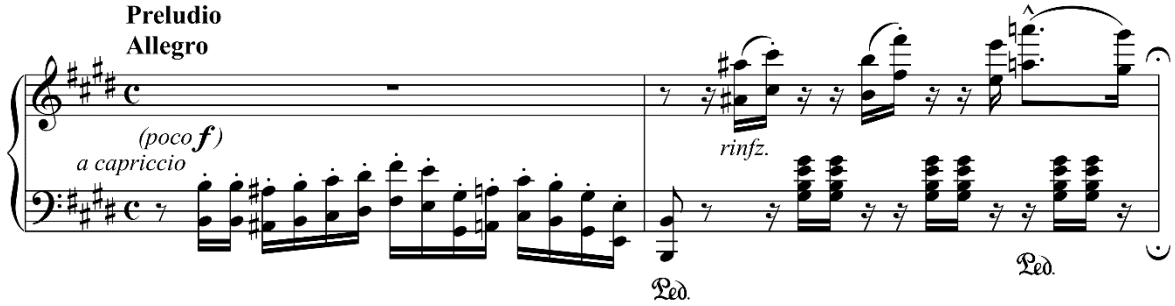


Fig. 1.5b: Verdi, 'Bella figlia dell'amore' from *Rigoletto,* Act 3, bb. 16-17

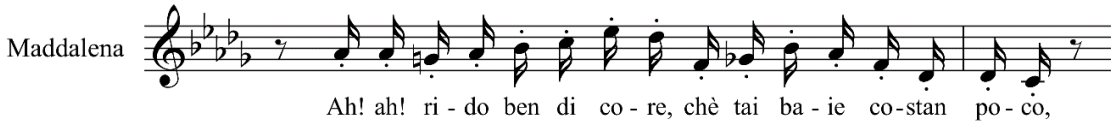
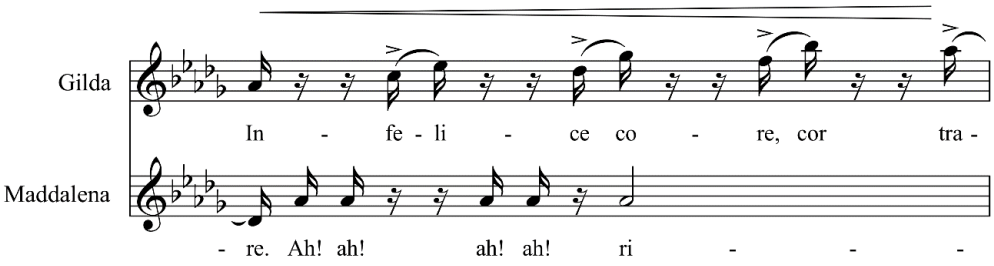


Fig. 1.5c: Verdi, 'Bella figlia dell'amore' from *Rigoletto,* Act 3, b. 33



[60] Hamilton notes the mediant key relationship as typical for Liszt's later paraphrases. See Hamilton, Kenneth, *The Opera Fantasias and Transcriptions of Franz Liszt: A Critical Study* (D.Phil thesis, Oxford University, Balliol College, 1989), p. 21

[61] The *Rigoletto Paraphrase* was written not for himself to perform, but for Hans von Bülow to play at concerts in Berlin and Paris in 1859/1860. See Liszt, Franz, *Paraphrase de concert sur Rigoletto, S. 434* (ed. Ullrich Scheideler, Henle-Verlag, Munich, 2010), p. iv.

However, by comparing the relative literality to Wagner's text seen in Figs. 1.2b, 1.3a and 1.4b to the examples below, we can see that Liszt deviates considerably more from Verdi's. Whilst it is clear from just these four bars of corresponding text that Liszt has largely replicated Verdi's score, the woodwind parts in Fig. 1.6a are replaced with improvisatory arpeggios in Fig. 1.6b and Liszt has dotted the melody's rhythm in the second halves of bb. 1 and 3. It could be argued that this is a form of composed rubato and it helps prevent the music becoming static with the inherent decay of the piano's sound. Liszt is also explicit in his textual prioritising of melody and harmony by using small typesetting, accounting for the inevitably contextual dynamics of orchestral writing.

Fig. 1.6a: Verdi, 'Bella figlia dell'amore' from *Rigoletto,* Act 3, bb. 1-4

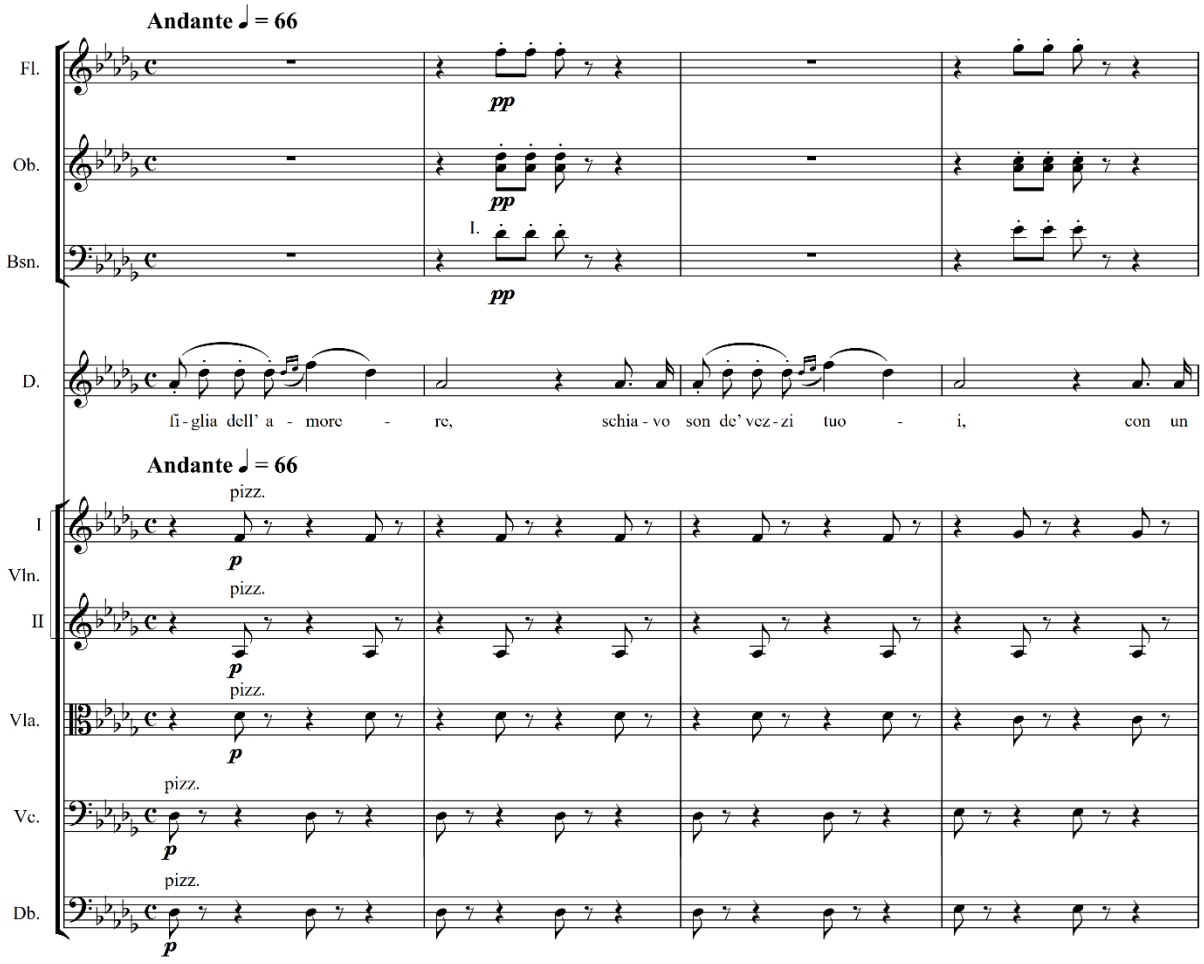
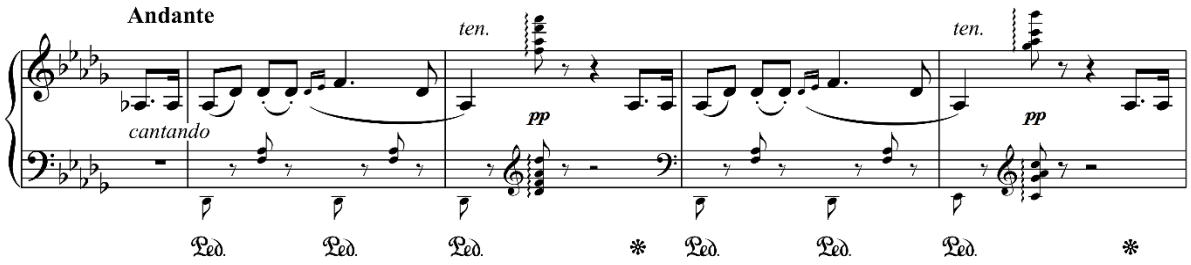
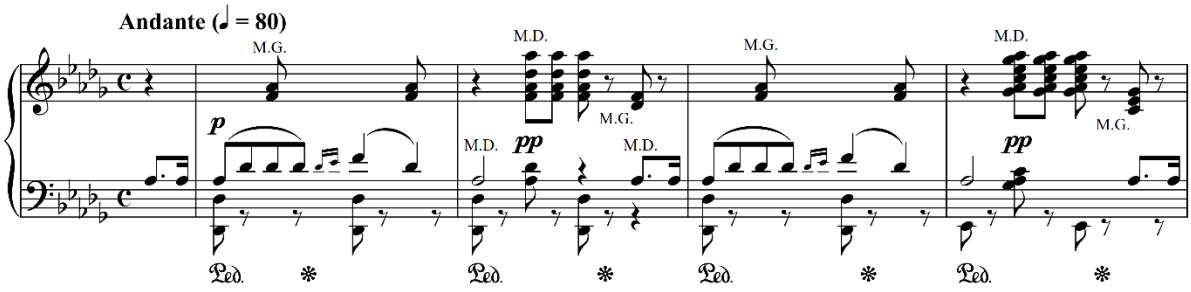


Fig. 1.6b: Liszt, *Paraphrase de concert sur Rigoletto, S. 434*, bb. 18-21



Thalberg's realisation of the same text, shown in Fig. 1.6c, is considerably more literal in terms of rhythm and dynamic, but does alter the pitches of the woodwind chords.

Fig. 1.6c: Thalberg, *Souvenir de Rigoletto de Verdi, Op. 82*, bb. 156-8



Throughout the paraphrase, Liszt continues to take increasingly expressive and dramatic divergences from Verdi's text. By studying Figs. 1.7a and 1.7b, it can be seen that not only do the alterations include dotting the melodic rhythm in the first bar, but also modifying the harmony in the second bar, changing the melody note from A-flat to B-double-flat and placing the bass notes with the harmony on the second and fourth beats of the third bar instead of the first and third. These choices were clearly taken by Liszt to intensify the expressive power of the music rather simply to manipulate Verdi's text. Liszt had to capture the emotionally climactic scene of a two-hour opera in approximately seven minutes, as well as overcome the challenges associated with writing for a solo instrument, not an orchestra. Liszt's score is demonstrably more detailed in his markings than Verdi's: the improvisatory qualities are, perhaps counterintuitively, created by his scrupulous attention to markings such as

cantando, the legato and dotted slurs, longer pedal indications, *tenuto*, *smorzando*, arpeggiations, unorthodox fingering suggestions, as well as the use of small font for the accompaniment to delineate the balance between the parts to the interpreter.

Fig. 1.7a: Verdi, 'Bella figlia dell'amore' from *Rigoletto*, Act 3, bb. 5-8

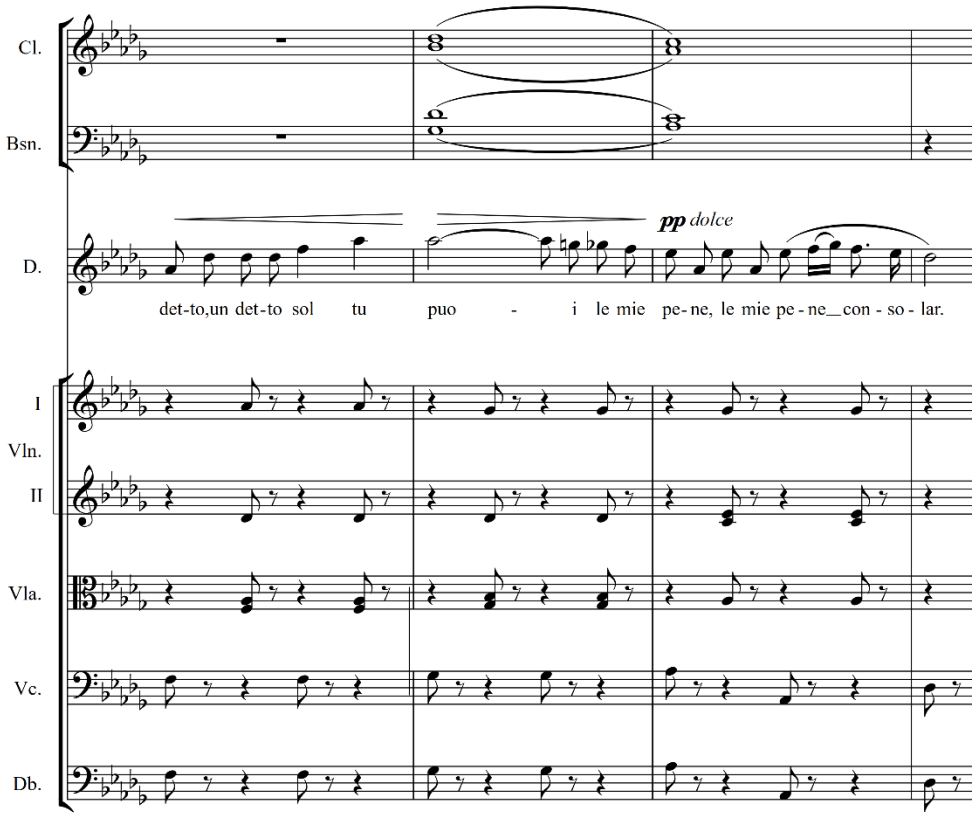
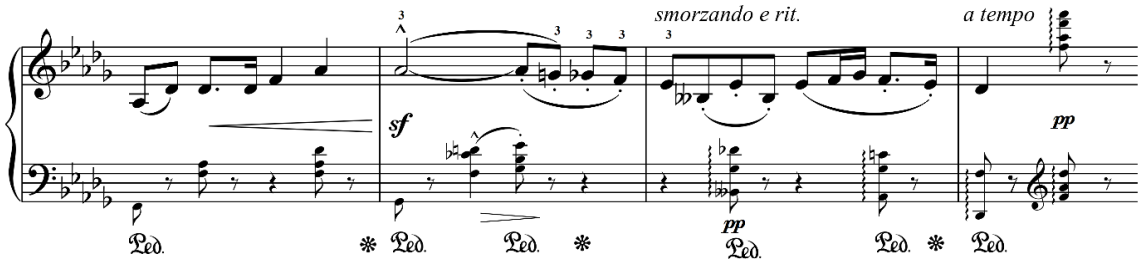


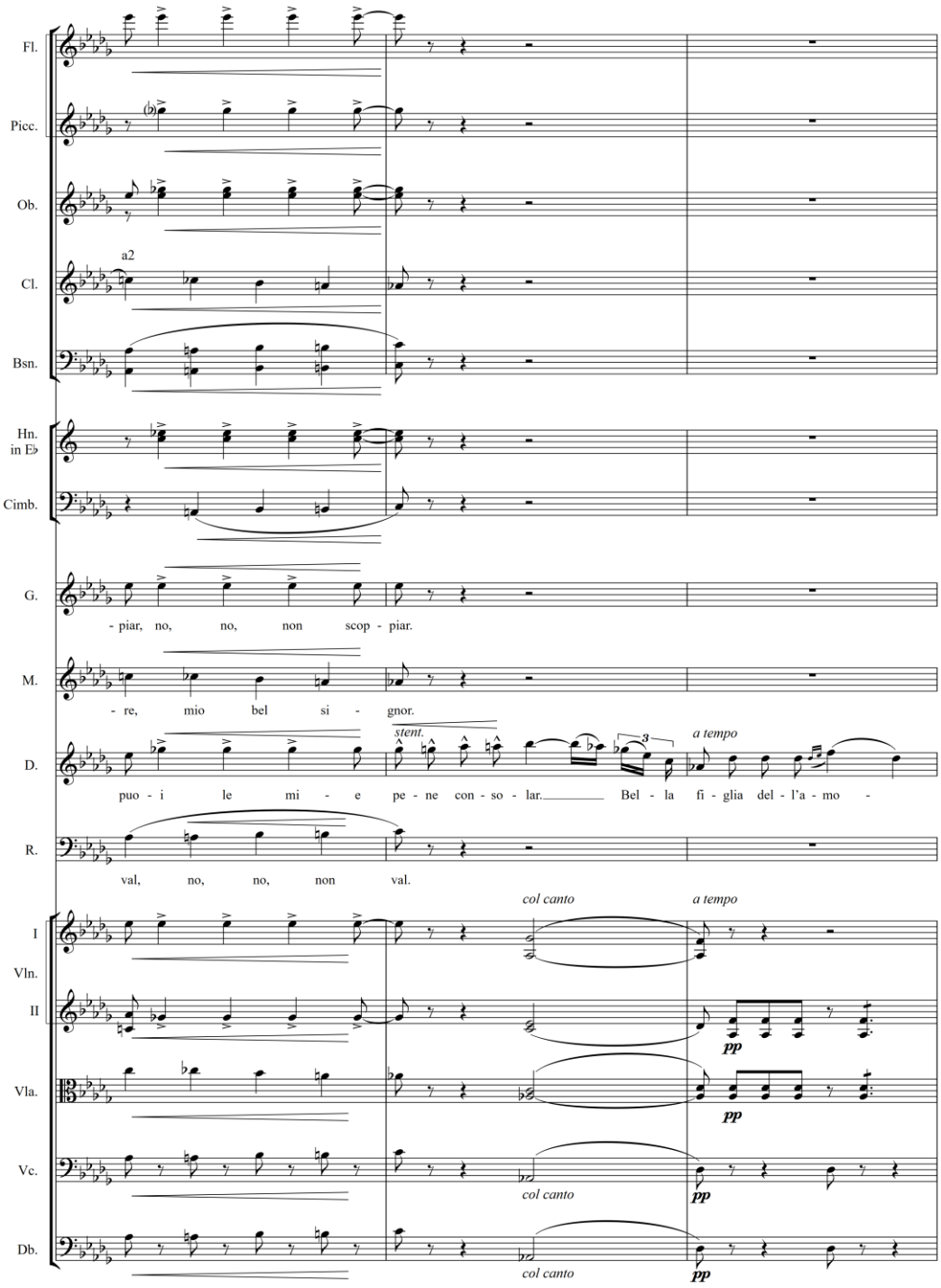
Fig. 1.7b: Liszt, *Paraphrase de concert sur Rigoletto, S. 434*, bb. 22-25



Liszt's *Rigoletto Paraphrase*, is an archetypal example of a paraphrase featuring the increased virtuosity and embellishments found in transcriptions of this nature. It essentially

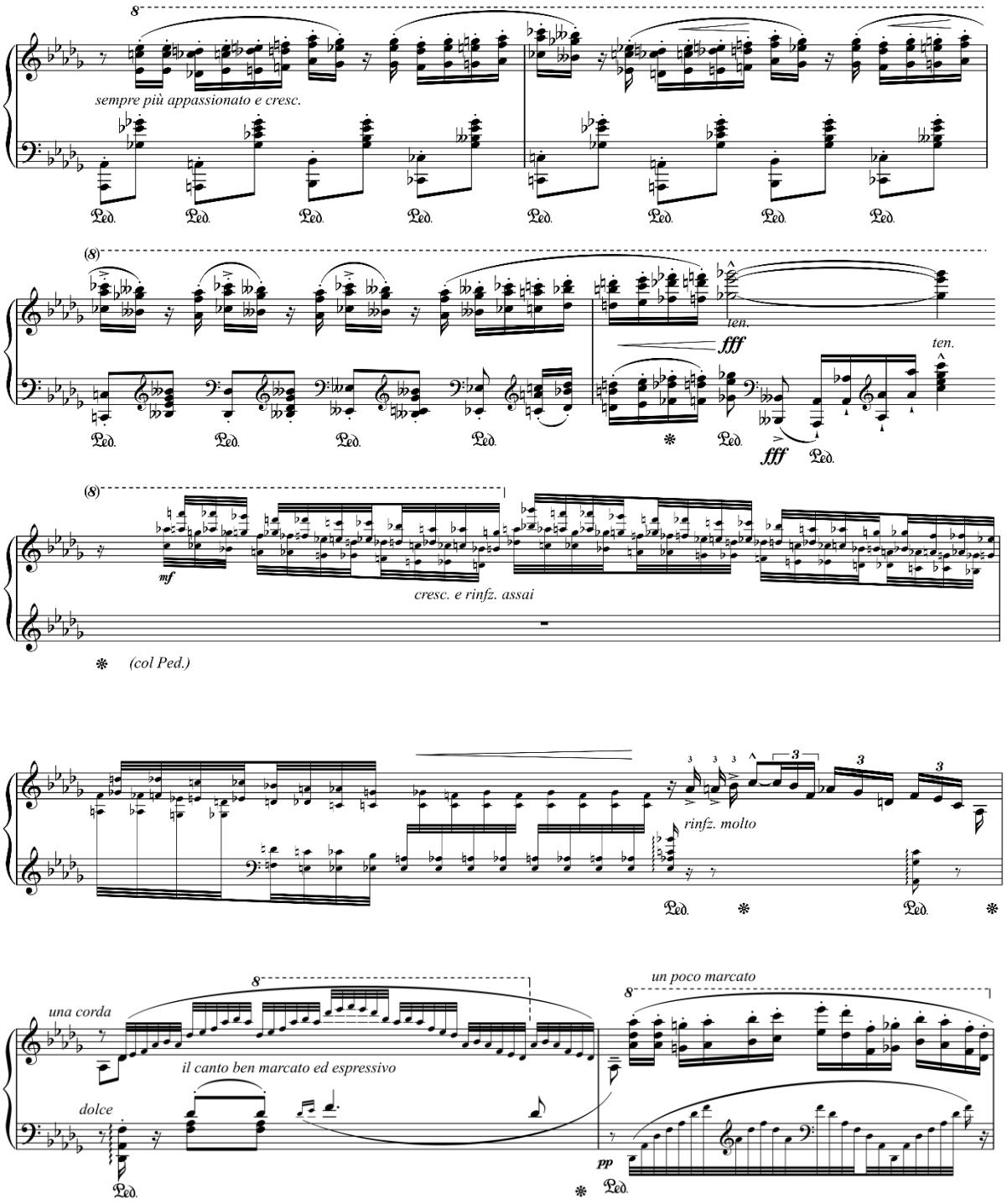
alters what Walker describes as the ‘sonic surface’ of the music but retains the structure of the original text: except for the introduction and the thunderous cadenza, it can be followed bar by bar with the parent text.[62]

Fig. 1.8a: Verdi, ‘Bella figlia dell’amore’ from *Rigoletto*: Act 3, bb. 24-26



[62] Walker (1983), p. 315

Fig. 1.8b: Liszt, *Paraphrase de concert sur Rigoletto, S. 434*, bb. 41-47



It is worth drawing attention, again, to the font Liszt chose to use. The accompaniment is printed in small typesetting with the una corda pedal indication printed above the stave, an altogether uncommon practice. He clearly revelled in, and demanded, the dynamic contrasts available on the newly improved instruments at the time of its composition. So, despite the

torrent of notes far outnumbering those of the melody line, Liszt makes it unequivocally clear where he wants his performers', and indeed listeners', attention to be drawn. Paraphrases such as this seen above, clearly can go quite fantastically beyond the confines of straightforward transcription. They feature demanding embellishments, cadenzas, and a venture into broader dynamic and expressive markings which profit from the vastly improved instruments.

3. Réminiscenses and Fantasies: expression through structural alteration

Moving beyond the parameters of paraphrases which are, most frequently, embellished transcriptions of single scenes from operas, Liszt created a new model altogether: *Réminiscenses*, as he called them. They are richly embroidered scores which present multiple scenes from operas and often in non-chronological order. As de Waal argues, works titled *Réminiscenses* and *Fantasie* can be considered more personal reflections of the opera, and indeed represent unique interpretations of the original work and characters therein. This is reflected in Rosen's writing when he said that "the finest of [Liszt's] opera fantasies... juxtapose different parts of the opera in ways that bring out a new significance".[63]

As the titles would suggest, works in this 'réminiscenses' category are the recollection of past events as seen through the perspective of the narrator. The selection of scenes and the order in which they appear can bring about an alternate meaning to, or reinterpret specific themes from, the original opera. De Waal pictures the process:

> *"one can easily imagine a composer-pianist who has been going to one of these 'Nights at the Opera' and who comes home afterwards, all excited and full of enthusiasm. He goes to his piano to express his intellectual and emotional responses to the music he has just heard. In improvising, his personal recollection reflects in his choice of scenes,*

[63] Rosen, Charles, *The Romantic Generation (Harvard University Press, 1998)*, p. 528

how he arranges them, what keys he chooses and in which dress the themes appear. It is his perception of the opera that is coming across, filtered through his mind and fingers".[64]

Suttoni claims that the operatic fantasy had three stages of life: the first, a free improvisation or set of improvised variations on a theme taken from an opera; the second, when popular themes from operas were simply the source for instrumental display, a vehicle for virtuosity; and the third, when composers tried to recreate a dramatic work in part or in full to communicate the essence of the opera or scenes from it. During this later phase, he argued that instrumental virtuosity was subservient to the music.[65] This is not entirely true if we choose to account for the *Réminiscenses*.[66] Yes, they are extremely virtuosic, it can neither be said that they are simply a source for instrumental display nor that they recreate works in part or in full to communicate their source's essence. For example, through the juxtaposing of the specific scenes chosen in his *Réminiscenses de Don Juan, S. 418*, Liszt clearly focuses on his own interpretation of the immoral Don and does not attempt to create a true representation of the original on the piano. The keyboard writing is highly virtuosic and is so far removed from Mozart's original that it is Liszt's own new work. It is a piece inspired by the content and themes of the opera – Liszt's commentary on them – and not a transcription or a paraphrase. Schmitt suggests that the work is semi-autobiographical: that Liszt's own life had strong parallels with Don Giovanni as the embodiment of seduction and virtuosity.[67] Hamilton probes further in aligning the popularity of the opera to nineteenth century cultural sensibilities attuned to sin and punishment. He argues that Liszt, with his own "vacillations between religious devotion and the no less keen pleasures of the flesh could hardly avoid perceiving the

[64] De Waal (2013), p. 181
[65] Suttoni (1973), pp. 3-4
[66] Or indeed subsequent additions to the genre after the 'romantic period' concerning his thesis. This will be addressed later in the chapter.
[67] See Schmitt, Axel, *Franz Liszt and the Don Juan fantasy: An Interpretive Study of Meaning and Dramatic Narrative* (DMA thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 2004)

connection between his own life and that of the opera's protagonist and was advantageously placed to articulate eloquently the 19th-century view of Don Giovanni".[68] Also, in his *Fantasie über Themen aus Mozarts Figaro und Don Giovanni*, Liszt's incorporation of material from *Don Giovanni* alongside the music from *Figaro* could, as Howard cogently argues, be seen as Liszt's character commentary on how Cherubino's seemingly innocent, flirtatious behaviour might lead to the unforgiveable behaviour and disastrous outcomes seen in *Don Giovanni*.[69]

The tables below reveal the varying degrees of structural freedom pianist-composers took when transcribing their works. They show that some are extremely literal and can be traced bar by bar with the corresponding parent text, and some are extensively reorganised.

Table 1: Relation of Gluck-Sgambati, *Mélodie d'Orfeo* to parent text

Sgambati *Mélodie d'Orfeo*	Corresponding bars in Gluck *Orfeo ed Euridice* Act 2, Scene 2
bb. 1-36[1]	bb. 1-28[1] (including repetition)
bb. 36[2]-38	Free cadential material using accompaniment figuration

Table 2: Relation of Liszt, *Isoldens Liebestod, S. 447* to parent text

Liszt *Isoldens Liebestod, S. 447*	Corresponding bars in Wagner *Tristan und Isolde*
bb. 1-4	Freely composed material based on the 'Liebe-heiligstes Leben' theme from Act 2
bb. 5-83	Act 3, Scene 3 ('Isoldens Verklärung') bb. 1-79

[68] Hamilton (1989), p. 145

[69] See Liszt Franz, *Fantasie über Themen aus den Opern von Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Die Hochzeit des Figaro und Don Giovanni, for piano solo, S. 697, Op. postumum*, 1st edn, ed. by Leslie Howard, completed by Leslie Howard (Editio Musica Budapest, 1997), p. iii

Table 3: Relation of Moszkowski, *Isoldens Tod, S. 447* to parent text

Moszkowski *Isoldens Tod*	Corresponding bars in Wagner *Tristan und Isolde*
bb. 1-11[1]	Prelude bb. 1-11[1]
bb. 11[2]-22	Freely composed material based on the Prelude
bb. 23-102	Act 3, Scene 3 (‘Isoldens Verklärung’) 1-79

Table 4: Relation of Liszt, *Paraphrase de concert sur Rigoletto, S.434* to parent text

Liszt *Paraphrase de concert sur Rigoletto, S.434*	Corresponding bars Verdi *Rigoletto* Act 3, Scene 3 (‘Bella figlia dell’amore’)
bb. 1-17	Freely composed introduction based on material from the scene. See bb. 16-17[1] and b. 33.
bb. 18-40	bb. 1-23
bb. 41-44	Freely composed cadential material expanding on bb. 24-25
bb. 45-51	bb. 26-32
bb. 52-57	Freely composed material based on material from the scene
bb. 58-63	bb. 26-32 (repetition)
bb. 64-67	Freely composed material based on material from the scene
bb. 68-87	bb. 33-52
bb. 88-90	Freely composed material based on material from the scene
bb. 91-99	Freely composed cadential material

Table 5: Relation of Moszkowski, *Chanson bohème de l'opéra Carmen* to parent text

Moszkowski *Chanson bohème de l'opéra Carmen*	Corresponding bars in Bizet *Carmen*, Act 2 ('Chanson bohème')
bb. 1-57	Freely composed introduction based on material from Act 1, Scene 10 ('Près des remparts de Séville')
bb. 58-144	'Chanson bohème' bb. 1-87
bb. 145-151	Free cadential material
bb. 152-191	bb. 88-127
bb. 192-205[2]	Free cadential material
bb. 205[3]-222	bb. 128[3]-145
bb. 223-226	bb. 146-147 (expanded)
bb. 227-241	bb. 149-163
bb. 242-256	Free cadential material
bb. 257-265	bb. 170-188
bb. 266-287	Free cadential material

Table 6: Relation of Liszt, *Réminiscences de Don Juan, S. 418* to parent text (version excluding ossia)

Liszt *Réminiscences de Don Juan, S. 418*	Corresponding bars in Mozart *Don Giovanni*
bb. 1-9	Act 2 Scene 11. Commendatore's interjections as statue: "Di rider finirai pria dell'aurora!" and "Ribaldo, audace, lascia a' morti la pace!"
bb. 10-59[1] From b. 12[4]	Act 2 Scene 17. Commendatore: "Non si pasce di cibo mortale". See declamato statement in the Liszt bb. 41-48. Mostly freely composed and evocative of the scene. Liszt incorporates gestures from the Overture (see b. 13, violin II)

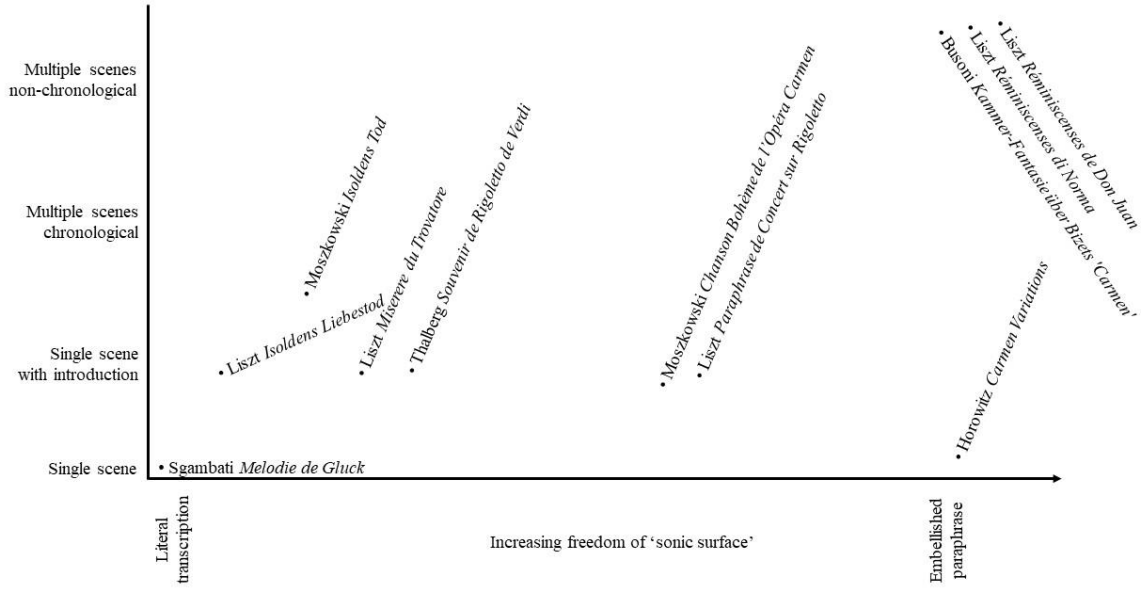
bb. 26, 28-40	Scalic gestures from the Overture (see b. 23, flute and violin I parts)
bb. 59-68 bb. 62-63	Free composed material to introduce Act 1, Scene 3 'Là ci darem la mano' Dotted quaver-triplet demi-semiquavers reminiscent of Overture (see b. 15); also appears in 'Là ci darem la mano' (e.g. at b. 29)
bb. 69-117[1]	Act 1, Scene 3 'Là ci darem la mano' bb. 1-49[1]. Fairly literal transcription
b. 117[2]	Freely composed cadenza
bb. 118-150	Act 1, Scene 3 'Là ci darem la mano' bb. 50-83
bb. 151-214	Variation 1 on Act 1, Scene 3 'Là ci darem la mano' bb. 1-49
b. 215	Freely composed cadenza
bb. 216-247	Continuation of Variation 1 on Act 1, Scene 3 'Là ci darem la mano' bb. 50-83
bb. 248-284	Variation 2 on Act 1, Scene 3 'Là ci darem la mano'
bb. 285-342 From b. 297	Variation 2 cut short. Freely composed material combines the Commendatore's ghost theme quoted at the opening of the Liszt as well as the varied motifs from 'Là ci darem la mano' LH echoes 'Là ci darem la mano', but in b-flat minor
bb. 343-376	Freely composed introduction to Act 1, Scene 3 No. 12 'Champagne Aria' ('Fin ch' han dal vino'), quoting the material, but in the minor key
bb. 377-439	Act 1, Scene 3 No. 12 'Champagne Aria' ('Fin ch' han dal vino') bb. 1-63
bb. 440-468	Freely continuing material based on Act 1, Scene 3 No. 12 'Champagne Aria' ('Fin ch' han dal vino')

bb. 469-495	Resumption of Act 1, Scene 3 No. 12 ‘Champagne Aria’ (‘Fin ch' han dal vino’) from bb. 93 with repetitions and incorporating scales from the opening.
bb. 496-524	Free connecting material based on scales from the opening
bb. 525-556	Repetition and expansion of Act 1, Scene 3 No. 12 ‘Champagne Aria’ (‘Fin ch' han dal vino’)
bb. 556-571	Act 1, Scene 3 No. 12 ‘Champagne Aria’ (‘Fin ch' han dal vino’) in the minor key. LH incorporates material from the Overture (see b. 13, violin II)
bb. 572-603	Free connecting material incorporating scales from the opening
bb. 604-621	Freely composed material based on Act 1, Scene 3 No. 12 'Champagne Aria’ (‘Fin ch' han dal vino’)
bb. 622-631	Coda, based on/suggestive of a restatement of the Statue’s interjections which appear at the opening.

The case studies examined above throughout Section 1.4 show that the two points of variation in transcriptions are the degrees of freedom from the parent text in terms of its ‘sonic surface’ (or how richly embellished it is), and the number or scenes quoted and the ordering of them. As such, a two-dimensional, linear scale might help us effectively assess and describe the compositions belonging to this genre. The x-axis deals with the ‘sonic surface’ of the music: from literal transcription through to an ornately embellished paraphrase; the y-axis addresses structural concerns: at the bottom is a single scene; then a single scene with a freely composed introduction; followed by multiple scenes in chronological order; and lastly multiple scenes in non-chronological order. Therefore, Sgambati’s *Mélodie de Gluck* can be described as a single scene transcription, Liszt’s *Rigoletto Paraphrase* is a single-scene paraphrase with a freely composed introduction, and Liszt’s *Don Juan* is therefore a multiple scene, non-chronological paraphrase. Moskowski’s *Isoldens Tod* is positioned between ‘single scene with introduction’

and chronological multiple scenes' transcriptions on account of the lengthy introduction based closely on material from the opera's opening Prelude.

Fig. 1.9: transcription nomenclature graph



1.5 Decline of the Virtuoso Operatic Paraphrase

Towards the middle of the nineteenth century, the popularity of the virtuoso operatic paraphrase gradually faded, and works of this nature became far less frequently performed in concerts. In the 1840s, Clara Wieck began to challenge her audiences more by playing fewer operatic transcriptions and presenting more original repertoire from the eighteenth century. For comparison, in a recital in 1832 she featured music by Pixis, Herz, Chopin (his *Variations on Là ci darem la mano*) as well as choral and orchestral music, but in an 1843 programme, whilst still in the typical format of the period featuring chamber music and singers, she performed

works only by herself, Robert Schumann, J. S. Bach and Beethoven.[70] Ritterman gives further detailed evidence of the slow withdrawal of operatic transcriptions from concert programmes, and provides a number of critical reviews which demonstrate that the increasingly discerning public was placing greater emphasis on the art of interpretation rather than on technical showmanship. At this time, greater respect was developing for those presenting Classical literature over "frivolity" and "dare-devil displays", which was becoming actively disliked.[71] Weber also cites the political upheaval of the 1848-49 revolutions as a significant factor in the changing musical taste across Europe in the 1850s, as well as the way in which the public were educated on music.[72] This also squares with the types of operatic transcriptions Liszt was writing throughout this time: the highly virtuosic, personalised *Réminiscences de Norma* and *Réminiscences de Don Juan*, were both composed in 1841, whereas the more faithful transcriptions of Wagner's music date from that period through to the 1880s.[73]

Composers also became more specific with their instructions in the score. Stravinsky and Ravel, for example, were open about their scepticism towards interpretation rather than performance. Arnold Schoenberg went so far as to say that the performer was "totally unnecessary except as his interpretations make the music understandable to an audience unfortunate enough not to be able to read it in print".[74] Dirk Schäfer argued that "every arrangement is to be condemned unless it comes from the composer himself and is of equal value as the original".[75] Historically informed performance practice and the *Urtext* score became the norm, and were coupled with a growing climate of distaste towards any form of manipulation of the composer's original text.[76]

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[70] Weber (2008), pp. 163-164
[71] Ritterman (1985) pp. 259-261
[72] See Weber (2008), Chapter 8: Classical Music Achieves Hegemony
[73] Although, Liszt did write an arrangement of the *Réminiscences de Don Juan* for two pianos in 1877, with some revisions.
[74] De Waal (2013) p. 10
[75] De Waal (2013) p. 60
[76] Even the dedicatee of Busoni's Chaconne transcription, Eugen d'Albert (1864-1932) felt that it was too overloaded and too far removed from J. S. Bach's original, preferring Brahms's more reserved version for the

The emergence of the era of recording must also be considered to play a role in the decline in the number of transcriptions being performed and written at the time. The gramophone and long-playing records took away the need to have music reduced for solo piano for domestic appreciation since people were able to listen to full orchestral and operatic works, in their original form, from the comfort of their own homes. This reduction in demand for arrangements and the return to an almost Socrates-like contempt towards forms of arrangement in art meant that composer-pianists such as Leopold Godowsky (most famous for his transcriptions of music not based on opera but already written for the piano including the Chopin Études), and Busoni (a prolific transcriber of J. S. Bach's much, among other composers) came for intense criticism. Godowsky defended himself by proclaiming that his versions not only further expanded the pianistic parameters of the originals but were essays on music in the same fashion that novels are dramatized and literary works had dissertations and commentaries written about them. He lamented that musicians were denied the same privilege in their medium. In the introductory remarks to his *53 Études after Chopin*, he said that "their aim is to develop the mechanical, technical, and musical possibilities of pianoforte playing, to expand the peculiarly adapted nature of the instrument to polyphonic, polyrhythmic, and polydynamic work, and to widen the range of its possibilities in tone colouring".[77]

De Waal sees the Godowsky transcriptions as "looking from different perspectives at, and commenting on familiar music" which "deepens our understanding of those scores and often makes our veneration for its composers even greater".[78] In this sense, the types of musical 'character studies' which Godowsky presented broadened the vocabulary of transcription to the extent that he was able to defend them as individual and unique compositions; they do not,

left hand alone. For an in-depth discussion about fidelity to the score and the transition from the liberties taken in the nineteenth century to the present day, see Hamilton (2008), Chapter 6: The Letter of the Score

[77]Quoted in Nicholas, Jeremy, *Godowsky: The Pianists' Pianist* (Appian Publications & Recordings, London, 1989), p. xiii

[78] De Waal (2013), p. 51

therefore, belong in the same compositional genre or category as the nineteenth century virtuoso operatic paraphrases. Just nine months before he died, Godowsky wrote an article, '*Pedagogic experiments at the two extremes of pianism*', in which he clearly still felt the need to defend his position against the "Niagaras of abuse" he had faced over his reworkings, as Kaikhosru Sorabji put it. In the article, he said that

> *to justify myself in the perennial controversy which exists regarding the aesthetic and ethical rights of one composer to use another composer's works… I desire to say that it depends entirely upon the intention, nature and quality of the work of the so-called "transgressor"… The original Chopin Studies remain as intact as they were before any arrangements of them were published.*[79]

The transcriptions of Australian pianist Percy Grainger also fall into this category, in that the musical reworkings are often so elaborate, and so precise in their notations, that they are unique compositions in their own right. Busoni, who transcribed almost one hundred works of other composers bemoaned, in 1907, that transcriptions were suffering unfair prejudice.[80]

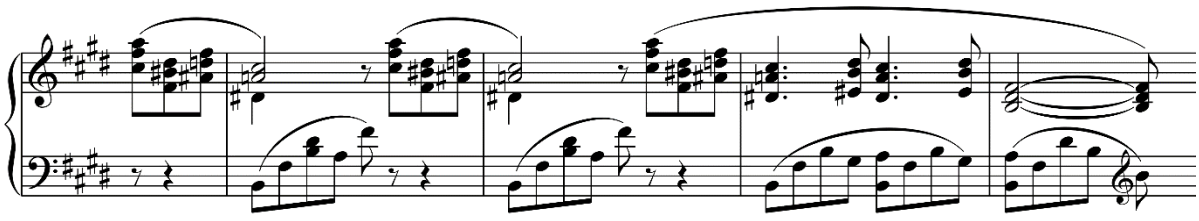
Roberge identifies a network of pianist-composers from around the turn of the twentieth century who were commonly united by their characteristic "profound interest in the transcription of other composers' works – or, more precisely, *creative transcription*" and whose output might be categorised together in the fashion outlined above.[81] That network features Busoni (depicted as a sort of 'heir' to J. S. Bach and Liszt) at its centre and included Godowsky and Percy Grainger, as well as Sorabji and Ronald Stevenson, among others and descendants.[82] Roberge posits that "transcription was for them as fundamental as composition, and they did not see the former as a lesser activity, but as a different manner of expressing

[79] Quoted in Nicholas (1989), pp. 36-37
[80] Busoni (1907), pp. 85-86
[81] Roberge, Marc-André, 'The Busoni Network and the Art of Creative Transcription' in *Canadian University Music Review, No. 11/1, pp. 68-88* (1991), p. 69
[82] It moves further toward the more recent past, with composer-pianists and performers of this repertoire, such as Guido Agosti, John Ogden, Yonty Solomon etc.

themselves" and that they imposed the stamp of their compositional style on the models they chose to build upon.[83]

In this sense, the reworkings of these composers bear a close etymological connection to the word *Nachdichtung*, a term often applied to some of Busoni's works. *Nachdichtung* not only implies transcription, but a poem after someone, or a reconstruction in another language, even. Figs. 1.10a/b, 1.11a/b and 1.12 show the type of imaginative freedom these pianist-composers afforded themselves from parent texts. Grainger's fastidious performance directions and full use of the colouristic potential of the piano demonstrate a refined command of sonority, however the piece clearly breaches the boundaries implied by straightforward transcription.[84]

Fig. 1.10a: Strauss, *Der Rosenkavalier*, Act 3, RM 300, bb. 1-5[3]



[83] Roberge (1991), p. 74

[84] Figs. 1.10b and 1.11b show that Grainger has adopted, and expanded upon, some of the more detailed notational styles in Liszt's transcriptions, such as small typesetting, more dynamic instructions than the original parent text and detailed pedal directions (see Figs. 1.6b, 1.7b and 1.9 for comparison).

Fig. 1.10b: Grainger, *Ramble on the Last Love Duet from Strauss's "Der Rosenkavalier"*, bb. 1-5

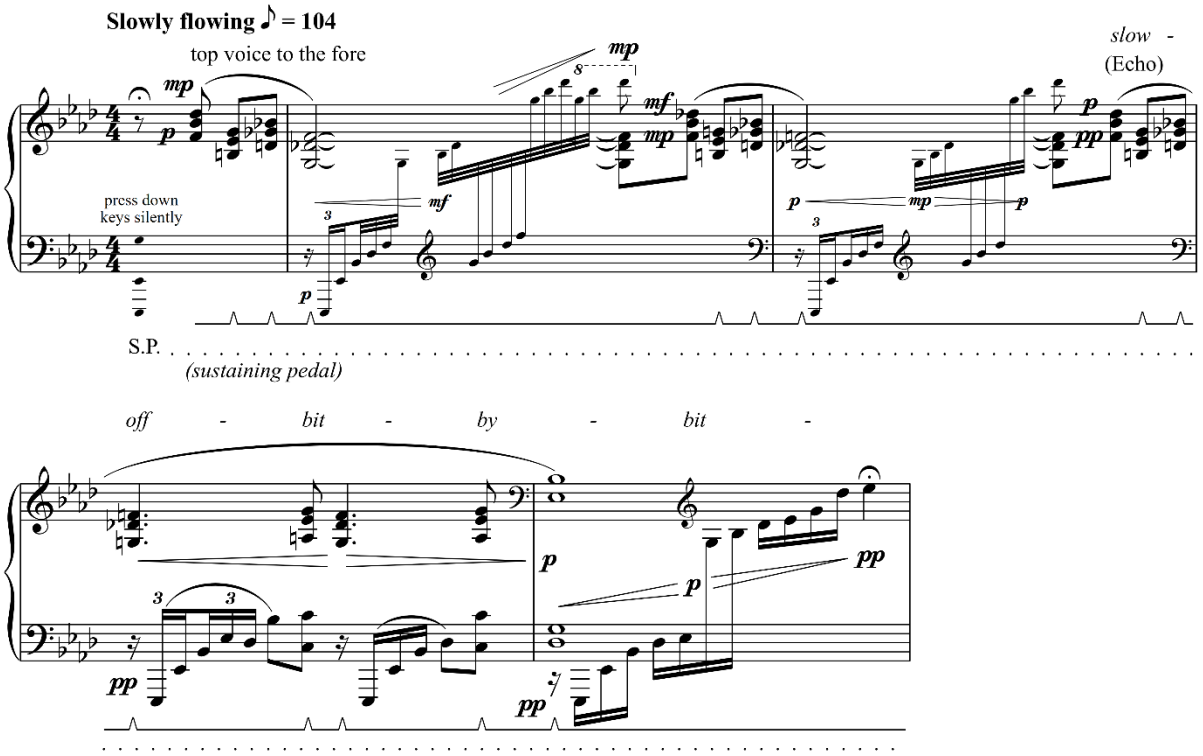


Fig. 1.11a: Strauss, *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Act 3*, RM 300, bb. 5^{3}-9

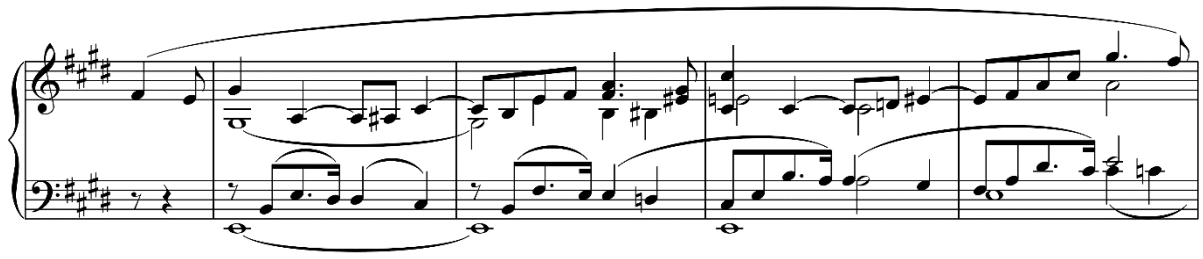
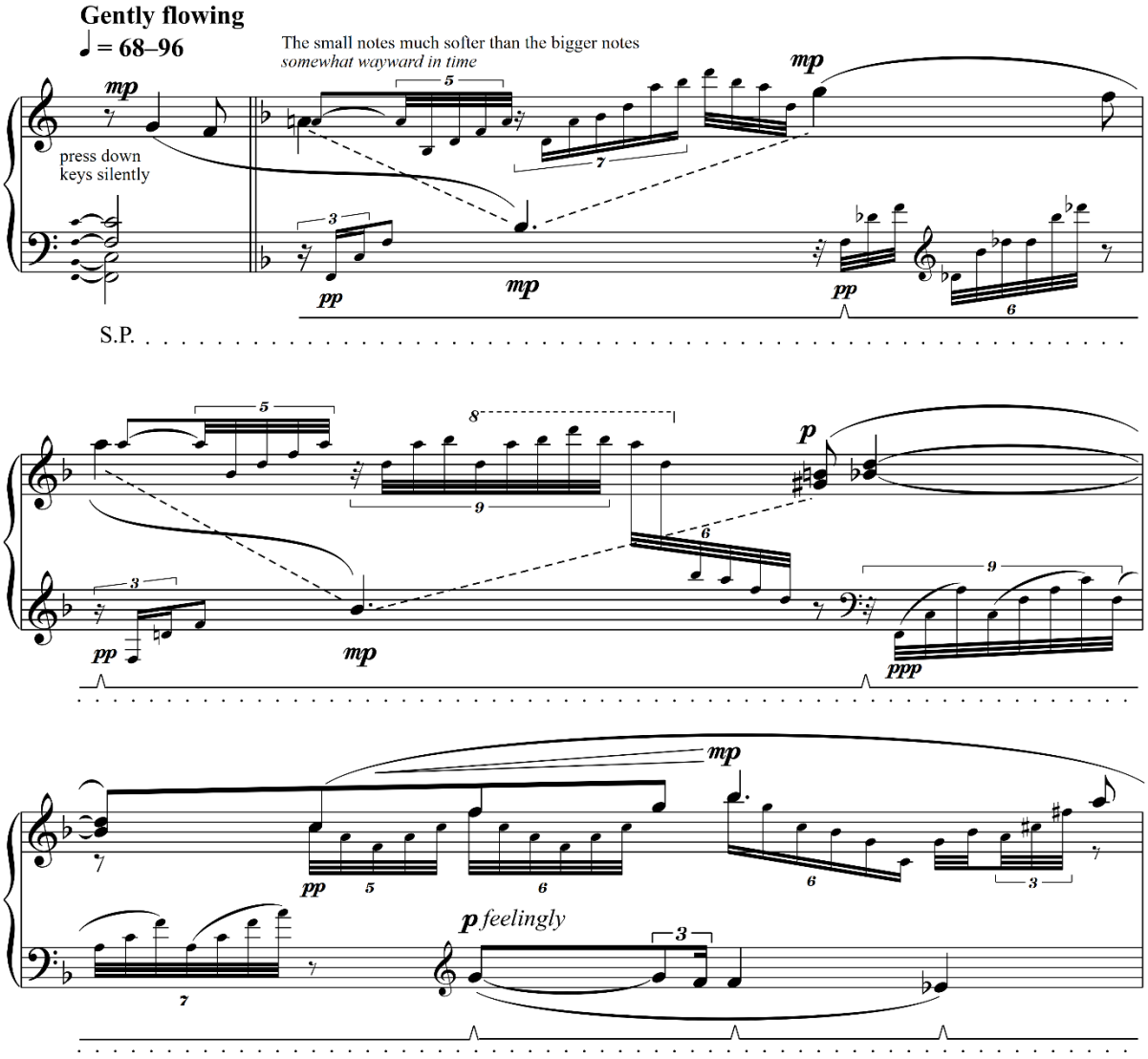


Fig. 1.11b: Grainger, *Ramble on the Last Love Duet from Strauss's "Der Rosenkavalier"*, bb. 28^3-31



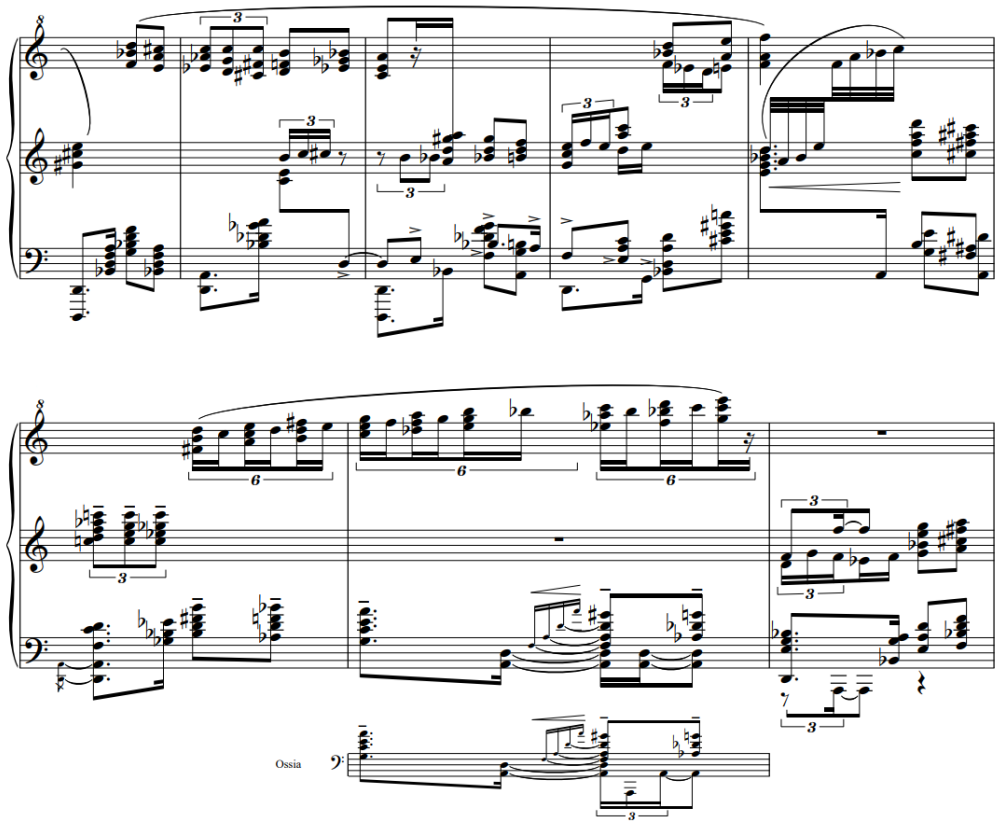
As we saw Roberge point out above, Sorabji was another composer heavily influenced by Busoni and one who often used other composers' music as foundations for his own works. His *Pastiche on the Habanera from Carmen by Bizet* (Fig. 1.12) is a prime example of such a work from this separate, post-Romantic strand of operatic transcription.[85] The focus on

[85] As Roberge points out, Sorabji's use of 'pastiche' as a title is misleading: the work is anything but a pastiche as it does not attempt to imitate a style or piece. Roberge rather suggests it to be a 'Nachdichtung'. See Sorabji, Kaikhosru, *Three Pastiches for Piano, A New Critical Edition by Marc-André Roberge* (The Sorabji Archive, 2014), p. v

typically ‘Sorabjian’, ornately upholstered harmony, counterpoint and rhythmic features sees deconstructions and the juxtaposing of Bizet’s material in ways which are absent in the original parent text (and would be wholly unstylistic), creating an entirely novel work. Garvelmann described it as follows:

> *We might suspect, hearing Sorabji’s whimsical romp with Bizet, that Carmen’s tobacco factory has moved to the marijuana field, for the Spanish tart’s famous aria is treated to an astonishing assortment of contrapuntal imitation, distorted melody line, and coruscating embellishment. Some listeners find the piece hilarious, while others feel it contains an insistent attempt to ‘annihilate’ the theme. In any case, it must be admitted as the most unusual aria-to-keyboard transfer.*[86]

Fig. 1.12, Sorabji, *Pastiche on the Habanera from Carmen by Bizet*, bb. 20-27



[87]

[86] Quoted in Sorabji (2014), p. xii
[87] Reproduced by permission of The Sorabji Archive www.sorabji-archive.co.uk

Michael Finnissy's four books of Verdi transcriptions (which were composed over a period of thirty years, between 1972 and 2005) are further valuable resources for comparison, since almost all of their contents take their roots from opera and are transcribed for solo piano. However, as Finnissy himself explains, "none of these pieces assume the original dramatic (Verdian) context, nor is their sound world (voices and orchestra) overtly imitated by the piano". He continues by saying that the rhetoric, musical logic, and idiom of nineteenth century opera is only occasionally present and often corrupted, and "that the (Verdi) material was no longer the point. The point was the different sorts of thing one could do to transform it".[88] As Pace points out, these works are often overt homages to Busoni (several of them quote from or allude to Busoni's work) and appear to adopt Busoni's philosophy laid out at the beginning of the present chapter: every notation is, in itself, the transcription of an abstract idea.[89] Finnissy has taken ideas from, or aspects of, Verdi's work and transformed them into entirely new, largely unrecognisable works by applying his own aesthetic aims and compositional devices to them.

Of course, as it has become apparent, one must view Adès's *Concert Paraphrase* not only within the context of the nineteenth century virtuoso operatic paraphrase genre. One must also consider Adès's and the piece's position within, and consequence of, musical history. The enormous changes to the aesthetics of music in the intervening period between the early nineteenth century and the present day are one of the aspects which make the work notable. The twentieth century and musical modernism saw a deliberate disavowal of the kinds of compositional techniques and forms employed by composers in the nineteenth century.[90] Even though examples of composers reworking and transcribing materials from operas for solo piano

[88] Quoted in Pace, Ian, *Michael Finnissy Verdi Transcriptions* (programme note for performance at Great Hall, King's College London, 9/12/05)
[89] Pace, Ian in booklet accompanying CD set *Michael Finnissy Verdi Transcriptions* (Metier Records CD92027 a/b, 2001)
[90] Botstein, Leon, 'Modernism' in *The New Grove Music Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Vol. 16, ed. by Stanley Sadie (2001)

and other instrumental forces abound over that timeframe, their aesthetic aims were, in the main, markedly different, and they are not in any way invocative the virtuoso operatic paraphrase.[91] An in-depth investigation of other composers and their strategies, however, lies outside the scope of the present study.

[91] One thinks of Stockhausen's numerous reworkings from his *Licht* cycle and Gerald Barry's frequent plundering of material from his first two operas *The Intelligence Park* and *The Triumph of Beauty and Deceit* in chamber works from the 1990s.

CHAPTER 2

2.1 Introducing Thomas Adès

Thomas Adès was born in London, UK, on 1 March 1971 to Timothy Adès (b. 1941, linguist and prizewinning translator, known for his translations of Stéphane Mallarmé, Victor Hugo and Bertold Brecht among others), and Dawn Adès (b. 1943, a noted art historian and authority on surrealist masters including Salvador Dalí and Marcel Duchamp).[1] His father studied at Eton College and later read Classics at Balliol College, Oxford, and undertook business studies at INSEAD, Fontainebleau. His mother studied at the University of Oxford and read History of Art at London's Courtauld Institute of Art. She was a trustee of the Tate, Professor of the History of Art at the Royal Academy of Arts, was awarded a CBE in the 2013 British New Year's Honours list for her services to Higher Education and Art History, and she is presently Professor Emeritus of Art History at the University of Essex.[2]

Thomas Adès studied at the Junior Department of the Guildhall School of Music & Drama (1983-1988) and undertook the first year of tertiary level education at the same institution before moving on to King's College, Cambridge (1989-1992), where he read Music, earning double-starred first class honours.[3] His piano teachers included Paul Berkowitz, he received coaching in chamber music from György Kurtág in Szombathély, Hungary, and he undertook studies in composition with Robert Saxton, Alexander Goehr and Robin Holloway. Thus Adès has continued the family tradition of intellectual and artistic endeavours.[4] (The suggestion that his mother's preoccupation with surrealism had a direct influence on Adès's musical style will be discussed later.)

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[1] Cao, Hélène, *Thomas Adès le voyageur: Devenir compositeur, être musicien* (Éditions M.F., Paris, 2007), p. 7
[2] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/405472/NY2013_Honours_List.csv/preview accessed 04/01/17
[3] http://www.fabermusic.com/composers/thomas-ad%C3%A8s/biography accessed 22/01/17
[4] Thomas Adès's brother Robert is a psychoanalyst, and his brother Harry is a writer

In 1989, Adès was runner-up in the keyboard category of the 'BBC Young Musician of the Year' competition, but he later reflected that, in principle, he did not wish to be a performer obliged to "play the same things again", and he resolutely decided that he wanted to become a composer.[5] His 'official' London début took place on 11 January 1993 at the Southbank Centre's Purcell Room under the auspices of the Park Lane Group. Although Adès appeared as a pianist, it was arguably the fact that he performed his own compositions which paved the way for his increasingly distinguished career with a special emphasis on him as a composer first and foremost. 1993 saw his first professionally performed composition, the *Chamber Symphony, Op. 2*, and he signed an exclusive publishing contract with Faber Music. He held a composition residency with the Hallé Orchestra (1993-95) and composed *The Origin of the Harp* (for the London Sinfonietta, premiered by Oliver Knussen and which earned Adès the Paris Rostrum Award in 1994), and *These Premises are Alarmed* (for the Hallé Orchestra and premiered in 1996 for the opening of the Bridgewater Hall, Manchester). It was during this time that he was commissioned by Almeida Opera to write his first opera, *Powder Her Face*, for the 1995 Cheltenham Festival, and in 1997 his ambitious, large-scale work *Asyla* was performed by Sir Simon Rattle and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra.[6]

Between 1998-2000 Thomas Adès was the first Music Director of the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group (founded in 1997 under the patronage of Simon Rattle) and he served as Artistic Director of the Aldeburgh Festival from 1999-2008. He held further composition residencies at the Ojai Festival, California (2000), with the Los Angeles Philharmonic (2005/06 and 2006/07), the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic (2009), Melbourne Festival, Australia (2010), and with the London Symphony Orchestra (2016, which included conducting with soloist Anne-Sophie Mutter). Increasingly prestigious commissions and

[5] Ross, Alex, 'Roll Over Beethoven' in *The New Yorker* (26/10/1998), p. 110. Available at https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1998/10/26/roll-over-beethoven accessed 22/06/18
[6] *Asyla* earnt him the highly coveted 2000 Grawemeyer Award

performances continued to decorate his curriculum vitae, including his first performance with the Los Angeles Philharmonic (1997), commissions for the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, the BBC Proms, and a second opera (*The Tempest*, 2003, to a libretto by Meredith Oakes) for the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, with further performances at the Opéra National du Rhin, Strasbourg, France and the Royal Opera, Copenhagen, Denmark. His *Violin Concerto: Concentric Paths* (2005) was written for the Berliner Festspiele and the Los Angeles Philharmonic. A continuing string of commissions saw his works performed at venues including the Berliner Philharmonie, Carnegie Hall in New York, the Barbican and Royal Festival Halls in London, the Salle Pleyel in Paris, the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, and at the Zürich Opera. Another large-scale orchestral work, *Tevot*, appeared in 2007 and garnered him the Richard and Barbara Debs Composer Chair at Carnegie Hall where he was featured during the 2007/08 season. Between 2015-16 he wrote his third opera, *The Exterminating Angel*, jointly commissioned by the 2016 Salzburg Music Festival, the Royal Opera Covent Garden, the Metropolitan Opera New York, and the Royal Danish Opera. It received its première in 2016. In 2018, Adès was awarded a CBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours list.[7]

2.2 Adès in the Literature

As is clear from the outline above, Adès's career has sustained a steep upward trajectory since his early twenties. He has become one of, if not the most celebrated British composers of his generation. Despite this, there was not a substantial body of literature scrutinising his music until relatively recently – a state of affairs noted by Christopher Fox in 2004 and again by Emma Gallon in 2013, who argued that most essays on Adès investigated

[7] https://www.gov.uk/government/news/the-queens-birthday-honours-list-2018

the semantic richness of his music more than its structural intricacies.[8] However, a growing body of work has emerged in more recent years with a variety of scholars attempting to increase the public understanding of Adès's music. This work covers a broad spectrum, discussing the music's influences, meanings, narrativity, and compositional techniques, as well as beginning to address what makes Adès's music typically 'Adèsian'. A review of the available literature yields a number of competing labels assigned to Adès in an attempt to categorise his music and assess the influences on it. As Dominic Wells points out, these include pluralist, postmodernist, neo-romantic, postminimalist, and polystylist.[9] Commentators including Richard Taruskin, John Roeder, Christopher Fox and Paul Griffiths readily accept the eclecticism in his music. 'Postmodernist' is certainly the most commonly discussed and widely used of those labels. Adès, however, has confided that he has worked hard to avoid being pigeonholed in any way and said that "when people start talking about atonal or tonal or postmodern, or whatever - I'm not being weird, but I really don't know what they are talking about".[10]

2.3 Adès and postmodernism

In order to consider stylistic issues of interpretation, and to understand why commentators have consistently assigned the 'postmodernist' label to Adès's music, a brief outline of the

[8] Fox, Christopher, 'Tempestuous Times: The Recent Music of Thomas Adès', in *The Musical Times, Vol. 145, No. 1888*, pp. 41-56 (Autumn 2004), p. 41; Gallon, Emma, 'Narrativities in the Music of Thomas Adès: The piano quintet and Brahms' in *Music and Narrative since 1900*, pp. 216-233, ed. by Michael L. Klein and Nicholas Reyland (Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2013), p. 216. I hasten to disagree with Gallon on this point, believing that the balance has always been tipped towards analytical study rather than investigating possible meaning in Adès's music.

[9] Wells rightly observes that polystylism was a term coined by Alfred Schnittke (1934-1998) and is suggestive of the more abrasive juxtaposing of disparate styles, whereas Adès seems more readily to allow his music to converse with various styles, avoiding harsh conflicts. See Wells (2012)

[10] Culshaw, Peter, 'Don't Call Me a Messiah' in *The Telegraph* (01/03/07). Available at https://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/music/classicalmusic/3663485/Dont-call-me-a-messiah.html accessed 19/11/18. This comment might be construed as being disingenuous: having received a double-starred first at Cambridge University, he is likely well-versed in these academic terms. He appears to wish to be considered an artist first and foremost, and this comment might be part of a cultivated public persona that abjures the 'academic', despite the fact he really is one.

term will be helpful. Jean-François Lyotard defined postmodernism as an "incredulity towards metanarratives", arguing that the periodisation of Western music with its inherited rules and customs was a grand narrative.[11] Raymond Monelle writes that "perhaps the main difficulty with [defining] postmodernism is the fact that its unifying factor is, specifically, a rejection of unification, of manifestos, of centralizing and totalizing forces" and that it embraces "pluralism as a fundamental tenet".[12] In his unfinished, posthumously-published study 'Postmodern Music, Postmodern Listening', Jonathan D. Kramer encourages his readers to consider postmodernism more in terms of thought, attitude or even as a form of political party rather than a period in history, and that postmodern art or music is better seen not as a reaction to its historical predecessors (unlike modernism or antimodernism, whereby composers sought to negate previous traditions), or a refinement of earlier ideas, and that it is not a natural continuation from another period or genre.[13] Rather, it can be viewed as a reflection of the eclectic and chaotic era in which we live. It is therefore pluralist by nature in that it engages with the past (both with gratitude and ironic ridicule or parody) and revels in contradictions whilst challenging the accepted norms of structure, of musical taste (provocatively combining or juxtaposing "high" art with "low" art) and its meaning is often found in what the listener understands it to mean, rather than in the music itself.[14]

Rather than offering categoric definitions of postmodernism, Kramer provides a list of traits which are often found in, but not all exclusive to, postmodern music. Since postmodernism readily accepts its past to date, he argues that examples can be found from other periods in history: Kramer cites Mahler's *Seventh Symphony* (1904-05) and Nielsen's *Sinfonia semplice* (1925) as being essentially postmodern works providing compelling

[11] See Lyotard, Jean-François, 'Musique et postmodernité', in *New Formations, Issue 66: Postmodernism, Music and Cultural Theory*, trans. by David Bennett (Winter 2008), pp. 37-45
[12] Raymond Monelle, *The Postmodern Project in Music Theory* quoted in *Music Semiotics in Growth*, ed. by Eero Tarasti (Indiana University Press, 1996), p. 37.
[13] See Kramer, Jonathan D., *Postmodern Music, Postmodern Listening*, ed. by Robert Carl (New York and London, Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), p. 14
[14] Ibid., p. 9

arguments as to why this might be so.[15] Peter Bürger, with perhaps an overly reductive simplicity, claims that postmodernism is "the happy hedonism of 'anything goes'", which certainly chimes in harmony with Adès's 'happy promiscuity' with music of the past.[16]

Tracing the influence of other composers, styles and techniques in Adès's music is, on the whole, a rather straightforward endeavour, since Adès frequently includes complementary works alongside his own in concerts. A champion of Stravinsky's music (not only in concert, but on record)[17], neoclassicism and references to the French Baroque can clearly be heard in works such as his *Sonata da Caccia, Op. 11* (1993), *Les barricades mystérieuses* (1994), and *Three Studies after Couperin* (2006). Dominic Wells claims that influences of jazz can also be found in Adès's music, citing *Life Story* (1993), the third movement of the *Violin Concerto "Concentric Paths"* (2005), and the 1930s British jazz elements in *Powder Her Face* as examples. There are elements of minimalism in works such as *America: A Prophesy* (1999), *In Seven Days* (2008) and *Polaris* (2010), and pop music found its way into his eclectic variety of influences, notably in his *Cardiac Arrest* (1995) – an arrangement for ensemble of the song by Madness.[18] Even Adès's composition titles further exemplify his pleasure in alluding to, and engaging with, other styles and works: *Totentanz* (2013) after Liszt's example, and the *Mazurkas, Op. 27* (2009) after Chopin and Szymanowski. Another example, of course, specific to the concerns of this project, is the *Concert Paraphrase*. The use of pre-existing music as models for his own music is clearly symptomatic of Adès's attitude towards the "pluralistic world that we live in"; He clearly sees music from all historical periods as a part of our contemporary environment.[19] This co-existence of past,

[15] Ibid., Book II, Case Histories, Chapter 12: Postmodernism in the Finale of Mahler's Seventh Symphony and Chapter 13: Unity and Disunity in Nielsen's *Sinfonia Semplice*
[16] Bürger, Peter, *The Decline of Modernism*, trans. by Nicholas Walker (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2013), p. 149
[17]Marwood, Anthony and Adès, Thomas, *Stravinsky: Complete Works for Violin and Piano* (Hyperion CDA67723, 2-CD set, 2010). Adès also recorded a selection of Stravinsky's solo piano music on his disc *Thomas Adès: Piano* (EMI 5 57051 2, 2000)
[18] Wells (2012), p. 5
[19] Refer to p. 20

present and future might be described as the 'sphericality of time', to use Bernd Zimmermann's term.[20]

2.4 Adès and surrealism

However, one intervention against the postmodern label, by Richard Taruskin in 1999, feels both significant, and relevant to the present project. Taruskin was emphatic that Adès should not be labelled a postmodernist, but rather a "masterly musical surrealist".[21] As mentioned at the beginning of the present chapter, Dawn Adès, the composer's mother, is a noted expert on art history having specialised in the surrealists and dadaists. It cannot be ignored that there must have been strong influences of surrealism on Adès during his formative years.[22] The application of terms principally applied to literature or visual art carries risks, since defining what makes music appertain to certain movements/schools is often in the eye/ear of the beholder, and defining terms are frequently contradicted and dismissed by the composer in question.[23] Taruskin argues that Adès's music runs contrary to the essential nature of music; it seems to span space rather than time. He describes it as painterly, and not narrative. He provides the specific example of how the seemingly bottomless descent in *Asyla* (1997) reminds him very distinctly of Salvador Dalí's work.

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[20] Olive, Jean-Paul, 'Montage in Modernity: Scattered Fragments, Dynamic Fragments' in *Transformations in Musical Modernism*, p. 145-154, ed. by Erling E. Guldbrandson & Julian Johnson (Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 151

[21] Richard Taruskin, *A Surrealist Composer Comes to the Rescue of Modernism* (New York Times 5/12/1999, https://www.nytimes.com/1999/12/05/arts/a-surrealist-composer-comes-to-the-rescue-of-modernism.html accessed 23/06/18)

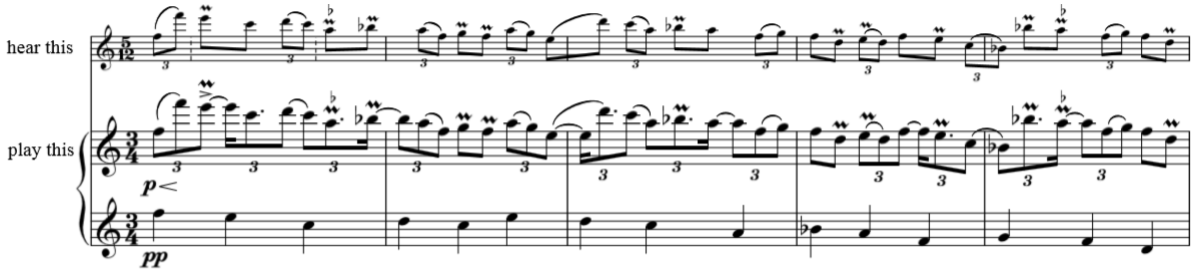
[22] It is also noteworthy that Adès's only student to date, the Spanish composer Francisco Coll, identifies himself as a surrealist composer. See David, Elizabeth, *Interview with Francisco Coll* for the Royal Opera House, 12th March 2014. Available at www.roh.org.uk/news/composer-francisco-coll-on-cafe-kafka-to-write-an-opera-in-the-era-of-cinema-you-must-find-new-kinds-of-narrative accessed 01/07/18 and White, Katy, 'Premieres: December's New Music', for *Rhinegold Press* (1/12/16). Available at https://www.rhinegold.co.uk/classical_music/premieres-decembers-new-music/ accessed 01/07/18

[23] For examples, Debussy and impressionism, Stravinsky and cubism etc. Daniel Albright's chapter on surrealism in music is perhaps the first, and most thorough exploration of this topic to date. See Albright, Daniel, *Untwisting the Serpent – Modernism in Music, Literature and Other Arts* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 2000)

Whilst many artistic styles or movements might be connected by themes of imagery or techniques, surrealism can, however, be more difficult to define. Surrealism often sought to explore the unconscious mind, focusing on expressing thoughts the moment they surface – known as surrealist automatism. It therefore resulted in the bizarre juxtaposing of irrational objects or subjects, also distorting a sense of time and scale, thus turning the ordinary into the extraordinary across a wide variety of media. Kramer acknowledges that, speaking very generally, while Cubism might distort objects more than surrealism, surrealism distorts but also focuses on the juxtaposing of different material to estrange objects from their 'normal'.[24] Kramer goes on to cite Ibert's *Divertissement* as a work which embodies surrealism on account of its juxtaposing of unrelated music which distorts its original meaning.

Whilst a number of authors have written about the use of polyrhythm and polymeter in Adès music, and the effects of these devices, none of them has explicitly identified these with surrealism. Yet the distortions of both time and space that they create certainly lend themselves to such a description. Even a small-scale composition such as Adès's *Second Mazurka, Op. 27* produces strikingly surrealist effects. In Fig. 2.1, we can see that Adès has written the material in the most literal fashion possible to simplify the alignment of parts for the performer but provided a 'hear this' alternative above the upper stave to make the

Fig. 2.1: Temporal asynchronicity in Adès, *Second Mazurka, Op. 27*, bb. 1-5



[24] Kramer (2016), p. 178

underlying musical gesture clear. The right hand plays the mazurka rhythm as we hear it with its inherent stylistic extension/emphasis of weaker beats, but written in a 5/12 time signature (and, later, the left hand is heard in 5/6), against a strict 3/4 time. Through this placement of the automatist element – the mazurka rhythm as it is heard, but not usually written – against the strict time in the left hand, coupled with the material whirling about in the high register of the piano, Adès distorts the every-day object that is the mazurka rhythm into something seemingly irrational. It is this type of reworking of a familiar musical gesture that reminds one of Cocteau, who said "the poet must extricate objects and feelings from their veils and their mists, to show them suddenly, so naked and so alive that a man can scarcely recognise them… [to] rehabilitate the commonplace".[25] The application of this surrealist attitude to material in a variety of Adès's works certainly supports Taruskin's argument.

The technique of surrealist art known as *Cadavre exquis* is also relevant here. Invented in 1925 by Yves Tanguy, Jacques Prévert, André Breton and Marcel Duchamp, it is best understood in terms of the parlour game *consequences*. Each artist draws something before folding or covering the paper so as to conceal what they have done, before passing it onto the next artist to contribute. These surrealist artists adapted the game to parts of the body, hence *cadavre*. This method, like the game *consequences*, means that there can be no real sense of overall congruity in terms of style or technique, even though a general form or theme may be present. There are also musical examples of *cadavre exquis* (such as Jean Cocteau's farcical ballet, *Les mariés de la tour Eiffel* set to music by members of Les Six: Georges Auric, Arthur Honegger, Darius Milhaud, Francis Poulenc and Germaine Tailleferre). Although obviously the work of a single author, the score of *Powder Her Face* is an interesting parallel. Its musical eclecticism appears in such a way that the quotations and

[25] Quoted in Albright (2000), p. 280

allusions (which will be studied in detail in the following chapter), are often presented as disparate musical objects.

Adès's particular interest in, and frequent performing of, the music of Poulenc cannot be overlooked in this context, either. Poulenc is considered a surrealist composer by Albright and this is further explored by Kramer, both of whom discuss specifically his use of intertextuality as a technique for "destabilising the normal semantic procedures of music… Poulenc is a composer of surrealizing misquotations".[26] Poulenc's songs, for example, frequently combine violently surreal texts with luscious, 'syrupy' music, and his Concerto in D minor for two pianos (which Adès performed during his student years at Cambridge), is a kind of musical *cadavre exquis* by a single composer. It therefore stands to reason that there may be elements in Poulenc's music to which Adès feels particularly drawn. In March 2010 Adès played the piano part in Poulenc's *Cello Sonata* as part of his threefold engagements at Carnegie Hall, which included the première of the *Concert Paraphrase,* and on the occasion of the Dutch première of the *Luxury Suite from Powder Her Face* in October 2019 he conducted Poulenc's Suite *Les Biches.*

However, as shall be demonstrated later from an interpreter's perspective, there is meaning behind Adès's use of quotations in *Powder Her Face,* and it shall be argued that they form a commentary on the narrative of the opera. As Adès himself remarked, the narrative progress of the music generally dictated what material he used/alluded to, rather than the other way around.[27] The use of allusion in *Powder Her Face* is such that one can draw further comparison to Cocteau's *Les mariés de la tour Eiffel* in that the music within is so referential it has the audience questioning whether they have heard something 'real' or something 'imaginary'. Albright writes of the Cocteau ballet that

[26] Ibid., p. 287
[27] See Service (2012), p. 76

> *Much of the music consists of, so to speak, images of preexisting music. When we hear Auric's overture, we are supposed to hear not actual marching bands on Bastille Day, but an evocation of such bands: just as the stage set shows Paris broken up by mirrors, so the music is a refraction of popular music. But as the play proceeds, it becomes increasingly difficult to distinguish "real" music from "imaginary" music, that is, self-sufficient music from music that alludes to or founds itself upon familiar music*.[28]

As we shall see in the next chapter, a large portion of that quotation could have been written about *Powder Her Face*, adding further compelling support to Taruskin's argument of Adès as a surrealist.

Yet works by Adès which have aspects of surrealism are not exclusively so. For example, within the apparently surrealist opera, *The Exterminating Angel* (2017), there is stylistic plurality throughout, in keeping with the thematic plurality of the subject: the seriousness of being trapped (Buñuel's commentary on the complicity of the Spanish upper classes with the fascist Franco regime) against the frivolous sentiments of the privileged dinner guests living in their own bubble, as well as the comic greeting scene, the disembodied hand, and the chilling déjà vu.[29] And, in *Powder Her Face*, the use of quotation does not only appear to function as a musical commentary on the dramaturgy as mentioned above, but it also evokes the surrealist effects brought about by the cluttering of so many distorted musical objects. Clearly there are features of Adès's music that conform to Taruskin and Albright's descriptions of surreal musical artworks, alongside features of postmodernism. Kramer questions Albright's distinction between surrealism and postmodernism, and posits that they are in fact the same. Curiously, however, his reasoning for this does not seem to apply to Adès's music. Kramer states that, in postmodern music, "the employment of automatic

[28] Albright (2000), p. 286

[29] See Romney, Jonathan, 'How Buñuel's The Exterminating Angel Became Opera's Most Surreal Soiree' Soiree in *The Guardian*, 1/4/17. Available at https://www.theguardian.com/music/2017/apr/01/thomas-ades-opera-exterminating-angel-bunuel-jonathan-romney accessed 1/07/18

writing in an endeavour to allow for unmediated contact between the creators' mind and that of the audience" is not used – in other words that the automatist element of surrealism is absent in postmodernism.[30] However, as we shall see below, Adès makes frequent use of automatic devices for creating musical material in ways that closely resemble those of surrealist visual artists, and their use is widespread throughout *Powder Her Face*.

2.5 Compositional signatures

The music of Thomas Adès poses many challenges when it comes to analysis, just as most music does that might be described as postmodern. The stylistic eclecticism means that the music evades simple categorisation, and the construction of the works does not necessarily resemble traditional musical forms. Consequently, no single theoretical disposition or method of analysis will adequately assist in tackling the multiplicity of techniques employed in the music. Roeder argues that the only realistic way to address this constraint is to focus analysis on the single feature which unites all music: its temporality – and gives a detailed and engaging account of the continuities in Adès's music.[31] Whilst an exhaustive study of Adès's compositional techniques lies outside the scope of this project, it is necessary to outline their principal features by surveying existing literature on the topic. It is important rather to stress the use of 'apparatus' or 'signatures'; they are tools instead of strict 'techniques' or 'methods' and they certainly do not constitute anything as hermetic as a 'system', in the Darmstadt sense. Adès often uses the devices discussed below as a means to create material, but he frequently demonstrates a liberal attitude when it comes to bending the rules he has established for himself. Adès emphasises that the musical impulses always come

[30] Kramer (2016), p. 186

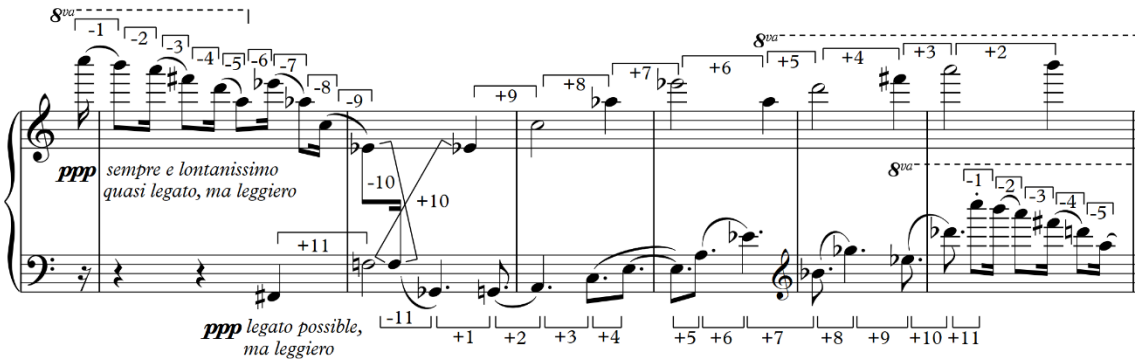
[31] Continuity is defined by Roeder as "an association between two percepts, formed when the second realises a mental projection that was made as part of the first". He goes on to give the most simple example possible of a leading note precipitating the perception of the tonic, and the arrival of the tonic fulfilling that perception, thus providing continuity. See Roeder, John, 'Co-operating Continuities in the Music of Thomas Adès' in *Music Analysis: Volume 25 Issue 1-2*, pp. 121-154 (Blackwells Publishing Ltd., Mar. 2006)

first and that the methods and forms used to realise them are secondary.[32] What is particularly interesting, and something Wilson comments upon, is that most of Adès's compositional signatures have remained with him, and largely unchanged, from his *Op. 1* to the present day.[33]

1. Signature scale

Whilst Adès has continued to evolve new techniques (notably in recent works such as *Polaris*), all of the devices used to create musical material relevant to this study are present in the *Five Eliot Landscapes, Op. 1* (1990). In the opening sequence of 'New Hampshire' (Fig. 2.2), Adès presents in the piano part his signature scales of expanding and contracting intervals where each note increases or decreases the interval of the preceding one by a semitone.[34]

Fig. 2.2: expanding and contracting interval streams in Adès, *Five Eliot Landscapes, Op. 1,* i) *New Hampshire* (piano part), bb. 1-6



[32] Service (2012), p. 7
[33] Wilson, Jake, *Portfolio of Compositions* and *'Local Harmonic Procedures in Thomas Adès's* Traced Overhead*'* (Ph.D. dissertation. School of Arts Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, 2016), p. 46
[34] Cao (2004), pp. 38-39

Although in ‘New Hampshire’ this signature scale device forms an integral part of the musical narrative, and appears in various permutations (retrograde, inversion and with rhythmic augmentation), in many of Adès’s other works, he appears to use it principally to create shorter motivic or melodic gestures, such as in the Overture to *Powder Her Face* (Fig. 2.3) or the close of his *First Mazurka* (Fig. 2.4).

Fig. 2.3: expanding interval stream in Adès, *Powder Her Face, Overture* bb. 4-5 (soprano saxophone part)

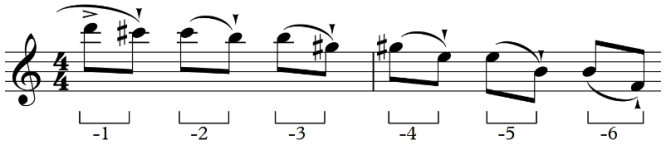
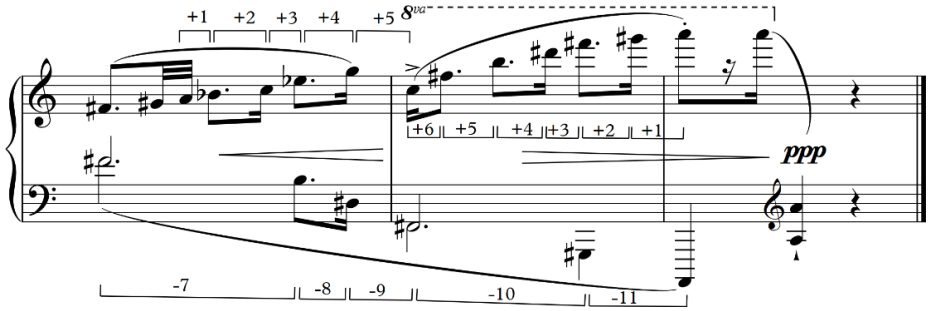


Fig. 2.4: Expanding and contracting interval streams in Adès, *First Mazurka, Op. 27 No. 1*, bb. 58-60

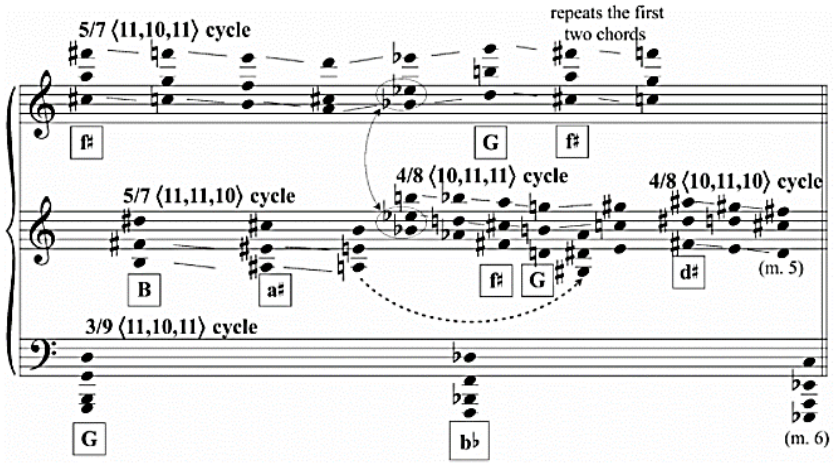


2. Aligned interval cycles

Another recurring compositional apparatus for Adès is the use of aligned interval cycles – the interactivity of two or more interval cycles – to create harmony. In the same way that ‘New Hampshire’ from the *Five Eliot Landscapes* could be considered a study in writing a piece with the limited means of an expanding interval pitch stream, ‘Chori’, the final

movement of *Traced Overhead* (1996), can be seen as one in aligned interval cycles.[35] At times composed across six staves, Adès's stacking of several aligned cycles creates a sense of multiple continuities and this has been excellently discussed and analysed by Philip Stoecker.[36]

Fig. 2.5: Reduction of the aligned cycles in Adès, *Traced Overhead*, iii) *Chori*, bb. 1-4[37]

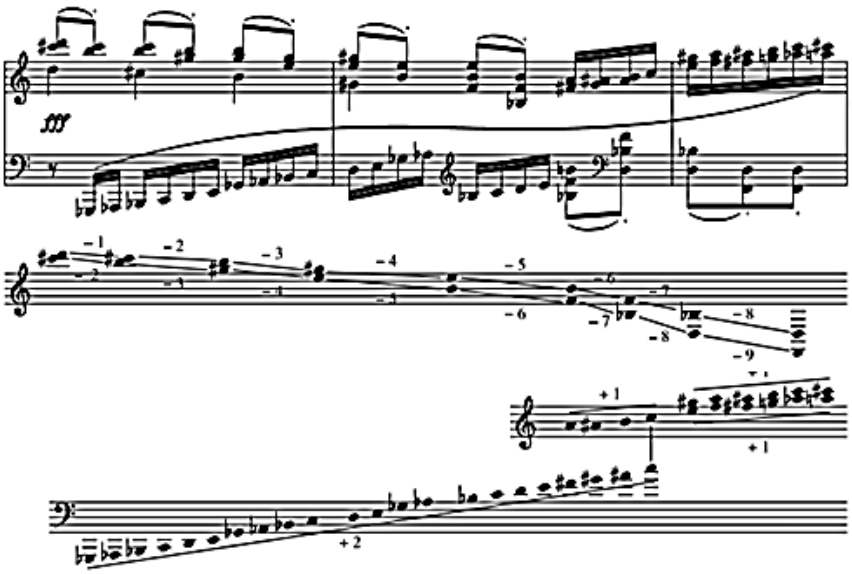


[35] Markou claims that *Five Eliot Landscapes, Op. 1* "is a platform where the five main compositional concepts and techniques of interval cycles, Nancarrow tempo canons, musical homages, musical quotation, and the creation of a distinct compositional signature scale are established and explored". Markou, Stella Ioanna, *A Poetic Synthesis and Theoretical Analysis of Thomas Adès'* Five Eliot Landscapes (University of Arizona, 2010), p. 81

[36] Stoecker, Philip, 'Harmony, Voice Leading, and Cyclic Structures in Thomas Adès's "Chori"' in *Music Theory & Analysis, Volume II, No. 11*, pp. 204-218 (Leuven University Press, Oct. 2015). See also Stoecker, Philip, 'Aligned Cycles in Thomas Adès's Piano Quintet' in *Music Analysis, Vol. 33, No. 1*, pp. 32-64 (Mar. 2014)

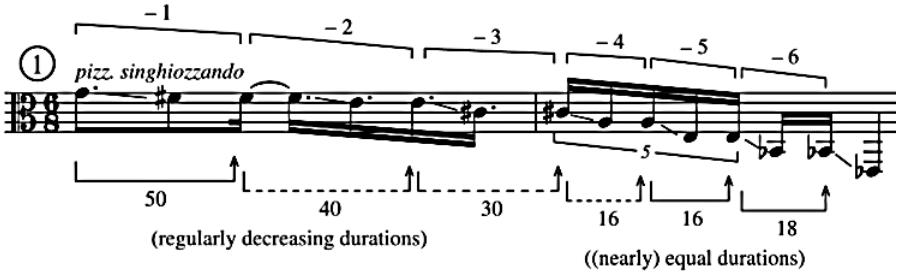
[37] This diagram, reproduced directly from Stoecker (2015), p. 213, identifies Adès's use of interval and pitch interval class. Performers unfamiliar with post-tonal analysis are advised to consult Straus, Joseph N., *Introduction to Post-tonal Theory*, 3rd edn (New Jersey, Pearson Education, Inc., 2005)

Fig. 2.6: aligned cycles, expanding and fixed interval pitch streams in Adès, *Powder Her Face, Overture*, bb. 4-6[38]



As well as the means of continuity Adès provides through his pitch stream and aligned cycles, he often applies similar techniques to his rhythmic motifs to create either cohesion or instability. Durational continuity is also studied in existing literature.[39]

Fig. 2.7: decreasing duration stream in Adès, *Arcadiana*, iii) *Auf dem Wasser zu Singen*, bb. 1-2[40]

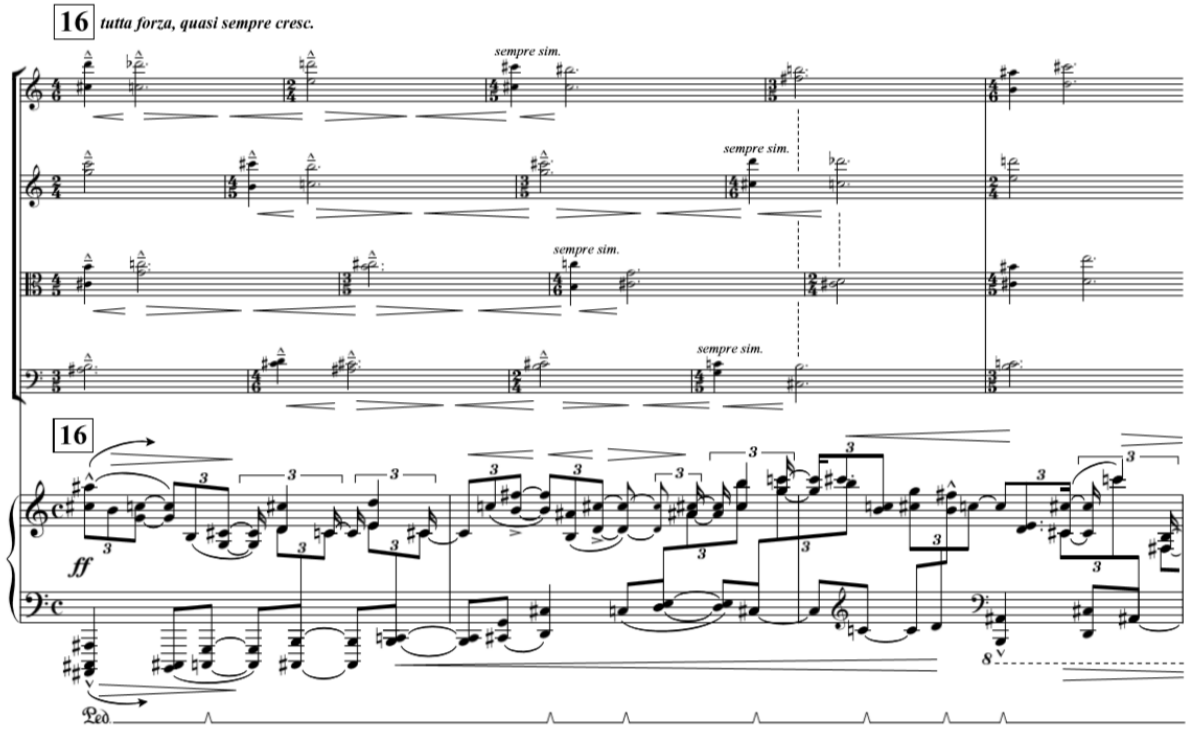


[38] Reproduced directly from Roeder (2006), p. 125
[39] See Ibid. (2006) and Fox, Daniel, 'Multiple Time-Scales in Adès's Rings' in *Perspectives of New Music, Vol. 52, No. 1*, pp. 28-56 (Winter 2014)
[40] Reproduced directly from Roeder (2006), p. 126

3. Polymeters and temporal asynchronicity

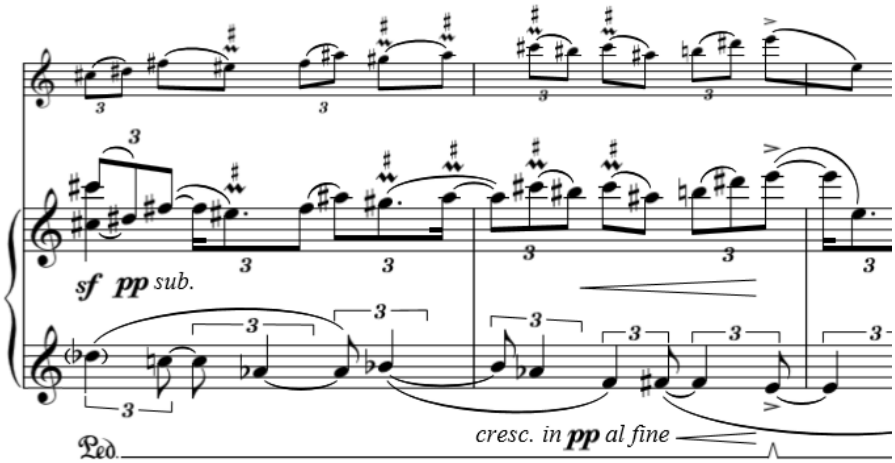
As noted above, another group of techniques used extensively by Adès include polymeters and temporal asynchronicity. These are doubtless inspired by his documented interest in Conlon Nancarrow and his use of tempo canons.[41] Although *Powder Her Face* does not utilise polymeters or simultaneous multiple tempi as in Nancarrow's works, a number of Adès's other works do, and as shall be demonstrated in Chapter 3, there are elements in *Powder Her Face* which suggest polymeters in their acoustical perception, even if they are not notated in print.

Fig. 2.8: asynchronous polymetres in Adès, *Piano Quintet*, RM 16



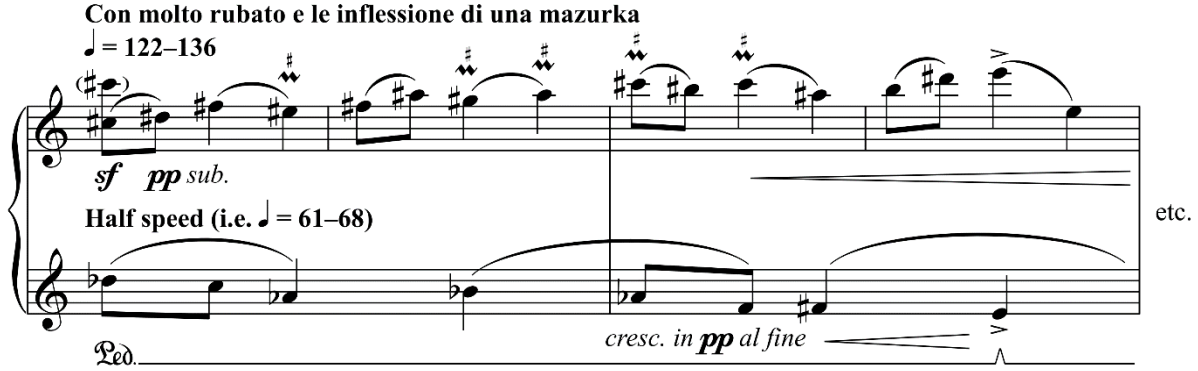
[41] Adès once referred to Nancarrow and Charles Ives as two of the greatest American artists. See Ross (1998). For more information on tempo canons, see Thomas, Margaret E., 'Nancarrow's Canons: Projections of Temporal and Formal Structures' in *Perspectives of New Music, Vol. 38, No. 2*, pp. 106-133 (Summer 2000). See also Markou (2010), p. 30 and Service (2012), p. 117

Fig. 2.9a: temporal asynchronicity in Adès, *Second Mazurka, Op. 27*, bb. 87-89



The effect of the example in the *Second Mazurka* above is that two note series are heard simultaneously in different tempi. This might be notated as follows:

Fig. 2.9b: alternative notation for Adès, *Second Mazurka, Op. 27*, bb. 87-89



An argument in favour of viewing this through the lens of acoustical surrealism is Adès's use of language. He describes Nancarrow's music as reflective of his fascination with machines, whereas Adès's own music has *distortions* of a "biological nature".[42]

[42] Cheng, Gloria, conversation between Thomas Adès and Gloria Cheng about their duo recital on the Piano Spheres Series (Sept. 2015). Available at: http://pianospheres.org/a-conversation-between-thomas-ades-and-gloria-cheng-about-their-upcoming-duo-recital-on-the-piano-spheres-series-4/ accessed 10/10/18

4. Quotation and allusion

Quoting and alluding to other music is a technique Adès has also frequently turned to throughout his output, and some examples have been noted above in the context of his musical influences. Markou claims that direct musical quotation may well be an acknowledgement of his admiration for the music of Charles Ives,[43] however Adès's 'happy promiscuity' with other composers' music – his use of intertextuality – is one of Kramer's key traits of postmodernism.[44] Kramer argues that:

> *intertextuality is not solely a condition of postmodern literature or music, but also of the postmodern self. People come into contact with so many other people, with divergent personalities and values, that the self is constantly in flux, always bending under the influence of others.*[45]

As we shall see, this is a particularly apposite comment with respect to Adès's music and his attitude towards his influences. Intertextuality first appeared in his *Five Eliot Landscapes, Op. 1* (and we may note that T. S. Eliot himself was a keen user of allusion and quotation) and has remained employed throughout his output to date. The close of 'New Hampshire' includes a *lontanissimo* quotation of George H. Clutsam's song, *My Curly-Headed Baby*, and Adès actually places inverted commas around the quotation in his score.

Intertextuality in Adès's music is not often as literally presented as in 'New Hampshire': allusions are frequently veiled. Adès said that "it's much better to think of the process like biological cells which you absorb and which mutate into the music you write".[46] From this, it is clear that musical gestures, harmonies, melodic lines, orchestration and any

[43] Markou (2010), p. 33. See also Burkholder, Peter J., *All Made of Tunes: Charles Ives and the Uses of Musical Borrowing* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1995). See also Markou (2010), pp. 48-49 on Adès's "borrowing" of stylistic (or compositional) traits.
[44] Kramer (2016), p. 9
[45] Ibid., p. 18
[46] Dammann, Guy, 'This Opera is About You – Whoever That is' in *The Financial Times Weekend* (19-20/11/16)

form of musical material might be manipulated in a way which still resembles the source of reference, but which does not quote it verbatim. For example, in *Asyla*, we are presented with a reference to Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle* – one which clearly draws parallels between the themes in Bartók's opera and the themes that a title like *Asyla* might suggest.

Fig. 2.10a: Bartók, *Bluebeard's Castle, Sz. 48*, RM 91, b. 1

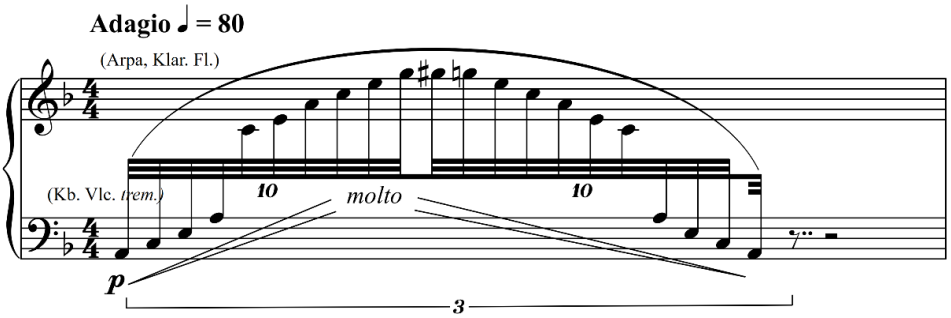
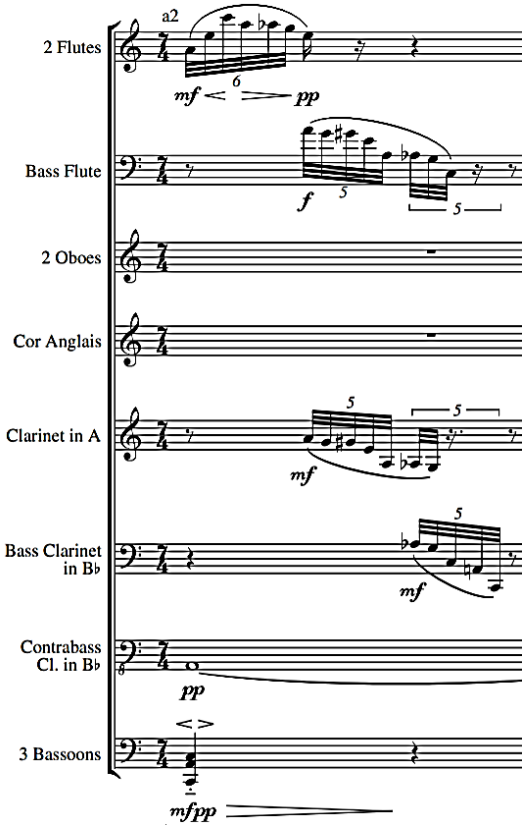


Fig. 2.10b: Adès, *Asyla, iv*, b. 1



Another obvious reference can be found in the opening of Adès's *Violin Concerto,* which bears more than a striking similarity to the opening of Ligeti's *Violin Concerto*:

Fig. 2.11a: Ligeti, *Violin Concerto,* b. 1 (solo violin) [47]

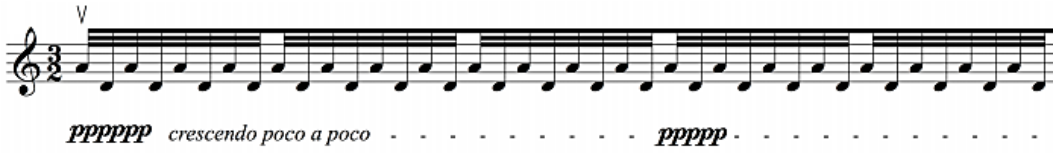
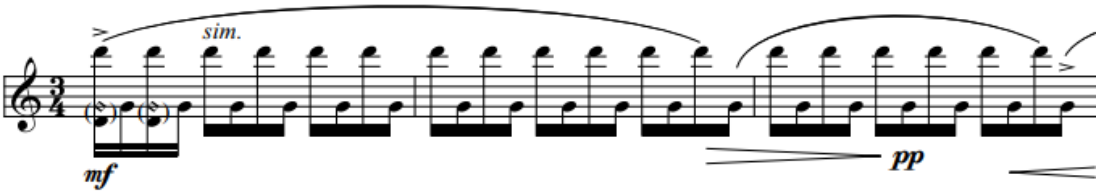


Fig. 2.11b: Adès, *Violin Concerto – Concentric Paths, i, Rings*, bb. 1-3



Intertextuality through the use of quotation and allusion is a technique used for a variety of different reasons and in different ways: Adès invokes musical forms from other periods/genres; he directly quotes pre-existing musical text – this can be woven into his own musical material or placed as a form of musical object; he might allude to something in heavy disguise; or indeed use material as a source for parody. This can either serve to comment on or contextualise musical meaning or intensify the audience's emotional response. This is exploited, perhaps, to the greatest degree in *Powder Her Face*. The opera is highly referential, and its quasi-encyclopedic musical quotations and stylistic parodying has been widely observed. Rupert Christiansen writes about its "super-sophisticated allusions to *Der Rosenkavalier*, *The Rake's Progress* and *Lulu*" and "inter-war popular music";[48] Fiona

[47] Reproduced by kind permission of Schott Music, Mainz
[48] Christiansen, Rupert, 'Powder her Face, Belfast - finally, great acting makes emotional sense of this opera' in *The Telegraph*, 29/01/17. Available at https://www.telegraph.co.uk/opera/what-to-see/powder-face-belfast-finally-great-acting-makes-emotional-sense accessed 10/10/18

Maddocks says the score ranges "from tango to two-step via Berg and Stravinsky";[49] and Dominic Wells points out that the opera frequently alludes to "British jazz from the 1930s… often aping the style typically associated with the music of Noël Coward, as well as including waltzes, foxtrots and tangos".[50]

The next chapter will introduce *Powder Her Face* and the *Concert Paraphrase* and investigate the appearance of the above-mentioned compositional devices, especially the use of musical quotation and allusion, with the intention of revealing how their use might inform one's interpretative choices in the performance of the *Concert Paraphrase*.

[49] Maddocks, Fiona, 'Powder Her Face; Through His Teeth – review' in *The Guardian*, 6/04/14. Available at https://www.theguardian.com/music/2014/apr/06/powder-her-face-through-his-teeth-review
[50] Wells (2012)

CHAPTER 3

"There was a future once because there was a past"[1]

This chapter seeks to carry out a detailed investigation into *Powder Her Face* and the *Concert Paraphrase*. By considering the thematic content and narrativity of the opera, it posits why Adès felt the work was particularly well suited to a piano piece in the vein of a virtuoso operatic paraphrase, and it also sets about comparing the circumstances of the paraphrase's composition and premiere with the professional incentives found in the nineteenth century. Later, there is a study of possible readings into the narrative of the *Concert Paraphrase*, and of the way typically 'Adèsian' compositional devices are used to reveal what, musically, we might infer about the relationship between the characters and their social class. Finally, there is a catalogue of quotations and allusions found throughout the *Concert Paraphrase*.

3.1 Introducing *Powder Her Face*

Powder Her Face was completed in 1995 when Adès was 24 years of age. Commissioned by Almeida Opera, the premiere took place on 1 July 1995 at the Everyman Theatre, Cheltenham, as part of the 1995 Cheltenham International Festival.[2] It is a chamber opera scored for four singers and fifteen players in two acts, with a libretto by English novelist, critic and journalist Philip Hensher (b. 1965)[3]. It has enjoyed over 300 performances and 50 productions in cities around the world, including New York, London, Philadelphia, Berlin, Tel Aviv and Vienna.[4] In 1999, it was made into a television film by the UK's Channel 4 Television

[1] Hensher, Philip, *Powder Her Face* (Faber and Faber, London, 1995), p. 9
[2] Adès, Thomas, *Powder Her Face* 1995 (Faber Music Ltd., 2015)
[3] Although often decorated with the title 'librettist', Hensher considers this unfair, having written just one. See Hensher, Philip, 'Sex, Powder and Polaroids' in *The Guardian* (29/05/08). Available at https://www.theguardian.com/music/2008/may/29/classicalmusicandopera2 accessed 06/10/18
[4] www.fabermusic.com accessed 26/03/19. Also, see Faber Music's *Powder Her Face Suites* Information Sheet (Jan. 2019)

and broadcast on Christmas Day; this was released on DVD in 2005 alongside a documentary about Adès.

The opera portrays an elderly and fading Duchess (she is not named in the opera, but the character is modelled on the real-life Margaret, Duchess of Argyll) reminiscing about her life through a series of flashback tableaux from her hotel suite with each scene focussing on events from different eras of her life. It includes at the centre her scandalous divorce case and the discovery of a now infamous polaroid image in which the Duchess is seen performing oral sex, which was subsequently used in evidence against her.

The musical style is eclectic and its content highly referential. There are allusions to a plethora of styles and composers ranging from Schubert to Carlos Gardel, Richard Strauss to Kurt Weill, and Stravinsky to Mussorgsky. Some of the musical quotations are merely suggestive, "red herrings", but others "robbery" as Adès himself put it.[5] A predominant theme in the opera is that of excess and extravagance: the Duchess's insatiable sexual appetite, wealth and decadent lifestyle is contrasted with the mocking ridicule of her by a hypocritical, patriarchal society; and the fellatio aria and the frivolous opening tango are contrasted with the sincerely felt tragedy of the Duchess's eviction from her hotel residence (and indeed society) representing her metaphorical death.

The Duchess is presented as an archetypal postmodern anti-heroine in that she not only challenges the accepted social norms of an aristocratic woman's sexual behaviour but that, through her flashbacks, she creates her own truth and reality. Several scenes focus on her perceptions of people's unfair prejudices of her, and feature her recalling scenes and events which, in reality, she cannot possibly have known about. The instability between what is true and what is false, with the Duchess clearly an unreliable witness, crumbles throughout the

[5] Service (2012) pp. 153 and 152 respectively.

opera. Yet, in spite of the outré hedonism which brings about her downfall, we cannot help, as Arnold Whittall says, but "feel compassion for this magnificent monster".[6]

A large part of the opera's success is owed to the 'interactive' nature of it. A detailed summary of the musical references and allusions and what they might mean for the interpreter will be set out in due course, but by referring to music from existing repertoire Adès invites the opera's audience to participate in the interpretative activity. As Edward Venn explains, audiences' recognition of musical allusions serves to intensify and build upon the nexus of references already established. It creates a form of participation in the pleasure of interpretation. In other words, what the audience recognises informs how they themselves interpret what they are hearing.[7]

Adès's music often confronts themes of being imprisoned: *Asyla* (toying with the ambiguity of its title of either being trapped in a mental institution or having safe harbour); there is Prospero's island in *The Tempest*; the inescapable room with the invisible walls in *The Exterminating Angel*; and the hotel suite in *Powder Her Face* – a physical manifestation of the Duchess being trapped in her undependable memory and former lavish existence. The fourth wall is breached, however, and the audience is directly addressed during the 'Fancy' aria in *Powder Her Face*, at which point the Waitress, singing about the Duchess's extravagant wealth, exclaims "That's what I want. That's what you want. You'd love it". There is clearly something very powerful about inviting an audience into someone else's vacuum and, as we shall see below, the music underscores this dramatic moment very effectively.

The abundance of musical quotations is of a piece with the decadence being portrayed on stage, and as her life disintegrates, so too does the music. We are left with nothing but white noise at the point of her eviction from the hotel: the sound of a finished record spinning on a

[6] Whittall, Arnold, Orpheus: And after in *The Musical Times, Vol. 139, No. 1865* (Winter 1998), p. 58.
[7] Venn, Edward, ''Asylum gained'? Aspects of meaning in Thomas Adès "Asyla"' in *Musical Analysis, Vol. 25 No. 1/2* (Mar. – Jul. 2006), p. 101

turntable. The hotel room is cleared up, her things removed, and the music is removed, too – a metaphor of death, or at least the end of the Duchess's life as she knew it, and the final harmonic door is closed shut on a grim B-flat minor chord.

3.2 Why a concert paraphrase and why *Powder Her Face*?

Before investigating the musical material in the *Concert Paraphrase,* it is worth exploring the motives Adès may have had behind writing it and why he chose to invoke the form, techniques, and genre of the nineteenth century operatic paraphrase; understanding the incentives behind a work's composition can have a bearing on the attitude of the performer in shaping a general interpretative concept of the work in question. The artistic and professional incentives for composer-pianists having written operatic paraphrases throughout the nineteenth century were discussed in Chapter 1. They were often:

- designed to be career-enhancing for the entrepreneurial virtuoso composer-pianist
- faithful realisations of their parent texts to help propagandise music
- compositional investigations of sorts, such as the Lisztian réminiscences (and, later, the types of transcriptions that Godowsky and Busoni became known for where the original work often formed a starting point for an entirely new composition).

Adès frequently reworks the compositions of others as well as those by himself (this was discussed at length in a 2020 webinar with Kirill Gerstein).[8] Adès has likened this practice to adding to existing buildings in our musical environment. Examples include *Les barricades mystérieuses* and *Three Studies after Couperin* which were highlighted in Chapter 2; *Darknesse Visible* (1992) after the song *In Darknesse Let me Dwell* by John Dowland; *Court Studies from "The Tempest"* (2005) after his own, second opera; *Blanca Variations* (2015), *Berceuse*

[8] Adès, Thomas, 'Roots, Seeds & Live Cultures' in *Kirill Gerstein Invites* webinar series for HfM Eisler, Berlin, 17/06/20 available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I0kHP_npxJA accessed 18/06/20

(2018), and *Three Berceuses* (2018), after *The Exterminating Angel*; and *Souvenir* (2018) and *Colette Suite* (2019) after his film score for the Hollywood film, *Colette*. Most of the musical reworkings from his own works were published in close proximity to the original which raises the issue of pragmatism: by reworking and releasing material already written, but scored for different instrumental settings, Adès has been able to capitalise more fully on the works in question whilst furthering interest in the original compositions. Dissemination and profile-enhancing practices like these were common throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and were discussed in Chapter 1.

Powder Her Face, however, appears to be something of a 'fountain of youth' for Adès and reworkings of it span his career to date. He has written the *Three-Piece Suite* (formerly *Dances from Powder Her Face*, 2007, revised 2018), the *Luxury Suite* (2017, formerly called *Powder Her Face Suite*) and the *Hotel Suite* (2018) all for large orchestra, the solo piano *Concert Paraphrase* (2009) and the two-piano arrangement of the *Concert Paraphrase* (2015).[9] It is not surprising that Adès has continued to mine *Powder Her Face* as much as he has – it has been one of the most successful operas in recent decades and there is evidently public demand for its music. Perhaps there is a conscious irony in how the fading Duchess has become a Dorian Gray portrait for Adès – as she ages and her story and music are exploited, Adès retains his musical vibrancy and 'youth'. As we have seen, musical reworkings are abundant among Adès's output. It is interesting, however, that he has tended not to rework compositions of his which might be understood, at least from their titles, to possess religious connotations, such as *Tevot* (2007) or *In Seven Days* (2008). Most of his musical reworkings stem from dramatic works – song, opera/stage. The ambiguity in the title of *Les barricades*

[9] A three-piece suite is a decidedly lower middle-class object of aspiration and its witty use as a title indicates that it is the least 'rich' of all the suites: it has just three movements (the Overture, Waltz, and closing Tango). The *Hotel Suite* contains five movements, and the *Luxury Suite* has eight. The two-piano version of the *Concert Paraphrase* was born from the fact that there were, at that point in time, no other performers of the work other than Adès and the present author. By arranging the work for two pianos, it was hoped that it would reduce the considerable technical demands and increase the number of performances.

mystérieuses, rather like his own title *Asyla*, might have been the spark which instigated his exploration of that piece. None of these examples, however, is written in the form of a concert paraphrase, and so it is interesting to consider specifically what in *Powder Her Face* prompted that musical impulse.

On the subject of the *Concert Paraphrase*, Adès said:

> *my model was Liszt's idea of "reminiscences" of operas – as if I was trying to remember parts of the opera after getting home, without a score. There's a lot to be said for this idea, as a way to find a new path. I think trying to remember things and getting them wrong is a very important way to progress.*[10]

From this, we might understand that the *Concert Paraphrase* is a further exploration of the original idea which gave birth to the opera, just from a different perspective. Adès himself said about it that it is as though "you glimpse something as if through the train window and a few years later you want to go and explore that place".[11] If we take Adès at his word, we might well assume that this type of further exploration or reworking belongs to the tradition set out in the examples by Godowsky, Busoni, Grainger, Sorabji etc. However, further discussion is needed to understand why the idea of a Lisztian 'réminiscences' may have sprung to his mind and whether Adès's comment is reflected in the music.

Operatic paraphrases are already a referential genre by nature. The Lisztian réminiscences are non-linear in their construction and play upon the notions of creatively (mis-)remembering music heard at the opera. Other paraphrases were, as we have seen, used for showcasing virtuosic performers, or promoting the original music further than the pragmatic limitations its stage form would generally allow for at the time – such as the financial costs involved in staging operas, the cost of attending and so on. The musically referential aspects

[10] Cheng (2015)
[11] Ibid.

of *Powder Her Face*, with Adès's extensive use of the technique of allusion and quotation, raises natural parallels with the operatic paraphrase genre. So too does the flashback narrativity of the opera which intrinsically aligns itself with the non-linear form of Liszt's réminiscences, structurally speaking. That Liszt's réminiscenses are also musical commentaries from his perspective, raises further similarities to *Powder Her Face* which is also presented from the viewpoint of an individual character/narrator. Adès's choice of scenes and the possible meanings they might have will be studied later.

As addressed in the section "Decline of the Operatic Paraphrase" of Chapter 1, criticism of the genre and performance tradition became one of disdain towards its inherent extravagance, the self-indulgence of the composer-performer exploiting virtuosity for its own sake, and the egotistical manipulation of an original, 'sacrosanct' score – in other words, its decadence. Interestingly, these criticisms can be closely linked to some of the themes and musical constructs of *Powder Her Face*: society's judgement (perhaps even jealousy) of a woman's sexual promiscuity reflected in score's instrumental virtuosity, and the Duchess narrating her own story to manipulate her audience(s) into sympathy for her.[12] The surface of the music is decadent – often full of the "too muchness" that Ferneyhough talks about[13] – as are the extreme demands on its performers (both in the opera and the solo paraphrase). Many of the visual aspects of the opera's score – with rich, multifaceted textures and complex notational and rhythmic devices – are also tropes of decadence. Adès's self-indulgent delight in these aspects is very much reflected through the Duchess's attachment to lavish extravagance and luxury 'things'.[14]

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[12] Indeed, in his programme note for the *Concert Paraphrase*, Adès said that "the Duchess's grace and glamour are figured in the music by a certain virtuosity". See Adès, Thomas, *Concert Paraphrase on Powder Her Face: Programme Notes*. Available at https://www.fabermusic.com/music/concert-paraphrase-on-powder-her-face-5420 accessed 20/10/16

[13] Ferneyhough, Brian, *Collected Writings*, ed. by James Boros & Richard Toop (Harwood Academic Publishers, Amsterdam, 1995), p. 451

[14] See Baker, Richard, ''Enough! or Too much!': Decadence and Camp in the Music of Thomas Adès' in *The Declinism Seminars: Decadence* (seminar arranged by the Axel and Margaret Ax:son Johnson Foundation, Trinity Hall, Cambridge, UK, 30/09/14)

Matthew Potolsky claims "imitation – in the various forms of allusion, citation, parody, translation and tribute – is the very stuff of decadent writing" and that "decadent texts… explicitly thematize it".[15] These elements in *Powder Her Face* have been strongly shown in evidence above, but it is also noteworthy that Hensher's libretto is also filled with similar forms of allusion, quotation and pastiche (*Powder Her Face* even being a somewhat camp reworking of the line 'cover her face' in John Webster's play *The Duchess of Malfi*)[16], but, in addition to the micro-level allusions, we can trace macro-level ones to narratives of other operas. The fall (from grace) of the Duchess is principally outlined with the decline of her financial circumstances, and it bears strong resemblance to the maleficent Baba the Turk from Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*, the downfall of Lulu in Berg's opera, and the aristocratic and sexually athletic Marschallin in Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier*. Hensher reflected, thirteen years after the opera was written, that "it ended up being an opera full of quotes".[17] None of the musical allusions to Stravinsky and Berg appear in the *Concert Paraphrase,* but those of the Strauss do; and even though the Duchess's full story is obviously not represented in the paraphrase, grasping the overall story is relevant knowledge to the pianist performing the solo *Concert Paraphrase* as shall be shown. Awareness of the sheer scope of reference and the decadent nature of the opera helps reinforce argument as to why Adès chose to write a paraphrase specifically on *Powder Her Face*. It might in fact also be possible to see *Powder Her Face* as an 'inverted' concert paraphrase in its own right – itself being so wrought with decadence, quotation, and chronicled as a reminiscence from the protagonist's sole perspective.

The professional circumstances for the composition of operatic paraphrases in the nineteenth century also align with Adès's own career at the time of the work's composition.

[15] Potolsky, Matthew, *The Decadent Republic of Letters: Taste, Politics, and Cosmopolitan Community from Baudelaire to Beardsley* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012)
[16] Webster, John, The Duchess of Malfi, https://www.gutenberg.org/files/2232/2232-h/2232-h.htm accessed 4/5/20
[17] Hensher (2008)

For almost two decades prior, Adès was largely seen as a composer and conductor (having publicly renounced his interest in being a pianist in favour of being a composer).[18] When the engagement to give a solo piano recital as part of a trio of concerts at Carnegie Hall presented itself at a time when he was keen to increase his presence in the USA (coinciding with signing up with IMG Artists, buying a second home in Los Angeles and his divorce from artist Tal Rosner) it perhaps seemed to Adès an entirely natural genre to invoke.[19] Appearing as conductor and composer in the other two concerts of the series, Adès may have been consciously casting himself in a Lisztian role. Creating a virtuosic operatic paraphrase for a major international debut as a pianist is clearly following in the footsteps of the pianistic giants of the nineteenth century.

As we have seen in Liszt's later operatic paraphrases (especially the Wagnerian ones), a key incentive behind writing them was to take advantage of his arranging skills to help promote others' music. The opportunity for Adès to stir renewed attention towards his own opera, and not only his pianism, at his Carnegie Hall debut was surely more than a happy coincidence. To compose and perform a paraphrase on one's own opera is an act not without vanity, and is perhaps in keeping with the themes of the opera and the image of Adès writing it: the Duchess relating her life and the incriminating polaroid photo – a kind of pre-mobile-phone era selfie – can be interpreted as a selfie of Adès's view of his own music. Furthermore, one can read into the themes of exhibitionism/voyeurism which run through the polaroid, the operatic paraphrase tradition and indeed the opera. It also flatters the audience by casting them in the role of nineteenth century salonistes and discerning patrons of the arts, and himself as a contemporary artistic and pianistic genius.

[18] Ross (1998)
[19] See Service (2012), pp. 166-169

In summary, it is for these reasons that *Powder Her Face* has lent itself so well to an operatic paraphrase. The fundamental tenets of decadence and extravagance in the virtuoso operatic paraphrase genre are closely connected to the subject matter of the opera; the professional incentives for Adès to compose such a work have been demonstrated to be comparable to pianist-composers of the early nineteenth century when the genre was enjoying its heyday; the opera's referential nature, exploiting audiences' familiarity with operatic examples and musical styles from the modern canon, adds a further dimension to the genre's nature of quoting famous material from its own era's recent past. The fact that Adès has also arranged the *Concert Paraphrase* for two pianos, in the way that composers of the past arranged their orchestral works for solo piano then two pianos, embodies past pianistic traditions more than "enough – or too much!" – to quote the close of Hensher's libretto.[20]

3.3 Form of the *Concert Paraphrase*

In order to shape an understanding of the form of the *Concert Paraphrase* (and how it might fit within the taxonomy outlined in Chapter 1) we shall now explore how its material relates to the original opera and study how the opera's text is arranged for the piano. In Table 7, we can see Adès's choice of scenes, and beneath we see both the corresponding parts of the libretto and how the opera's text is arranged and re-written for the piano. Having studied the *Concert Paraphrase* in this way, we can then go on to a more detailed commentary on what this information tells us. By looking into the work's narrativity, we can investigate possible readings of the work which are distinct from, and different to, the original opera. (In the commentary below, differences in notation, expressive indications, tempi etc. between the sources have been left out deliberately. Because there have been so many different

[20] Hensher (1995), p. 42

manifestations of material from *Powder Her Face*, a full editorial breakdown of these variants is provided as Appendix 2 for convenience of reference.)

Table 7: Relation of Adès, *Concert Paraphrase on Powder Her Face* to parent text

Movement of Adès *Concert Paraphrase*	bb. of *Concert Paraphrase*	Corresponding bars in Adès *Powder Her Face*
I	bb. 1-7[2]	Introduction using material from the opera. Melody from Scene 1 bb. 171-177 ("I was beautiful…")
I	bb. 7[3]-14	Scene 1 bb. 380[3] (merging 381-382)-388
I	bb. 15-54	Scene 1 bb. 147-186
I	bb. 55-56	Connecting material
I	bb. 57-95	Scene 1 bb. 342-380
I	bb. 96-102	Scene 8 bb. 312-318
II	bb. 1-79	Scene 5 bb. 1-78
III	bb. 1-112[1]	Scene 3 bb. 1-112[1]
III	bb. 112[2]-113[1]	Connecting material
III	bb. 113[2]-161	Scene 5 bb. 484[2]-532
III	bb. 162	Connecting material
III	bb. 163-210	Scene 8 bb. 23[2]-70[1]
III	bb. 211-213	Connecting material quoting "Be kind" motif Scene 8 bb. 312-318
IV	bb. 1-66	Scene 8 bb. 342-407

Adès has not revealed in any interviews whether he composed *Powder Her Face* 'at the piano'. Certainly, only a virtuoso pianist could write a work like the *Concert Paraphrase* – and play it. Gloria Cheng, however, ventured to comment in their conversation that "it's enlightening, in a funny reverse way, to hear the raw music on the piano, which you composed

at the piano, I presume, then orchestrated, and here we are back at the piano(s)", but Adès did not respond to the point.[21] The most interesting resource for comparison in this context is the piano part of the vocal score. In most instances, operatic vocal score piano parts include absolutely everything from the parent text, playable by two mortal hands or not, and *Powder Her Face* is no exception. It is therefore a useful tool to call attention to the fidelity of the *Concert Paraphrase* in relation to the original score.

The opening material references music which appears later in the opera, specifically the melody sung by the Electrician in his grotesque parody of the Duchess, but in more improvisatory fashion. From bb. 15-54 the music focuses on the Electrician in full swing of his send-up, combined with interspersions and laughter from the Maid:

ELECTRICIAN AS DUCHESS:	I was betrayed, girl. My life is one long sorrow. There are moments in my life. There are moments in my life as of no other life. Moments of anguish and betrayal.
MAID:	But why your Grace did this happen to you? Why to you?
ELECTRICIAN AS DUCHESS:	I cannot say. I was beautiful. I was famous. I was young. I was rich, girl. What more do they need? Do they need purity to crow over? They had it. Do they need innocence? I was innocent, girl. Girl, I had innocence.[22]

This entire passage is an almost literal transcription of the original score, with the writing nearly identical to the piano part of the vocal score. There are only a few minor

[21] Cheng (2015)
[22] Hensher (1995), p. 5

alterations, and these take shape in terms of voicing, padding out textures, embellishments or the removal of material in consideration of playability. For example, note the unification of the two separate parts from the vocal score into a single part, as well as the increased density of the left hand chords in Figs. 3.1a and 3.1b.

Fig. 3.1a: Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 1, bb. 382-384 (vocal score piano part)

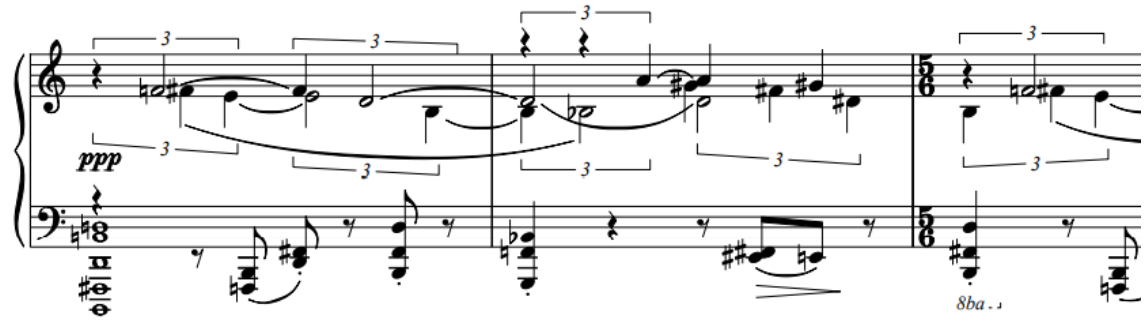
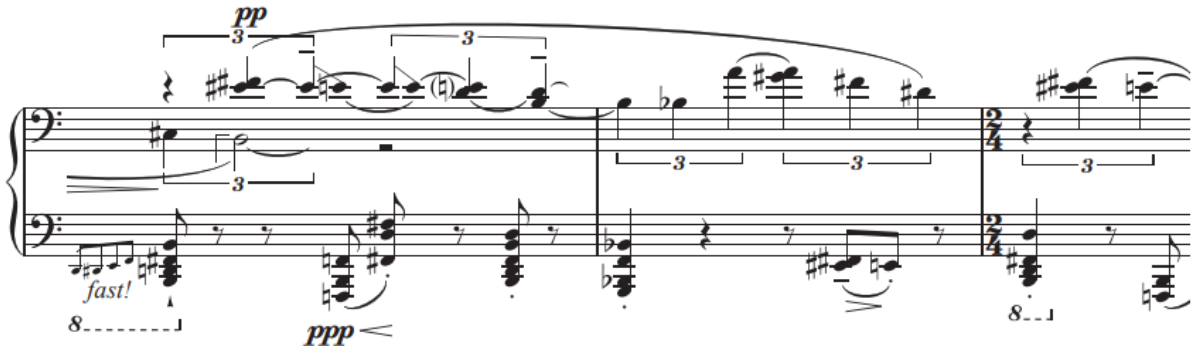


Fig. 3.1b: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, i), bb. 8-10



Bb. 20-21 feature an arpeggio-based flourish. It is one of the very few instances of embellishments in the *Concert Paraphrase* and is one which is retained in the orchestral suites.

Fig. 3.2a: Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 1, bb. 152-153 (vocal score piano part)

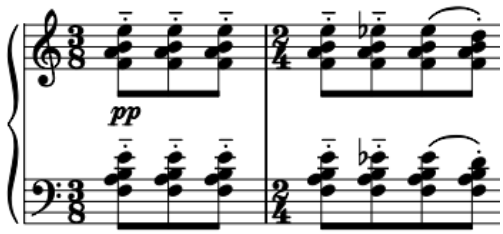
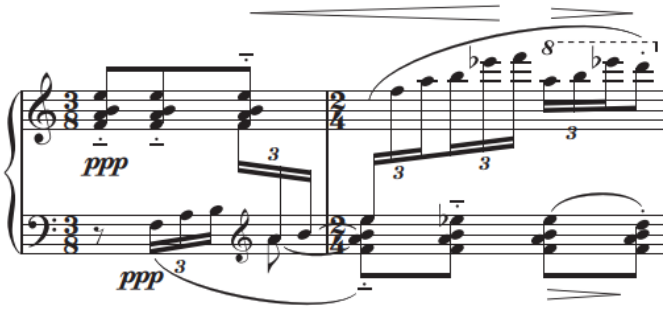


Fig. 3.2b: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, i), bb. 20-21



When material is omitted in the *Concert Paraphrase*, it seems to be purely on account of the impossibility of playing it all with just two hands. In Fig. 3.3b, we can see that Adès removes the trombone part in the solo version, but reinstates it in the two-piano version. It can also be seen that, by distributing the Maid's sung line between the two hands and having the accompaniment material surround it, Adès has employed the Thalbergian/Lisztian three-handed technique which was discussed in Chapter 1 and seen in the last line of Fig. 1.8b.

Fig. 3.3a: Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 1, bb. 167-168 (vocal score)

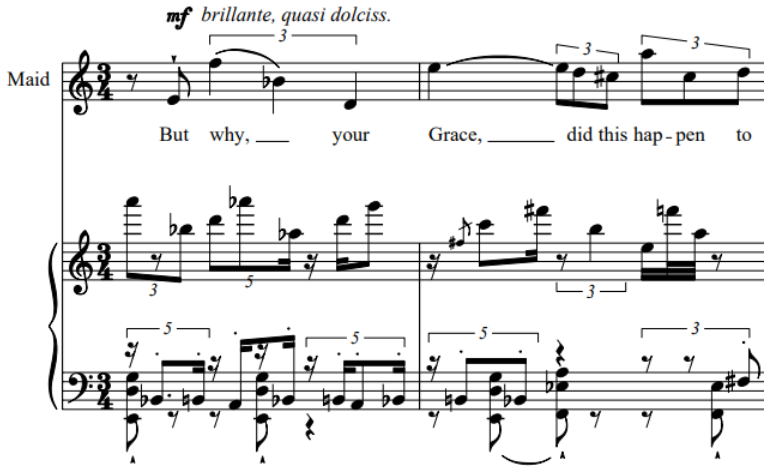


Fig. 3.3b: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, i), bb. 35-36

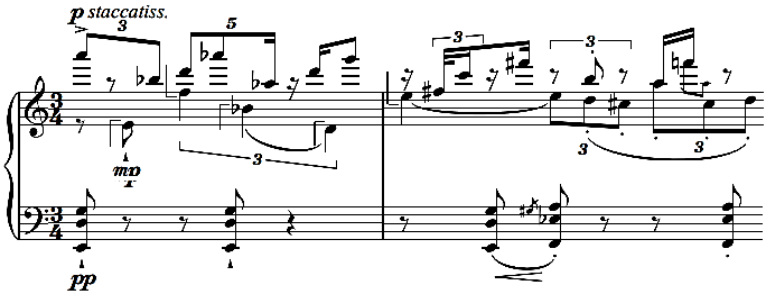
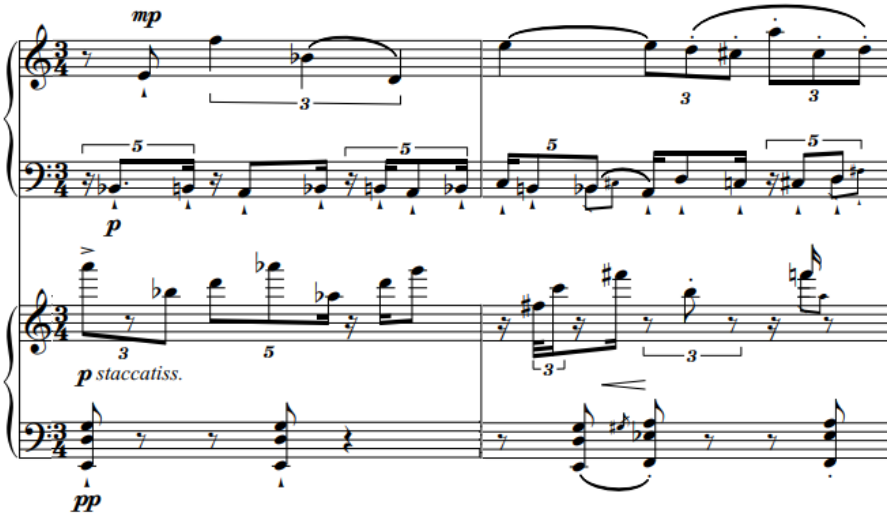


Fig. 3.3c: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, i), bb. 38-39 (two-piano version)



The *Concert Paraphrase* material from bb. 57-95 features the trio between the Duchess, the Maid, and the Electrician. This text focuses on the Duchess's lyrical ode to her perfume (Joy by Jean Patou) – a song about her wealth and grandeur –, and her long lines are contrasted with the short, almost percussive commentaries by the two staff members. This is one of the ways Hensher and Adès have textually and musically assigned class and social statuses to the characters in this way, and this will be analysed further, focusing on the 'Fancy' aria in due course.

DUCHESS:	And here I am, and my glorious smell, My scent, which I have worn forever, which outlasts fashion And outlasts time, and lasts forever Like nothing, like nothing else; [etc.]
ELECTRICIAN and MAID:	Joy.
MAID:	The expense, the money.
ELECTRICIAN and MAID:	The buying of Joy. And in the end it evaporates into air Like everything. The stuff, the money, It goes, all goes –
ELECTRICIAN:	And hers has gone for good.
MAID:	Gone for good.
ELECTRICIAN:	You can't have everything –
MAID:	Not everything –
ELECTRICIAN:	Not forever – [etc.][23]

[23] Hensher (1995), p. 8

Again, the *Concert Paraphrase* incorporates most of the text successfully, but the notation does not always make clear the layering and voice-leading of the parts. Compare Figs. 3.4a and 3.4b:

Fig. 3.4a: Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 1, bb. 355-356 (vocal score)

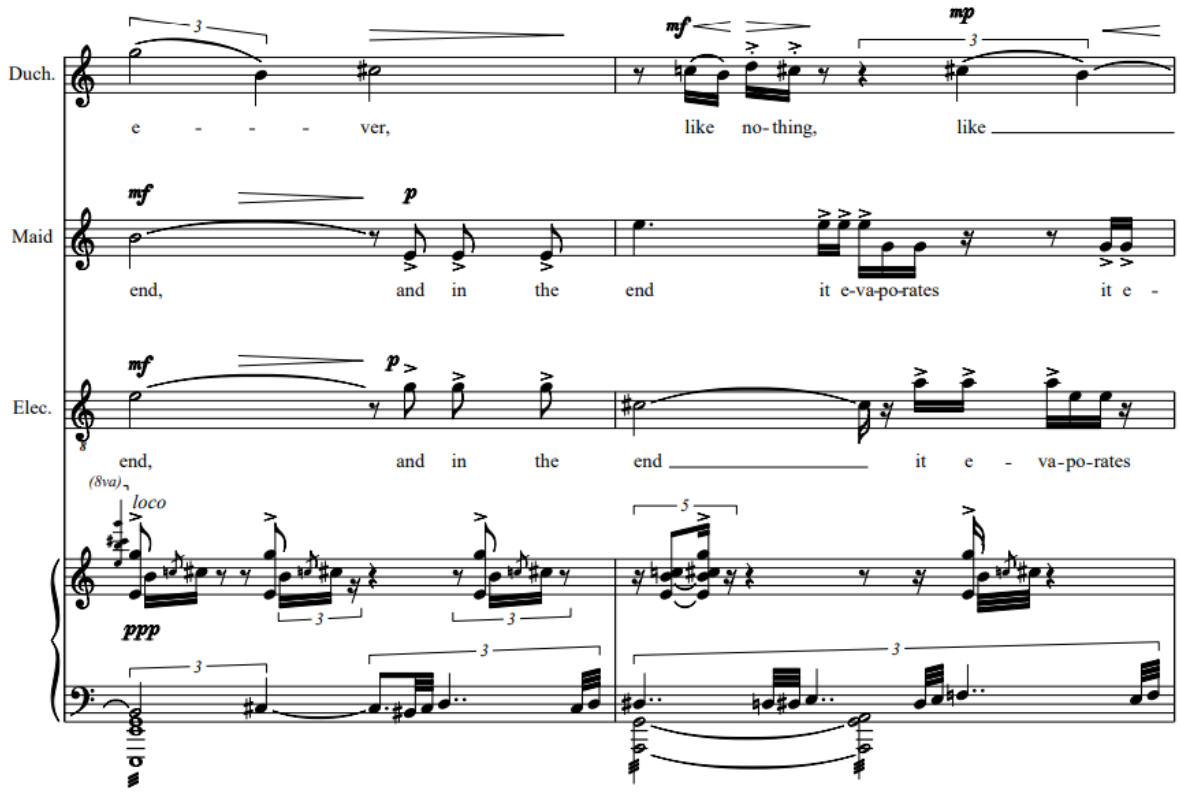
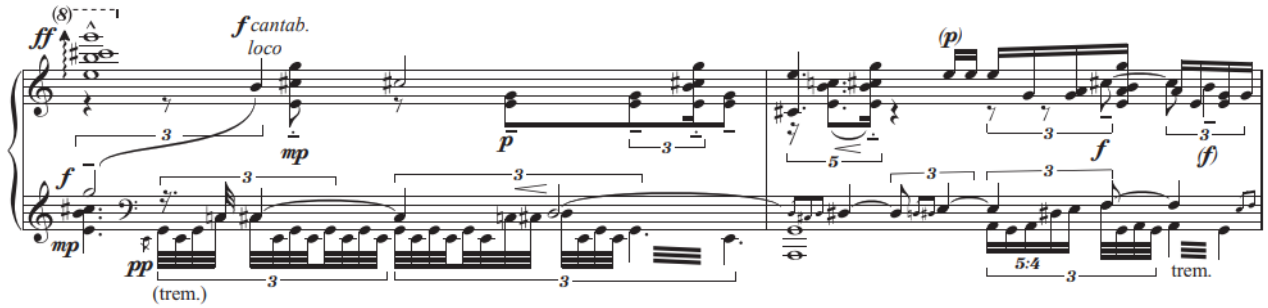


Fig. 3.4b: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, i), bb. 70-71



In Fig. 3.4b, the stem direction of the Duchess's last two notes in the *Concert Paraphrase* points downwards, whereas upwards would make the delineation more explicit (whilst stemming the semi-quavers downwards). Also, the rhythmic notation of the Duchess's last two notes in the examples above varies: the solo version is notated as syncopated triplet quavers, rather than triplet crotchets, which also distorts the phrasing/emphasis of the notes. In addition, the distinction between the Electrician and Maid's parts with what appear in the right hand of the vocal score piano part is unclear, not least in how it does not adequately differentiate the varying articulation of the parts. The rhythmic construction of the tremolo in the left hand of the *Concert Paraphrase* appears to be written as it is to help make obvious the rhythm of the trombone glissando above it. It also enhances the visual aesthetic of the score. Traditional tremolo notation (as seen in the final beats of each of each of these two bars) or smaller typesetting as seen in passages from Liszt's *Paraphrase de concert sur Rigoletto*, would provide identical acoustical effects whilst making the score clearer for the interpreter. When I asked Adès how literally the tremolo figuration should be taken, Adès responded:

> *I think they are free, the amounts written are sort of "serving suggestions" as a way to show (or again, suggest) where to place the glissando voice within the tremolo… It certainly needn't be literal.*[24]

Again, in bb. 81-84, Adès utilises the three-handed technique and has opted to write out the string tremolo figurations. Again, the exact number of notes and groupings seem mostly for the convenience of placing the melodic line – the vocal score has just the four-note chords presented with tremolando bars through the stems. However, on this tremolo section in particular, Adès said "I rather like the idea of it 'accidentally' being exactly the right number – 'by luck rather than design' - I think something of that is what is *virtuoso*."[25] A dotted line

[24] E-mail correspondence with the composer 6/12/20
[25] Ibid.

between the last melodic note in in the RH at b. 83 (A) and the first note in the LH in 84 (B♭) would also make the voice-leading clearer; the top D (b. 83) to D♭ (b. 84) etc. happens to be scored for clarinet, ***pppp*** in the full score, yet is visually presented here as more significant.

The passage from bb. 90-94 presents one of the largest notational divergences from the original score (compare Figs. 3.5a and 3.5b with 3.5c). By notating the Duchess's line in small print among harp filigree, its rhythmic placement and phrasing has become incomprehensible without referring to other sources. When asked whether a solo or two-piano work might bear greater interpretative freedom, or *rubato*, than a larger ensemble piece, Adès said that was the idea of making the *Concert Paraphrase* in the first place.[26] Whether this particular change in notation was to unshackle this section from the rhythmic constraints of the original, or simply

Fig. 3.5a: Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 1, bb. 375-376 (vocal score)

[26] Cheng (2015)

Fig. 3.5b: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, i), bb. 94-95 (two-piano version)

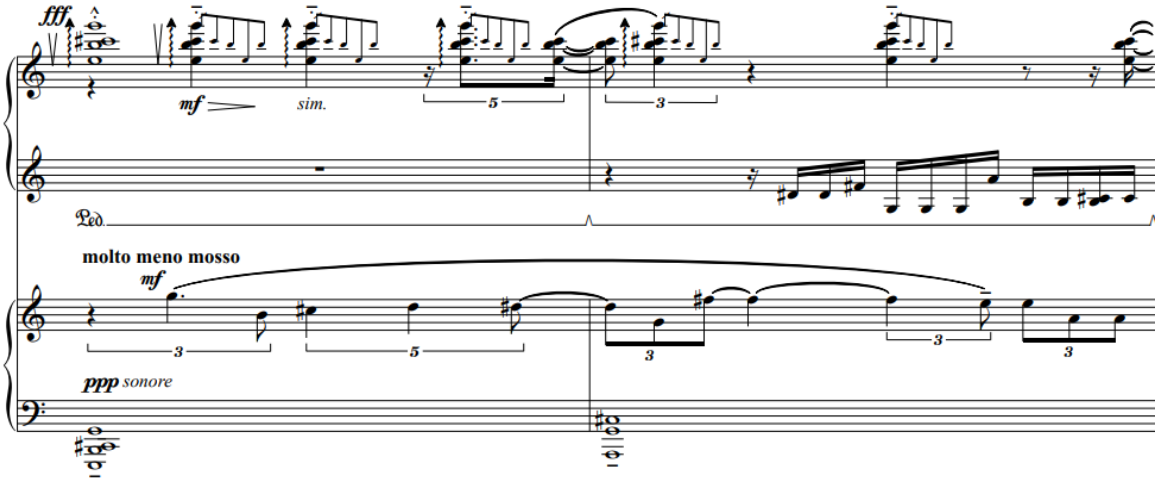
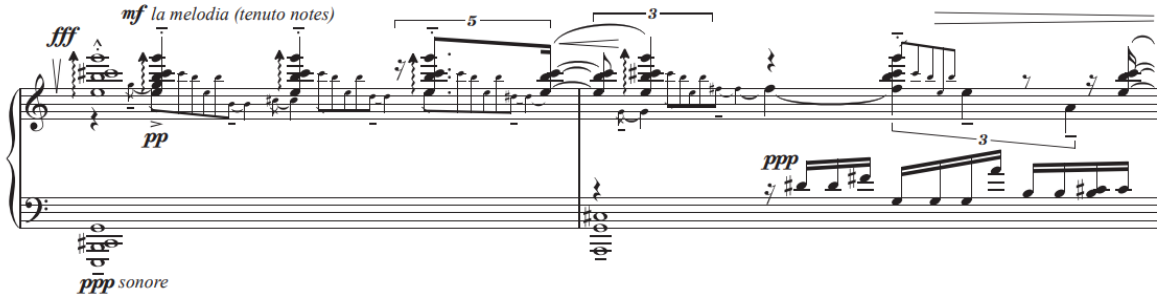


Fig. 3.5c: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, i), bb. 90-91



to avoid an overcrowded score, since the rhythm of the Duchess's line already gave the impression of a degree of freedom, remained unclear. Even more so, because the Duchess's rhythm is reinstated in the two-piano version. Adès clarified, saying:

> *I thought it would be more evocative to sketch her line through the texture rather than plonk all the rhythms exactly where I tell the singer to put them… and also it would indeed look horribly neo-complex.*[27]

[27] E-mail correspondence with the composer 6/12/20

B. 96 to the close of the first movement acts as a premonition of the very final lines sung by the Duchess in the opera in which she beseeches the Hotel Manager to "be kind" at the time of her eviction from the hotel. Again, all of these moments of connecting tissue which either expands upon moments in the opera or connects seams between scenes have implications for possible readings of the paraphrase, as we shall see.

The second movement of the *Concert Paraphrase* is a transcription of the first part of 'Is Daddy Squiffy?' from Scene 5, which portrays the Duke entertaining a mistress in his hotel room. The text focuses on small talk and flirtation between the two characters over a bottle of champagne (swigged straight from the bottle, of course). Adès cuts the scene at the point before the two start to gossip about the Duchess, but returns to the conclusion of it – the 'Paperchase' scene, when they discover the incriminating camera film in the Duchess's chest of drawers – later, in the third movement of the *Concert Paraphrase*.

MAID AS MISTRESS:	Is Daddy squiffy?
HOTEL MANAGER AS DUKE:	No.
MAID AS MISTRESS:	Is Daddy squiffy?
HOTEL MANAGER AS DUKE:	I don't think so.
MAID AS MISTRESS:	Is Daddy bloody squiffy?
HOTEL MANAGER AS DUKE:	Well - perhaps just a little.
MAID AS MISTRESS:	Good Daddy. And where has he been to be so squiffy?
HOTEL MANAGER AS DUKE:	The Hendersons. Good number. Grand style. You know, they said we'd never see that style again, after the war. And here we are and I can't remember such parties since my dancing days were over.
MAID AS MISTRESS:	Queer, isn't it, darling? My father said quite the same thing my dear about the last war. And I can't remember it but by all accounts after the war was over –
HOTEL MANAGER AS DUKE:	I remember it.[28]

[28] Hensher (1995), pp. 22-23

The movement is a very close realisation of the material from the opera, with the solo piano part being almost identical to the vocal score's piano part but with occasional and not consistent inclusion of the vocal parts. Adès has, however, made a number of interesting pianistic adjustments showing consideration for how the solo pianist might distribute material between the hands, whereas the vocal score appears to be about presenting the notes in as direct a fashion as possible.

Fig. 3.6a: Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 5, bb. 1-2 (vocal score piano part)

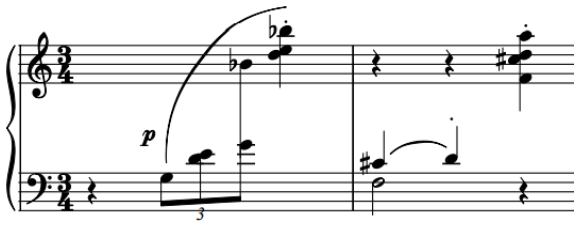


Fig. 3.6b: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, ii), bb. 1-2

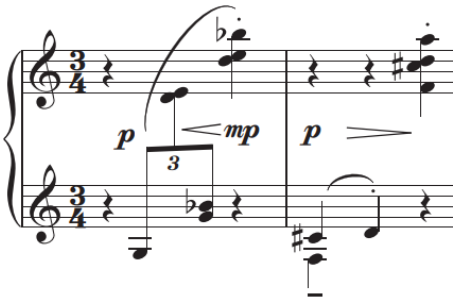


Fig. 3.7a: Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 5, b. 9 (vocal score piano part)

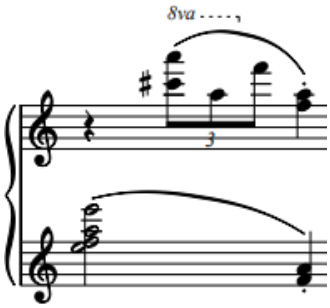
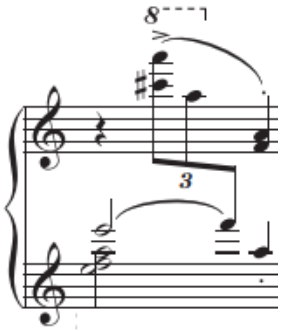


Fig. 3.7b: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, ii), b. 9



For much of the movement it seems reasonable to assume that Adès conceived this material at the piano. The vocal score piano part is rich with idiosyncratic keyboard writing, such as that seen in earlier examples discussed in Chapter 1, and the *Concert Paraphrase* is a very close replica. The sung lines are frequently incorporated using the three-handed technique and surrounding registers are full of flourishes and broken chords. There are, in fact, almost no changes in the transfer of material from the opera to the solo piano version, except for a few minor subtractions on account of playability.

Fig. 3.8a: Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 5, bb. 57-59 (vocal score)

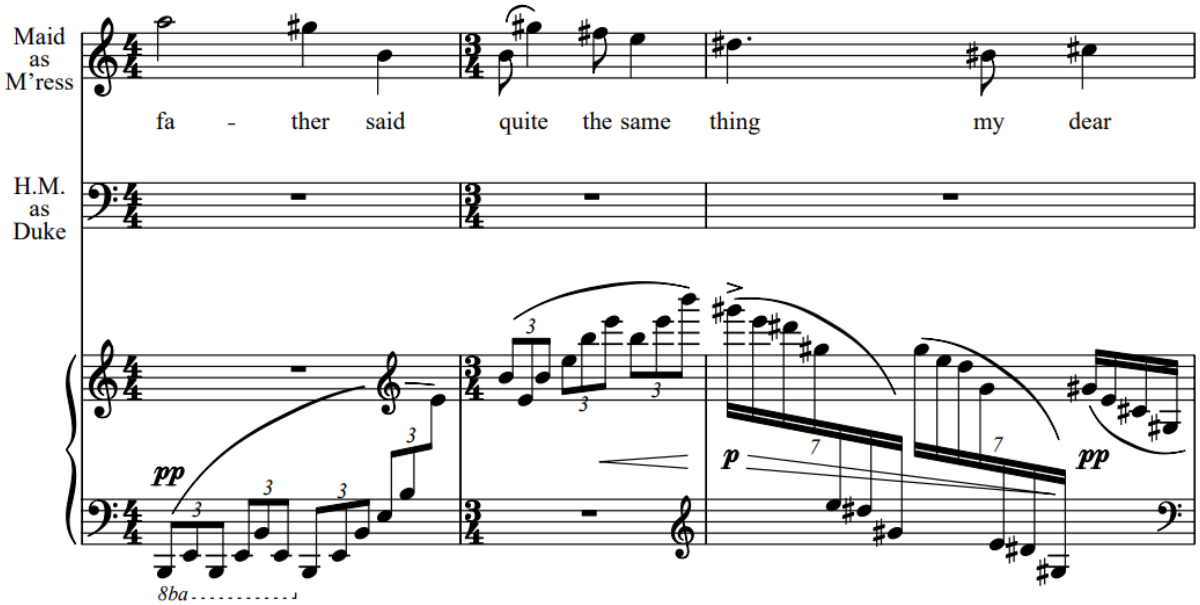
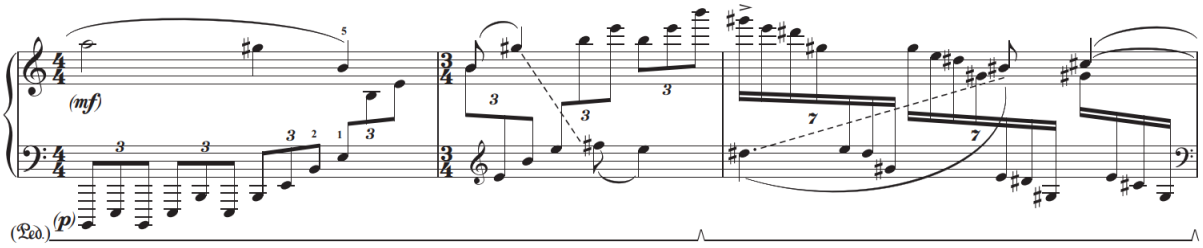


Fig. 3.8b: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, ii), bb. 58-60



The third movement of the *Concert Paraphrase* combines three major passages from the opera. The first is the 'Fancy' aria from Scene 3 in which we hear the sung fantasy of the Waitress imagining what it would be like to be as extravagantly wealthy and profligate as the Duchess; the second is the orchestral conclusion to Scene 5, 'Paperchase', when the Duke and his Mistress discover the incriminating polaroid of the Duchess; and the third is the Hotel Manager's aria, 'It is too Late', when he evicts the Duchess from her suite, a crucial turning point in the life of the Duchess.

Whilst the compositional devices used in the 'Fancy' aria are discussed below, one might argue that Hensher's libretto is a trenchant commentary on English attitudes to social class of the period:

MAID as WAITRESS: Fancy.
Fancy being rich.
Fancy being lovely.
Fancy having money to waste, and not minding it.
They've got too much money, and nothing to do.
Nothing to do, but come to a wedding in the middle of the week.
(laughter)
Only fancy.
Fancy eating lobster in the middle of the week standing up.
Fancy drinking champagne in the middle of the day and too drunk to worry and twelve and six a bottle.

Fancy being her.

The food's so lovely, though.

Shining like water, all under aspic.

Cut fruit in aspic, vegetable shapes, whole chicken.

Fish swimming in aspic, caught in stiff water.

Preserved.

She doesn't look happy. She looks rich. (laughter)

I wouldn't want to be happy if I was as rich as that.

I'd be like her. I'd marry rich men.

I wouldn't live in two rooms in Kentish Town, I'll tell you that for nothing.

I'd wear a tiara for breakfast.

I'd sleep in an hotel if I felt like it in the afternoon.

I'd eat nothing that wasn't lovely in aspic and hard work for someone.

I'd buy a whole shop full of diamonds and have it delivered in a carriage if I felt like it.

And I would feel like it, and I'd look as miserable as sin.

Just like her.

Just fancy being her.

Fancy putting milk and almonds in your bath.

Fancy your underclothes costing thirty shillings the ounce.

Yes, fancy having nothing to do but wait for the man for your hair and the girl for your skin and the boy with the telegram with reply paid for.

Fancy purchasing a Duke.

That's what I want.

That's what you want.

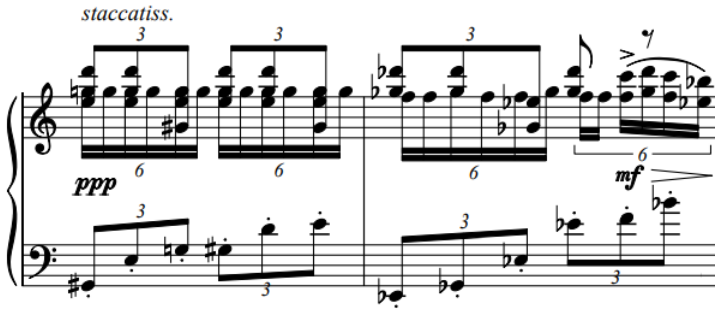
You'd love it.[29]

[29] Hensher (1995), p. 16-17

The play on the word 'fancy' here is clearly used to hark back to the era of supermarket labels which denoted 'fancy' as a prefix for anything of above-average quality, as well as to characterise envy. The seemingly endless list of items which the working-class gaze might aspire to own or indulge in is probably very different from the objects her source of envy finds beautiful; this is but one of the many ways in which the social class divide is portrayed in the opera. Hensher breaks the fourth wall by having the Waitress address us, the audience, and it points out further hypocrisy: on the whole, we are judging the Duchess throughout the opera for her behaviours and attitudes towards people of lower social class, yet we do so from the comfort of our plush velvet seats at the opera house, and surely also envy her. In this sense, we could all be the Waitress.[30]

Again, the *Concert Paraphrase* here is an almost entirely literal arrangement of the full score, but it omits large portions of the vocal material in much the way that Liszt's *Isoldens Liebestod* does. The solo piano writing often merely tidies the placement of the material between the two hands when compared to the vocal score piano part.

Fig. 3.9a: Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 3, bb. 11-12 (vocal score piano part)



[30] Breaking the fourth wall in opera has precedent. Since reference to Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier* is widespread in *Powder Her Face*, it seems organic to refer to Koestenbaum's observation that "[w]hen Octavian enters, Sophie knows that time will soon be bending, and so she exclaims, 'This is so lovely, so lovely!'… Sophie speaks for the listener. 'This is so lovely!' I sigh, hearing the soprano's excitement and the orchestral explosion announcing Octavian's arrival. The music provokes my exaltation and also comments on it". See Koerstenbaum, Wayne, *The Queen's Throat: Opera, Homosexuality and the Mystery of Desire* (Penguin Books, London, 1993), p. 218

Fig. 3.9b: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, iii), bb. 11-12

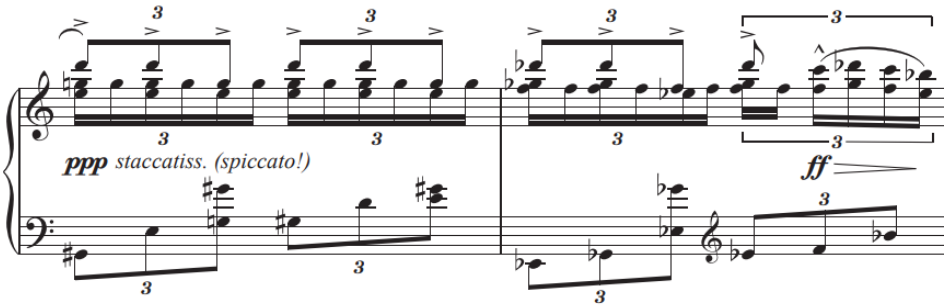


Fig. 3.10a: Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 3, b. 57 (vocal score piano part)

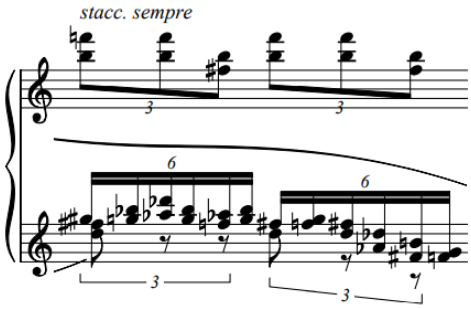
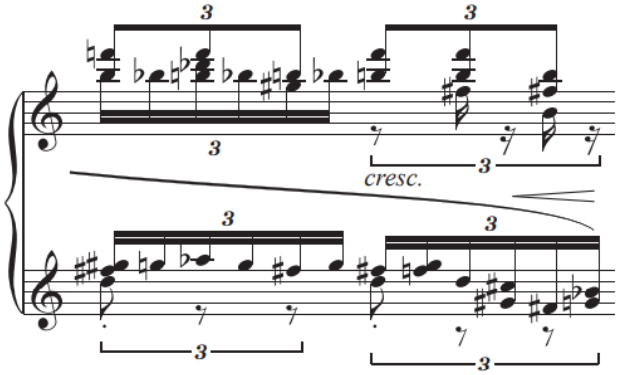


Fig. 3.10b: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, iii), b. 57



There are, however, a number of instances where Adès integrates the vocal line, but omits notes when they are perfectly playable. This is the case in both the solo piano version and the two-piano version. Adès explained, referring to the example show in Figs. 3.11a/b below:

that is to do with wanting to show the musical shape *of the line rather than the notes she sings because of the syllables required - almost as if the original was in another language, and the English had to add an extra syllable… which I've taken out. So the music is On(-ly) Fan-cy, Fancy Eating (lob)-ster… I also kept them out in the orchestra versions. So that, also, it doesn't just sound like instruments mechanically playing a vocal part note by note without reflecting the* musical gesture.[31]

Fig. 3.11a: Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 3, bb. 21-22 (vocal score)

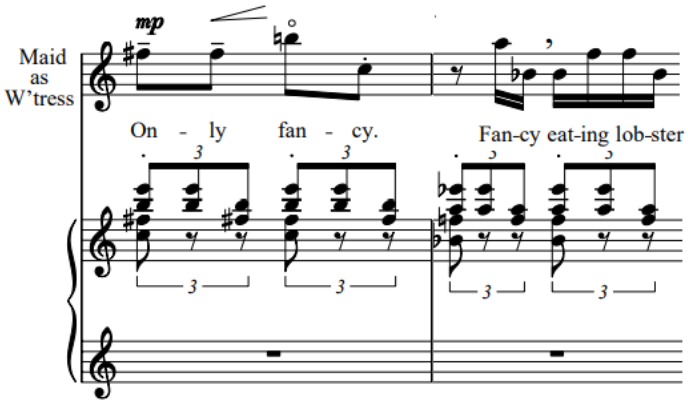
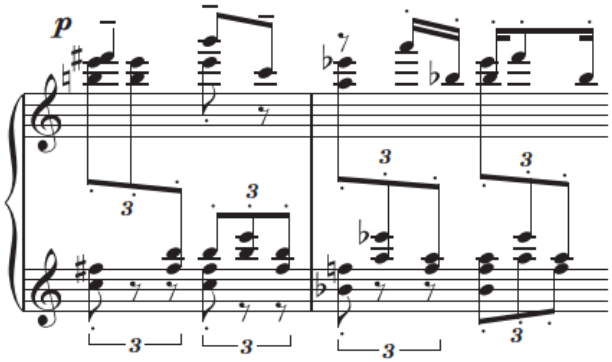


Fig. 3.11b: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, iii), bb. 21-22



[31] E-mail correspondence with the composer 6/12/20

The ‘Paperchase’ which follows in the *Concert Paraphrase* is furthermore a mostly direct representation of the vocal score’s piano part, with very few alterations. There are minor idiosyncratic adaptations such as those discussed above, including placing the material more pianistically across the two staves, and padding out the text in a more characteristic manner for the piano. Note how, in Fig. 3.12a, the left hand in the vocal score piano part portrays the tremolos across the register, whereas the *Concert Paraphrase* (Fig. 3.12b) sees the same notes organised as a sweeping arpeggio. The right hand melodic line is also presented as broken octaves to intensify the sonority. Also, by comparing the Figs. 3.13a and 3.13b below, we can see that Adès has again adhered to the general outline of the text, but fleshed out the texture with denser chords, and wider arpeggios.

Fig. 3.12a: Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 5 bb. 482^{4}-485 (vocal score piano part)

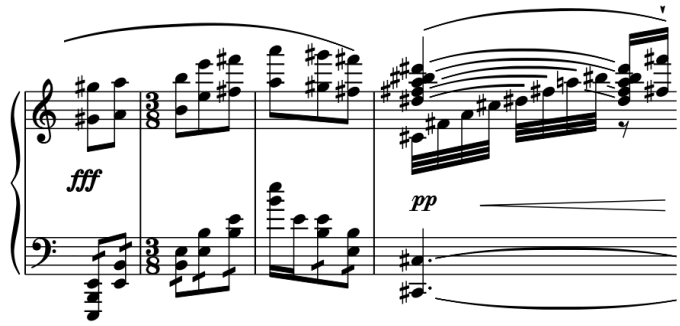


Fig. 3.12b: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, iii), bb. 113^{2}-116

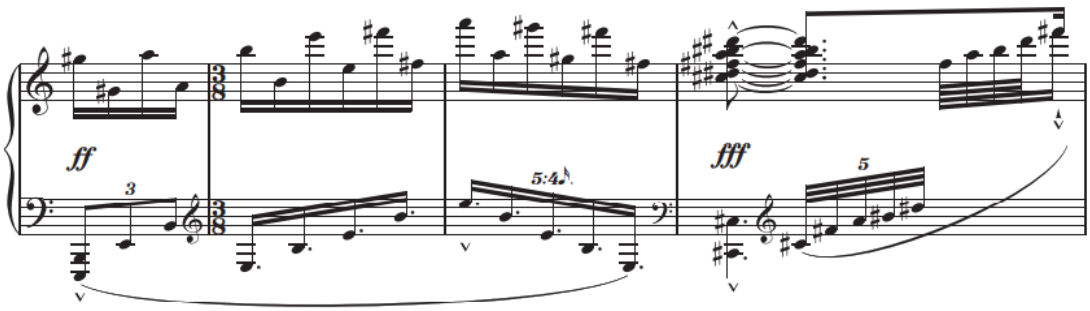


Fig. 3.13a: Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 5, bb. 520-523 (vocal score piano part)

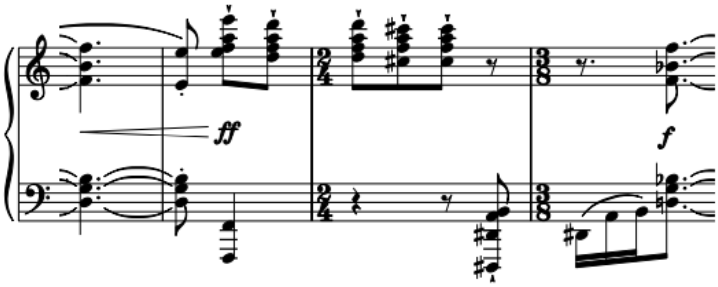
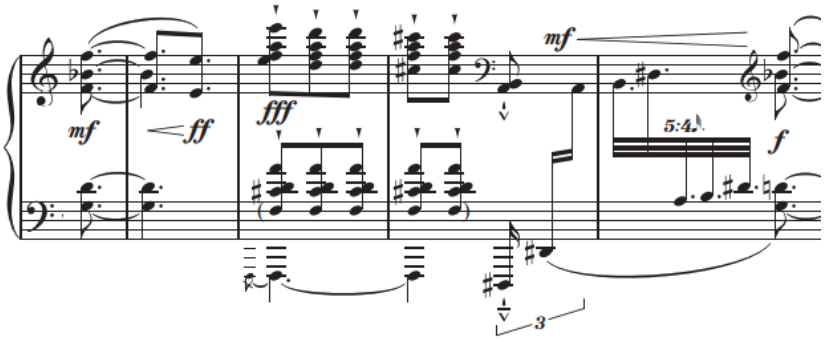


Fig. 3.13b: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, iii), bb. 150^{2}-154



At the moment when the Duke discovers the camera and retrieves the film, the *Concert Paraphrase* jumps abruptly to the final scene in the opera when the Duchess, having accumulated significant debt for non-payment of rent, is evicted by the Hotel Manager. One of the particularly interesting aspects reflected in both the libretto and the music, is the complete reversal of the Duchess's social and financial positions: at the start of the opera, and in the first movement of the *Concert Paraphrase*, she appears noble, singing long, grand lines, and is prescribed expressive markings such as *molto cantabile*, *pesante* etc. By contrast, the Electrician and the Maid are presented as vulgar, gossipy and of lower social class through their short interjections, large dynamic contrasts, and *marcatissimo* performance directions – possibly a representation of how the Duchess perceives them as lesser individuals on account of their lower social status. By the end of the opera, the converse is the case: the Hotel Manager has the long and imposing lines and the Duchess is reduced to short, stuttered pleas, marked

disperato, piangendo. Her fallen social position is further represented in the tonality of the aria, with the Hotel Manager singing in D minor, followed by the Duchess's first whimpers accompanied by the orchestra a tone lower in C minor; the Hotel Manager then repeats his demands to vacate in C-sharp minor, and she sinks further down to B minor, and finally B-flat minor.

HOTEL MANAGER:	It is too late for that. You have lived here too long. It is time to vacate. You have lived here for a while. The time to vacate always comes, and now it has come for you. I have made inquiries. Your time is up. You have nothing more. Everything is spent, madam, Everything is used up. And now you must go.
DUCHESS:	Not yet – I'm not – Not yet. I'm not quite ready. You must come back. You'll have to come back. I haven't – I need to have my things packed.
HOTEL MANAGER:	You see, it comes to everyone. And everyone expects it. But you have not expected it. And now it is here for you.
DUCHESS:	I need more time. A day, a week, a month. A month more. A week, a day. Give me just one more day.[32]

Again, there are almost no alterations to the text, except for the slightly more pianistic apportionment, as in 'Is Daddy Squiffy?' and the 'Fancy' aria, as well as the withdrawal of some of the sung material.

[32] Hensher (1995), p. 39

Fig. 3.14a: Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 8, bb. 30-31 (vocal score)

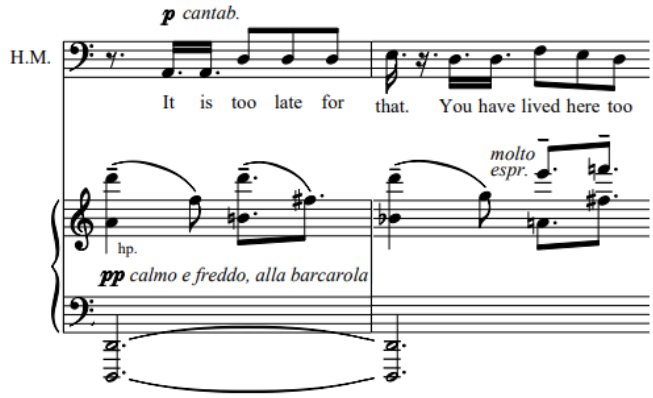


Fig. 3.14b: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, iii), bb. 170-171

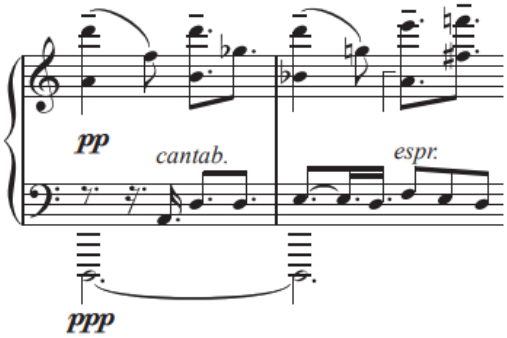


Fig. 3.15a: Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 8, b. 40 (vocal score piano part)

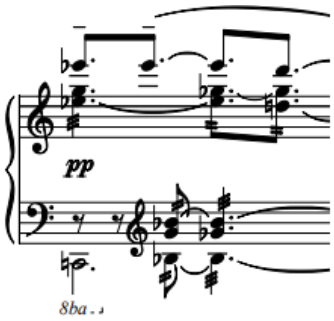
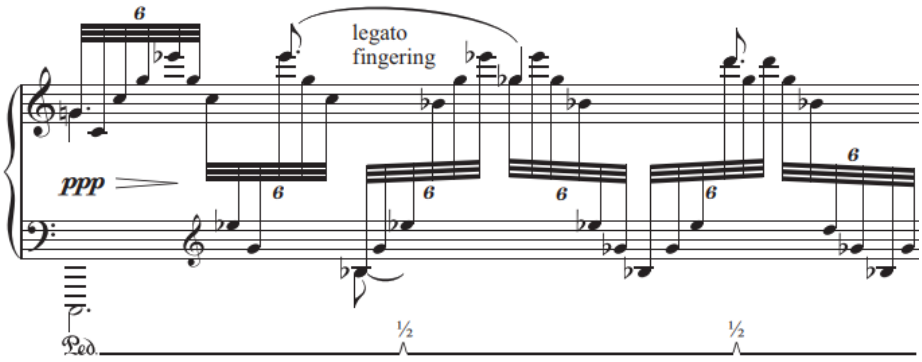


Fig. 3.15b: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, iii), b. 180



Again, Adès uses arpeggio figurations to imitate the string tremolos. The fact the Duchess's material is removed altogether during the passages when she is begging the Hotel Manager, leaving us with only the trembling orchestral music, further emphasises her financial (and moral) destitution. After the catastrophic climax, Adès quotes the final words sung by the Duchess in the opera ("be kind", albeit at a different pitch level), before launching into the closing tango.

The final movement of the *Concert Paraphrase* is, yet again, an almost exact reproduction of the vocal score's piano part. There are a handful of noticeable differences which refine the solo version, including the redistribution of the material between the hands, as well as giving written-out notations for the string glissandi, such as in the example below.

Fig. 3.16a: Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 8, bb. 352 & 360 (vocal score)

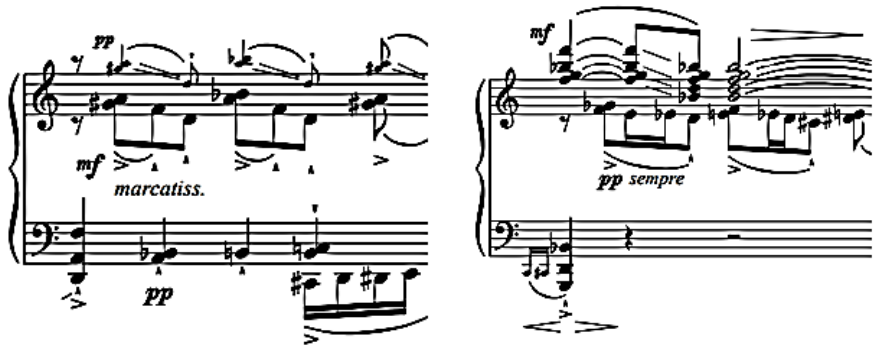
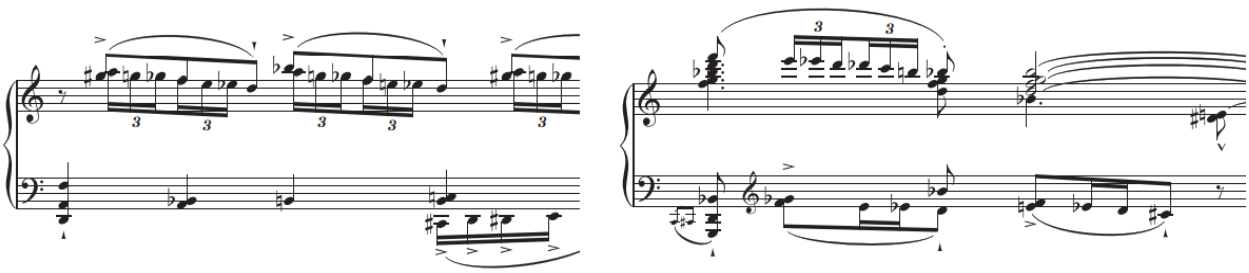


Fig. 3.16b: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, iv), bb. 11 & 19



The only significant alteration from the full score in this final movement of the *Concert Paraphrase* is from b. 51, where the orchestra is silent except for the bongo. Rather than imitate it, or have silence, Adès opted to include very quiet chromatic scales.

Fig. 3.17a: Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 8, bb. 392-395 (vocal score)

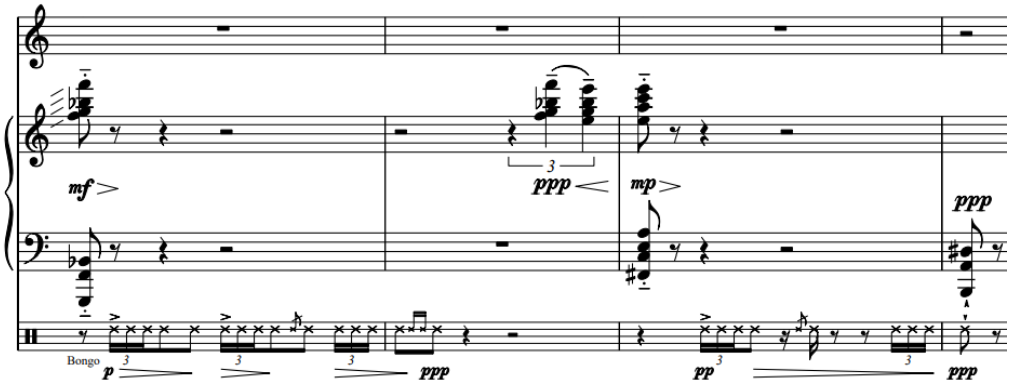
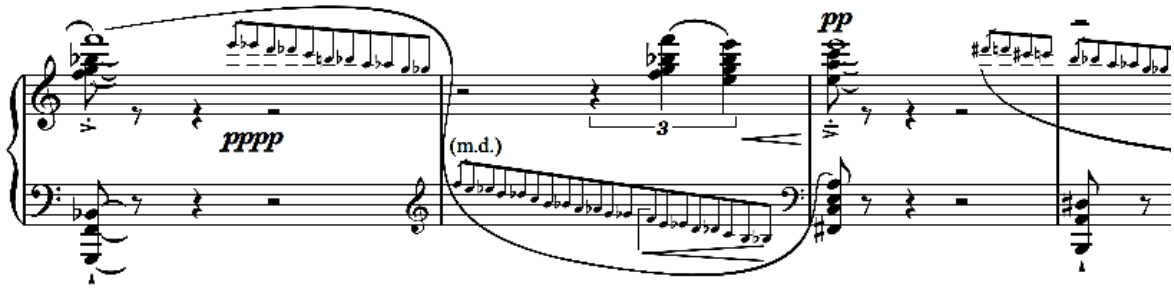


Fig. 3.17b: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, iv), bb. 51-54



From these examples, it is indeed reasonable to infer, as Gloria Cheng does, that much of the opera was conceived at the piano. Although the vocal score presents the orchestral text in a less polished way than the *Concert Paraphrase*, it demonstrates that much of it fits within standard parameters of (albeit advanced) pianism. The realisation of certain orchestral techniques, and overcoming the challenges of accommodating text across a wide tessitura, are achieved by using many of the nineteenth century methods of pianism highlighted in the examples in Chapter 1: tremolos/arpeggiation, use of the three-handed technique and so on. In

the same way that composer-pianists in the nineteenth century were exploiting the developing features of the instruments of their day, so too has Adès used the full capacity of the modern piano, for example with his frequent deployment of the middle pedal and dynamics ranging from ***pppp*** to ***fff***.

Powder Her Face and its flashback narrativity clearly draws on cinematic models – with some critics having already noted that the opera's "events proceed as if edited by a master cinematographer".[33] As such, the *Concert Paraphrase* requires consideration from a different perspective than the nineteenth century operatic paraphrases: Liszt and his contemporaries' narrative models were literary or theatrical. In the 1990s there was a particular explosion of postmodern narratives in cinema and Adès and Hensher would, in all likelihood, have been acutely aware of the possibilities of using these forms in a contemporary opera.[34] The flashback narrativity of *Powder Her Face* can be compared to narratives in films such as *Little Big Man* or *Forest Gump*: both start and end with their protagonist in the present, and make use of flashback to narrate the story in chronological order. This conforms with Kramer's belief that

> *postmodernism is profoundly temporal, but it uses, rather than submits to, time. Its music shapes time, manipulates time. Time, like tonal sounds and diatonic tunes and rhythmic regularity and textual unity, becomes no longer context, but malleable material.*[35]

One might even suggest that, in a work such as the *Concert Paraphrase* which makes use of cinematic techniques (flashback, jump cut, match cut, flash forward etc.), time is not only material used in the way Kramer describes, but it becomes a significant subject of the music.

[33] Boyden, Matthew, The Rough Guide to Opera, 3rd edn, ed. by Nick Kimberley (Rough Guides Ltd., London, 2002), p. 626
[34] See Denby, David, 'The New Disorder: Disordered Narratives in Film' in *The New Yorker* (26/02/07). Available at www.newyorker.com/arts/critics/atlarge/2007/03/05/070305crat_atlarge_denby accessed 17/12/20
[35] Kramer (2016), p. 152

The use of narration is also a widespread device in films, but it is frequently presented in paradoxical ways – we often find out at the end of the film that the narrator cannot possibly have known the details in the story they have narrated, or that they may be dead making their narration a logical impossibility, such as in *Sunset Boulevard* or *Rebecca*. Similarly, the Duchess's flashbacks feature scenes which she could not have known about.

Adès's choice of scenes invites speculation and comment. The majority of the *Concert Paraphrase* features scenes from the opera which do not include the Duchess, but peripheral characters and their judgements *of* her: the Electrician staging his grotesque drag impression of the Duchess before the giggling Maid, and the 'Ode to Joy' once the Duchess interrupts the staff;[36] 'Is Daddy Squiffy?' confronting the hypocrisy of the Duke having a mistress, whilst society scoffs at the Duchess's indiscretions; 'Fancy', envying the Duchess's wealth; and the 'Paperchase' scene when her downfall becomes inevitable. It is only at this point, the final aria, that the Duchess reappears in the *Concert Paraphrase* and we see her at her weakest moment.[37] The Electrician's drag impression is a parody of the Duchess which appears right at the start of the opera. Adès said:

> *it started with a parody: we don't start with the woman on stage grandstanding about her life, we start with somebody taking the mickey out of her instead. This was a pre-emptive acknowledgement on our part that the whole idea is absurd, of walking in off the street and hearing this woman go on about her perfume.*[38]

We have seen in Chapter 1 how Liszt's choice of scenes draws our attention to his interpretation of the unscrupulous Don in his *Réminiscenses de Don Juan*. In a similar fashion, the *Concert Paraphrase* points towards highlighting much of the social and sexual hypocrisy

[36] Let us also consider that this scene, called 'Ode to Joy' and in which Joy is the name of the Duchess's perfume, appears before the opera's first flashback. The human sense of smell is widely noted to be the strongest one for evoking memories, and this cannot be a coincidence.
[37] To a degree, it recalls Liszt's *Réminiscences de Norma* which includes no fewer than seven themes from Bellini's tragedy, but excludes Norma's most famous aria, *Casta Diva*.
[38] Service (2012), p. 61

on display in the opera, and displays a degree of sympathy towards the Duchess. The prevalence of scenes from this perspective is perhaps one of the reasons that her eviction is still extremely powerful and touching in this tightly condensed version of the story: the Duchess's only appearance before her dislodgement is in the first movement, when she interrupts the hotel staff ridiculing her.

In a postmodern, post-Roland Barthes world, however, an operatic paraphrase like this forces us to question the ultimate 'impossibility' (or rather the conscious knowingness) of writing a work of this nature at the turn of the twenty-first century:[39] it leads us, the postmodern listener, to inquire into its narrative strategies and indeed ask *who* is doing the narrating.[40] Of course, as many scholars of musical narrative have argued, "music cannot narrate. It lacks the words to do so"; it is incapable of articulating precise meaning and specifics: it is not diegetic, but mimetic.[41] Abbate refers to the 'leitmotivic' form of analysis as having become a default post-Wagnerian position and the use of musical objects in this way has indeed shaped the views on musical narrative for a long time. But they are still just that – objects, which can, at best, only signify a dramatic idea, object, or character.[42] Abbate's argument for the possible existence of a narrator and the possibility of a 'past tense' in music through her reading of Dukas' *L'Apprenti Sorcier* was both innovative, and influential on subsequent discussions of

[39] For a discussion of this from a musicological perspective, see Kramer, 'The Listener as Creator', in Kramer (2016), pp. 117-122. Kramer highlights Barthes' challenge to the long-reigning tyranny of scholars and critics who argued that meaning came from the author or the text only, whereas Barthes argued that "every person creates, *and is entitled to*, his or her own mental version of a text, based on the backlog of his or her own mental experiences". Kramer (2016), p. 118

[40] Abbate, Carolyn, *Unsung Voices: Opera and Musical Narrative in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1991)

[41] Klein, Michael, 'Chopin Fragments: Narrative Voice in the First Ballade' in *19th Century Music*, pp. 30-52 (Jul. 2018), p. 30. Adès said in interview with Ian Bostridge that "when he said 'music is incapable of expressing anything but itself' Stravinsky didn't mean that music was incapable of *expression*, he meant that you don't write a piece about not getting enough birthday cards. You have to think of it in context, as a reaction to late-Romantic composers". See sleeve notes to Adès, Thomas, *Adès: Anthology* (EMI Classics, 5099908856029, 2011), p. 10

[42] Abbate does highlight how "narrative can be encapsulated in a string of critical words, as in Humbert Humbert's story of how his mother perished: picnic, lightning. The reader creates the connections and the details, just as the listener might weave the links between the associations called up by the Leitmotive". See Abbate, Carolyn, 'What the Sorcerer Said' in *19th-Century Music, Vol. 12, No. 3*, pp. 221-230 (University of California Press, Spring 1989), p. 223

musical narrative.[43] Many of the questions she asks are particularly apposite in a discussion of the *Concert Paraphrase*.

So, who does the narrating in the *Concert Paraphrase*? Is it the Duchess? Is it Adès? Is it the pianist/performer? Or a fictional character, perhaps an audience member who has just attended a performance of *Powder Her Face* in the manner described by de Waal?[44] To whom does the "unsung voice" Abbate might try to identify belong?[45] In the 1840s, this question would, in all probability, not have been considered at all, but is a valid one here. On the subject of narrator in Chopin's first Ballade, Michael Klein says that

> *to miss the narrator in the first theme is really to miss the whole point of the Ballade: the musical construction of a character who tells. The narrator is already fraught in literary works, often stepping forward, if at all, in impossible semblances. Since there is no narrator in music, its fabrication especially leaves marks.*[46]

Like Chopin's first Ballade, Adès's *Concert Paraphrase* is an instrumental work for solo piano. It is quoting from music which has a clear dramaturgical narrative, that has characters who sing words and narrate, but it cannot do so itself. It does not have characters or people who sing or speak words. Yet somehow, even if it were given an abstract title, we might still detect a voice, or several.[47] In the opera, the Duchess is often an 'unsung voice' in that the scenes we witness do not all directly feature her, yet they are her flashbacks and her story. In the *Concert Paraphrase* we are dealing with the conceit of memory and the fact that the ordering of the material is non-linear (refer to Table 7) might cause us to question *whose* reminiscence we are

[43] For example, Klein, Michael and Reyland, Nicholas, *Music and Narrative since 1900* (Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2013); Almén, Byron, *A Theory of Musical Narrative* (Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2008)
[44] De Waal (2013), p. 181
[45]For her ground-breaking work on narrative, and the application of literary analytical techniques in music, see Abbate (1991)
[46] Klein (2018), p. 36
[47] For an engaging discussion on instrumental music which alludes to operatic music, see also Parker, Roger, *Britten and the String Quartet: A Classical Impulse – String Quartet No. 3* (transcript of lecture given at Christ Church Spitalfields, 27/06/13). Available at https://www.gresham.ac.uk/lecture/transcript/download/britten-and-the-string-quartet-a-classical-impulse-string-quartet-no3/ accessed 19/12/20

listening to and their reliability as narrator.[48] Not only might the selection of scenes tell us something, but the connecting material used to join them and any music which does not appear in the original opera.

In the *Concert Paraphrase*, after the violent opening gesture, the first thing we hear is the piano playing a single voice.[49] Given the title and 'paratext' (the programme note, any information we may have read in publicity, reviews, articles about the piece, interviews with the composer etc), we might reasonably assume it to be the Duchess's had we seen the opera. We might be forgiven for misremembering in this way – after all, she sings a very similar melody later in the opera.[50] While the actual melody which appears here at the very beginning of the *Concert Paraphrase* is that of the Electrician performing his grotesque drag, the character of the music is unlike that moment in the opera: its extrovert, noisy, chuntering woodwinds, horn, and double bass (which indicates unequivocally that it is a grotesque parody, even without the visual image of a tenor in lipstick, a fur coat, and heels on stage) are absent. This parody only appears when Adès quotes directly from the scene two pages later in the *Concert Paraphrase*. Instead, the opening is quiet, punctuated with silence, halting (as if trying to remember?). Nonetheless, the material is the Electrician's, not the Duchess's and it comes from his parody of her. Whilst the opening section is absolutely an introduction of the kind Czerny might have prescribed (as we saw in Chapter 1), it hints at something which is not present in the opera and that is unique to the *Concert Paraphrase*. Is it somebody misremembering the way the opera starts or is Adès purposefully tricking us, the listener, into making this mistake? The real-time stream-of-consciousness process makes us question ourselves: we believe it begins with the Duchess grandstanding about her life, about how

[48] Film examples which exploit this non-linear narrativity technique include *Citizen Kane*, *Reservoir Dogs* and so on.
[49] Adès referred to this chord-glissando as a bitch-slap. See commentary in Chapter 5
[50] Scene 1, bb. 344-361

beautiful and famous she was, but then we realise we were mistaken, and that the opera did in fact begin with the drag send up, full of spite and mockery once we reach the third page.

Readers familiar with Abbate's *What the Sorcerer Said* will be aware that the section of material she identifies as creating this 'past tense' frame is the epilogue of Dukas' scherzo.[51] With Adès's *Concert Paraphrase,* we are concerned with the start of the piece. This introduction is a new framing device that Adès has constructed specifically for the *Concert Paraphrase:* a completely instrumental one unlike the first and final scenes of the opera, which are the dramatic frame, and both set in the 'present' in the opera. There are a number of possible readings this might invite from listeners. In a reverse way, by quoting material 'from the future' in the *Concert Paraphrase,* might we assume that Adès begins the piece in the past tense? If we assume that the unadulterated version of the Electrician's tune at the opening is the Duchess, it must be in the past tense in order for the parody to be possible. After all, the Electrician has these phrases so readily to hand to lampoon in Scene 1, it is safe to assume that she really did say and sing these things all the time.[52] On the other hand, we could read it in the 'present' – might it be the Duchess in her dotage, still reminiscing, still singing her tune, and the introduction's somewhat stuttered, hushed manner portrays her frailty, then the parody is part of the flashback she has *now*, at the very moment we listen to the *Concert Paraphrase*. Another option still: might it simply be the pianist trying to remember how the opera goes, and that the music happens now and is merely a struggling reconstruction of events passed? There are clearly a number of different ways in which we read tenses through Adès's manipulation of the musical objects – and musical time – in this way.

[51] Abbate (1989)

[52] This also calls to mind that the Electrician, later in Scene 1, also parodies the Jack Buchanan pastiche quoting the exact same melody but to the vulgar text "why don't you suck me off until you can't take more" instead of "why don't you love me back until we're ninety-five". This again reinforces the fact that the Duchess must have sung and dwelled on these aspects of her life in order for the Electrician to be able to parody them.

Let us also consider the fact that there are two 'bitch-slaps' (b. 1 and b. 39), not just one. The first one is merely how Adès gets our attention, as the listener/audience – rather in contrast to the introductions Liszt felt he had to write to afford his audience to "assemble and blow their noses as they settled down in their seats".[53] The second one is the one from the opera: the humiliation of the Duchess. To 'bitch-slap' is, literally, "to deliver a stinging blow to (someone), typically in order to humiliate them".[54] If we take Adès at his word, one could argue that the sound is both a kind of call to attention – very practical in such a virtuosic work – and also mimetic of the Duchess's humiliation in the first scene of the opera, and perhaps her recall of it.

Inevitably, the question of whose 'voice' (to continue using Abbate's multiple meanings of the word) we hear at the opening of the *Concert Paraphrase* remains unresolved. That we are unable to decipher exactly what we are hearing, or who is narrating, means that the multivalence of the music provides another shared interpretative puzzle. All listeners, including the performer, are invited to contemplate a question which cannot possibly be resolved definitively, and which offers multiple readings and possibilities – a quality which Kramer argues is an integral feature to both postmodern music and postmodern *listening*.[55]

Conversely, to return to the cinematic analogy, perhaps we might consider that Adès is not so much *telling* us (in literary, narrative fashion), as *showing* us, a version of events that is slightly difficult to make out, as if with Vaseline over the camera lens. Almost like the start of Ravel's *La Valse*, where it is difficult to make out exactly what is really going on. It might be that we have a preview of the opening scene in a sort of muffled blackout, and that the *Concert Paraphrase* is sort of a showreel, a 'director's cut', of the opera.

[53] Isacoff (2011), p. 60
[54] Definitions from Oxford Languages
[55] Kramer (2016), p. 115

Between bb. 8-12 we hear a fragment of the Duchess's line, and one that could easily be regarded as a commentary on the nature of the music we are presently listening to: "[t]here was a future once, because there was a past". The *Concert Paraphrase* only exists because there was an opera. It is also a further play on the aspects of the manipulated temporality. Another point of curiosity is how Adès incorporates typically Lisztian flourishes over notes which have words with particular connotations (assuming we are aware of which words this music is set to later): "young" (b. 6), "past" (b. 12), and "innocence" (bb. 54-56). By underscoring these parts of the libretto, we might read that the narrator is creatively misremembering the opera in this way and forming a real-time commentary.

The join in the first movement at bb. 55-56 is, as already indicated above, a cadenza on the word "innocence", but the ensuing quoted passage from later in Scene 1 arrives suddenly and without warning. There are also two possible ways of reading this: firstly, that Adès has written this overtly simple torrent of notes as a sort of musical pun or extemporisation on the libretto text; or secondly, that the simplicity of the piano writing might suggest the narrator has forgotten his place in remembering the opera, with the flourish functioning as the sort of cheap trick a (bad!) performer might employ had they suffered a memory lapse. This latter reading is supported by the sudden jolt remembering material from the same scene, yet skipping the intervening 156 bars.

At the conclusion of the first movement of the *Concert Paraphrase* (bb. 96-102), Adès uses material from later in the opera (Scene 8, bb. 312-318) but adapts it texturally to continue the present sound world – a match cut in cinematic terms.[56] The spotlight is, again on the Duchess in her frailty, with the chromatic interspersions between her melody suggesting

[56] A match cut is described as "a transitional technique that refers to a cut between two unrelated shots (outgoing and incoming) that are deliberately joined, matched, or linked by physical, visual, aural, or metaphorical parallelism or similarities, to establish continuity; there can be *audio* matches, segues (a segue refers to a smooth, uninterrupted transition), and *visual* match-cuts of various kinds". See https://www.filmsite.org/filmterms13.html. See also Hayward, Susan, *Cinema Studies: The Key Concepts*, 4th edn (Routledge, London & New York, 2013), pp. 96-98

sniggering laughter by the hotel staff. The torrent at the end is slightly 'misremembered', but its outline is still present. The final harmony is conveniently present in the opening bars of 'Is Daddy Squiffy?'.

Fig. 3.18a: Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 8, bb. 312-319 (vocal score)

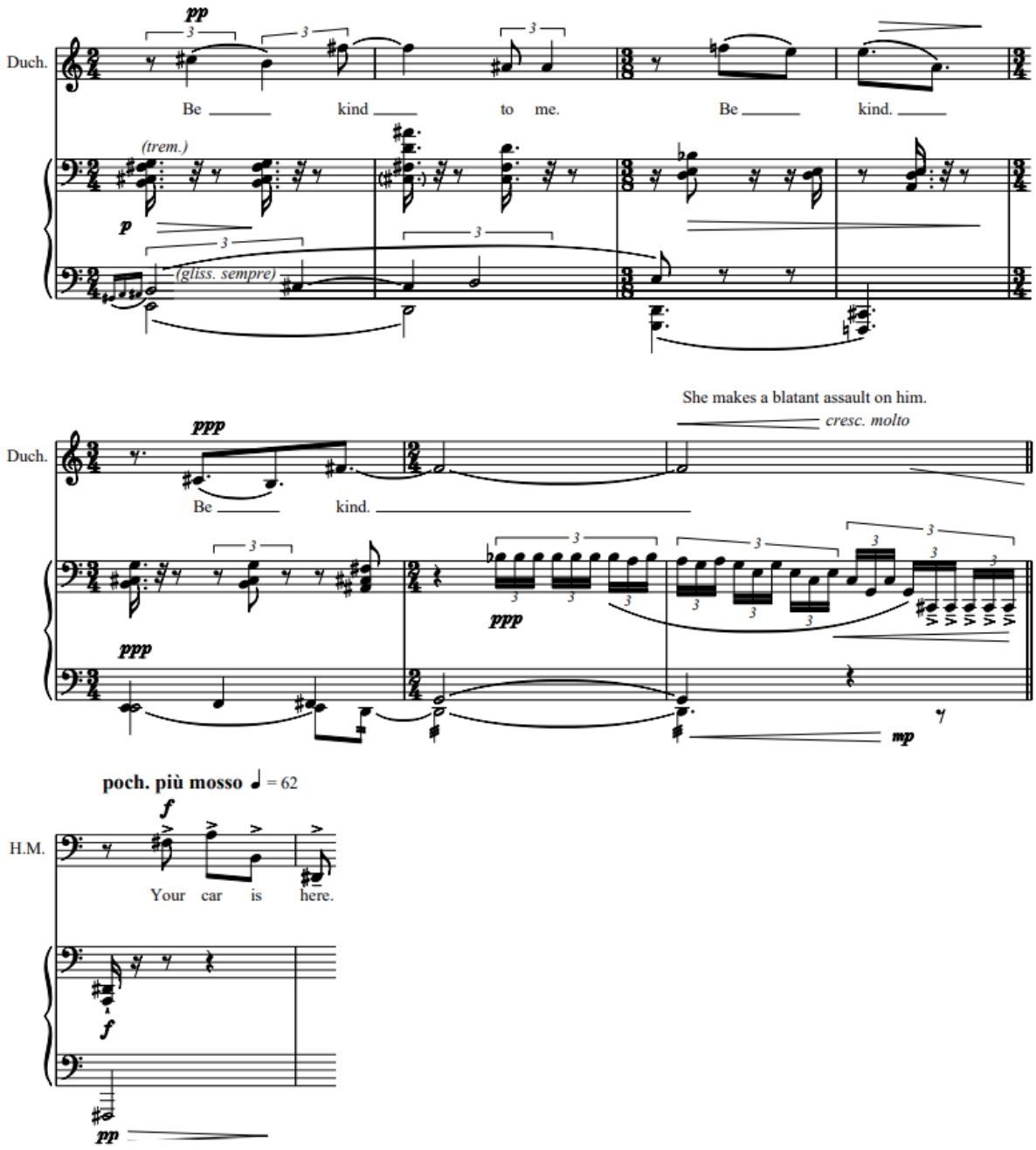
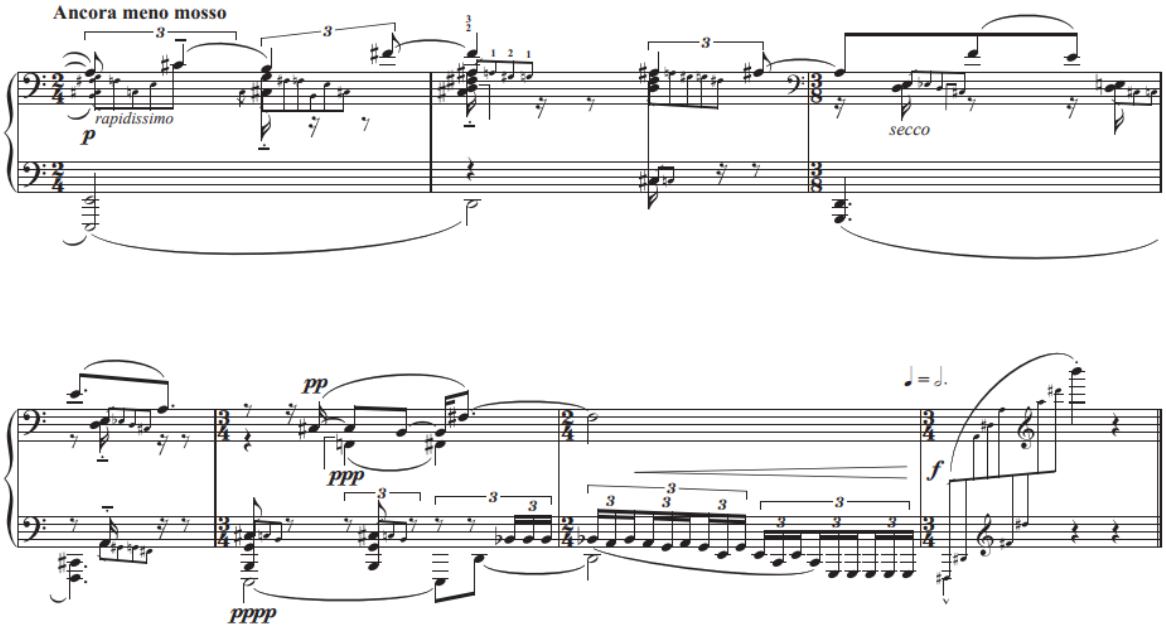


Fig. 3.18b: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, i), bb. 96-102



That the second movement cuts off where it does appears to be a purely aesthetic and proportional matter. It is the shortest movement of the *Concert Paraphrase* at a mere ninety seconds or thereabouts. In the original opera, the material is extended and largely repeated, but replicating that in the *Concert Paraphrase* would add unnecessary bulk. One hearing is enough for us to grasp the relation to the 'Paperchase' material which follows in the third movement. The connection between the 'Fancy' aria and 'Paperchase' is similar to that at the end of the first movement. The harmonic workings of this passage will be discussed in section 3.4 below, but Adès has again used the harmony from one passage, and texturally adjusted it to fit in to the next, functioning as another match cut. The arpeggios racing up then down the keyboard in bb. 112-113 are almost like tearing paper, a fun, if perhaps questionable, allusion to the title of the scene.

The created bar which joins the end of the 'Paperchase' to the 'It is too Late' aria is an especially cunning elision between the two scenes (yet another match cut), formed using a typically declamatory, virtuoso piano gesture. In b. 162, Adès continues his transformation of the laughter motif to form an extended anacrusis which acts as a substitute for the words "it is

too", before arriving on the word "late" in the aria. The use of material from 'Paperchase' – which precipitates the Duchess's downfall – as a way to connect to 'It is too Late' – the moment of her downfall – is narratively logical (see Figs. 3.19a and 3.19b from the vocal score which are connected by 3.19c in the *Concert Paraphrase*). The final moment of transition, between the eviction scene and the concluding tango is, again, the quotation of the "be kind" motif heard throughout the opera, another reinforcement of the idea of the narrator as being Duchess-sympathetic.

Fig. 3.19a: Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 5, bb. 526-531 (vocal score piano part)

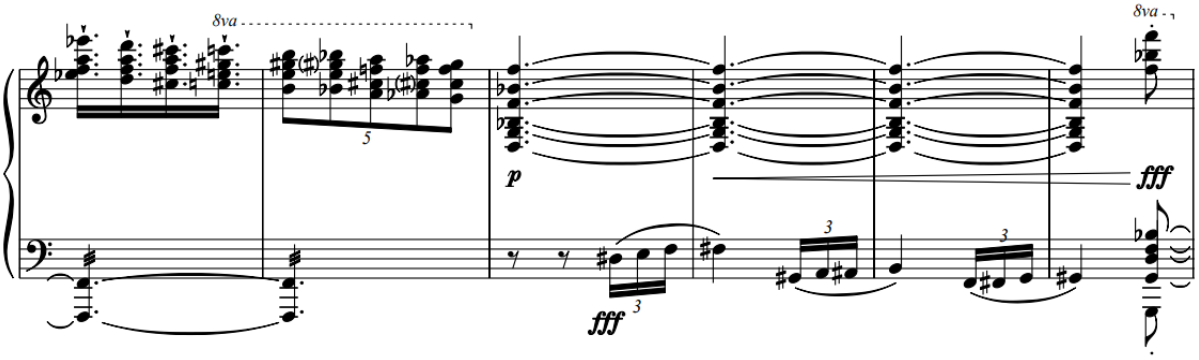


Fig. 3.19b: Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 8, bb. 20[4]-23 (vocal score Hotel Manager and piano parts)

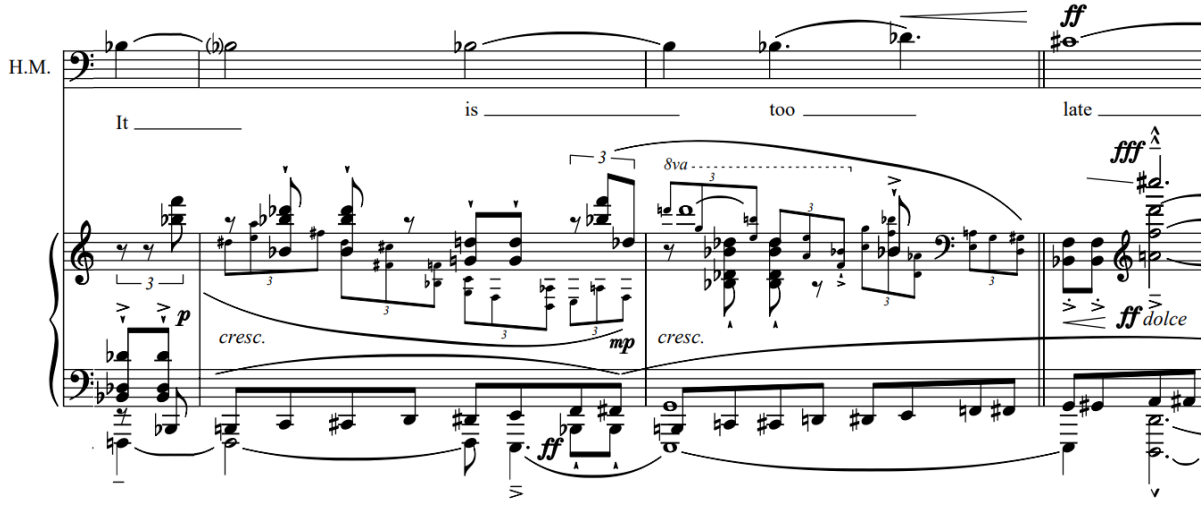
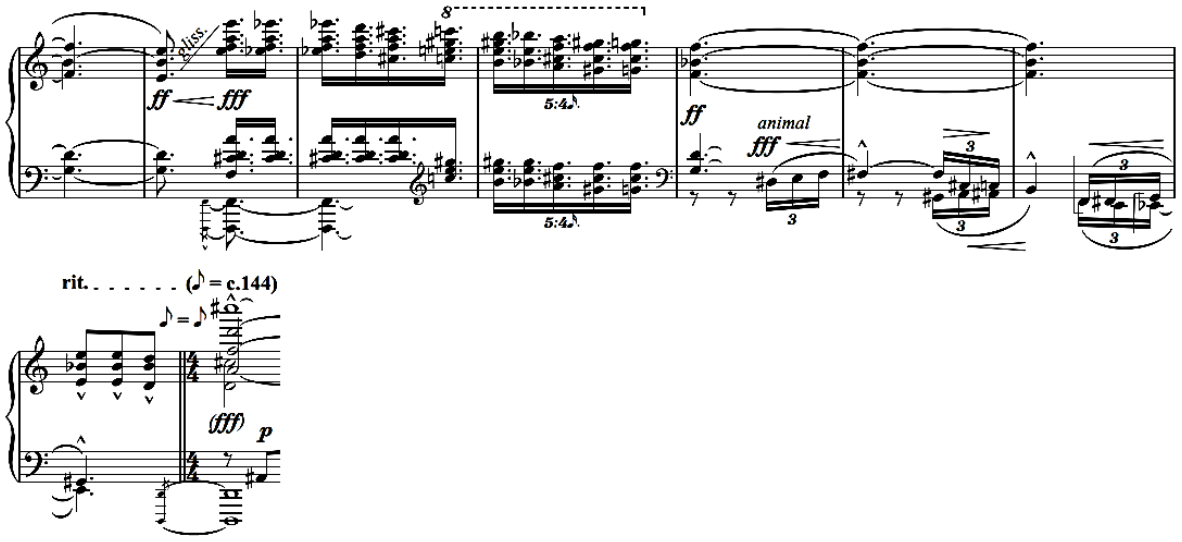


Fig. 3.19c: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, iii), bb. 155-166



In truth, it is not possible to know, unequivocally, who is narrating the *Concert Paraphrase,* or from whose viewpoint the material is presented. Adès suggested that *he* was trying to remember parts of the opera, and of course we know that he wrote the paraphrase for himself to perform. Adès has written explicitly that:

> *it would be called 'Reminiscences of Powder Her Face' except that it would be rather strange to be trying to remember one's own opera. Liszt's reminiscences are always of someone else's, quite logically.*[57]

He also said, in interview, that he had been "working on ways to make the music have a new musical structure – bring out the musical logic of it, independently of the dramaturgical logic"[58] Might this possible shift in viewpoint (or 'focalization' to use Genette's term) be evidence of this new, independent musical logic?[59]

Slightly at odds with Adès's avowed aim of wanting to creatively misremember parts of the opera to create new paths, the entire *Concert Paraphrase* is, in actuality, a very literal

[57] E-mail correspondence with the composer 6/12/20
[58] London Philharmonic Orchestra (2018)
[59] Gérard Genette was a French literary theorist. See Henderson, Brian, 'Tense, Mood, and Voice in Film (Notes after Genette)' in *Film Quarterly, Vol. 36, No. 4*, pp. 4-17 (Summer 1983), p. 13

transcription of the featured parts of the opera, and it is only structurally that it bears resemblance to the form of the Lisztian réminiscenses. According to the descriptive taxonomy laid out in Chapter 1, the *Concert Paraphrase* is a non-chronological, multiple scene transcription. This obviously does not align it with the more exploratory transcription models produced by composers such as Godowsky and Sorabji, but more to Liszt's, structurally, yet without any remarkable alterations to the 'sonic surface'. There is a certain postmodern faux-naivety to Adès's *Concert Paraphrase*: if the Busoni/Godowsky/Sorabji/Finnissy works are to be seen as a developed school from Liszt's model, then Adès has created a piece which harks back to Liszt in a way which assumes they do not exist. In itself, this constitutes a rather radical aesthetic attitude.

3.4 Understanding the 'Adèsian' compositional devices in the *Concert Paraphrase*

Having introduced Adès's recurrent compositional signatures in Chapter 2, we shall now explore their use in the *Concert Paraphrase* and catalogue the musical quotations – the gewgaws that Adès refers to, which litter the opera like the trumpery and detritus of the Duchess's own profligate lifestyle.[60] We may now consider how an understanding of their use might inform interpretation of the *Concert Paraphrase*.

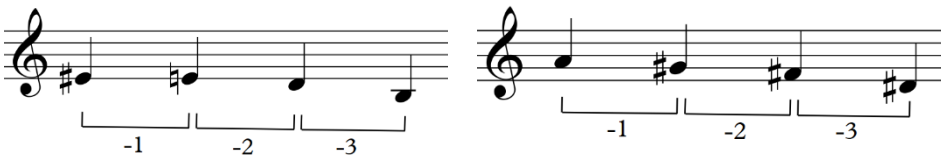
1. Signature scale

In 'New Hampshire', for example, the expanding interval stream device appears in various permutations (retrograde, inversion and with rhythmic augmentation) and is used to

[60] Service (2012), p. 153

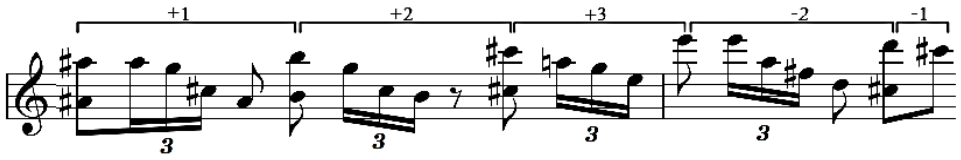
create longer narratives. In *Powder Her Face*, and consequently the *Concert Paraphrase*, Adès tends to utilise it exclusively for shorter motivic or melodic gestures.[61]

Fig. 3.20: Expanding interval streams in Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, i), bb. 8 & 9



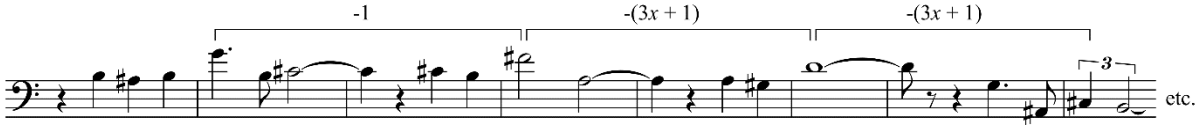
Other examples of expanding or contracting interval streams can be found throughout the *Concert Paraphrase*, and a number form outlines of musical gestures, are disguised, or are written according to certain formulae.

Fig. 3.21: Expanding and contracting intervals in Adès, *Concert Paraphrase,* iv), bb. 35-36



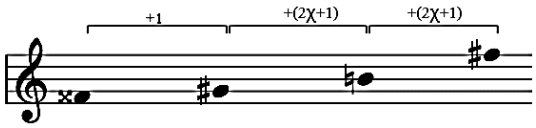
The example below is a descending pitch stream which expands by three times the size of the previous interval (χ) plus a further semitone i.e. -(3χ+1).

Fig. 3.22: -(3χ+1) expanding interval stream in Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, i), bb. 1-8



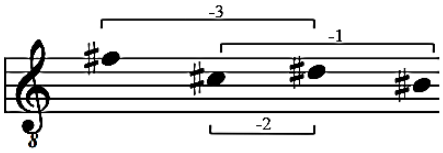
[61] See Markou (2010), Chapter 3 "New Hampshire" and Cao (2007), p. 38

Fig. 3.23: +(2χ+1) expanding interval stream in Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, i) b. 62



The example below shows a contracting interval stream, disguised by the fact that the second and third notes have been switched around.

Fig. 3.24: Contracting interval stream in Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, i) b. 72-73



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Throughout most of the opera, Adès's signature expanding interval scale is used in descent, most notably at the very beginning of the opera in the overture. However, its use in its ascending form seems to have uniquely associative qualities which might represent characteristic traits in the Duchess. Its use in the Jack Buchanan song (Scene 2, bb. 285-287, Fig. 3.25a), the end of the fellatio aria (Scene 4, bb. 312-314, Fig. 3.25b) when the Duchess enquires "Do you know who I am?" and towards the close of the eviction scene (Scene 8, bb. 70-71, Fig. 3.25c) is telling. And although not strictly expanding, the Electrician in his drag impersonation of the Duchess and the Duchess herself sing lines which are very suggestive of being so (Scene 1, bb. 156-158, Fig. 3.25d and Scene 1, bb. 354-355, Fig. 3.25e respectively). All these instances are highly suggestive of nostalgia and fragility – or mock nostalgia in the case of the Electrician. In the latter two examples, Adès has contoured the melodic line to fit

[62] This material is originally sung by the Electrician in Scene 1, bb. 357-358. It is present, but not clearly delineated in the *Concert Paraphrase* score. Consequently, the vocal score part has been used for clarity.

within the parameters of the harmony: a distorted cycle of fifths, in keeping with the cabaret sound world which the music evokes in these places.

Fig. 3.25a, Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 2, bb. 285-287 (vocal score)

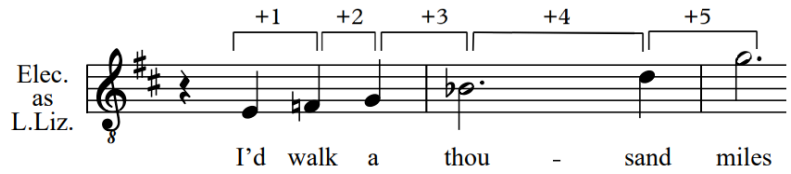


Fig. 3.25b, Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 4, bb. 312-314 (vocal score)

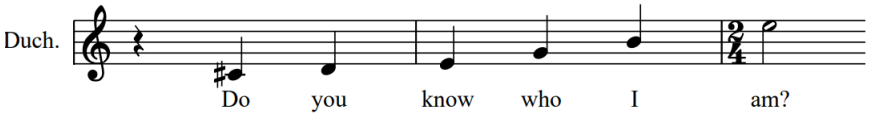


Fig. 3.25c, Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 8, bb. 70-71 (vocal score)

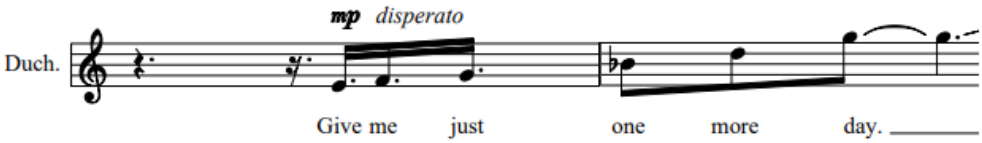


Fig. 3.25d, Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 1, bb. 156-158 (vocal score)

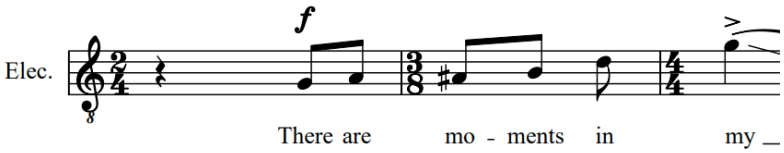
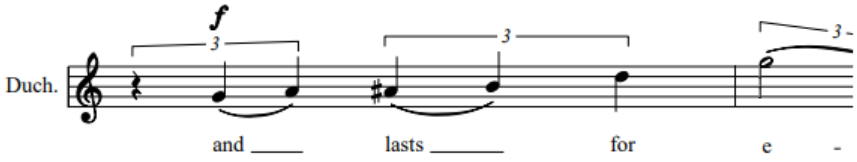


Fig. 3.25e, Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 1, bb. 354-355 (vocal score)



2. Aligned interval cycles

The use of aligned cycles is extensive throughout the opera and in the *Concert Paraphrase*. A selection of examples is provided below.

Fig. 3.26: T1 related i-10 and i-11 aligned cycles in *Concert Paraphrase*, i), b. 13

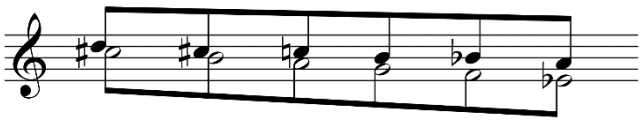
 [63]

Fig. 3.27: Reduction of aligned cycle in *Concert Paraphrase*, ii), bb. 42-43

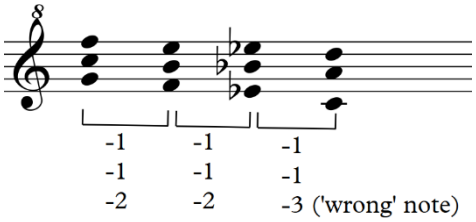
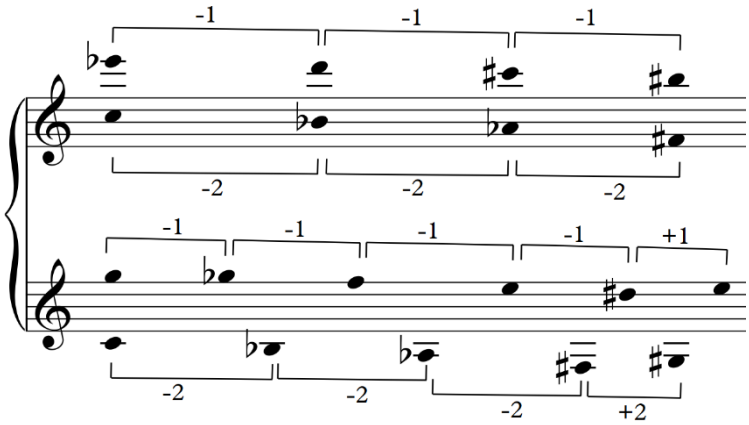
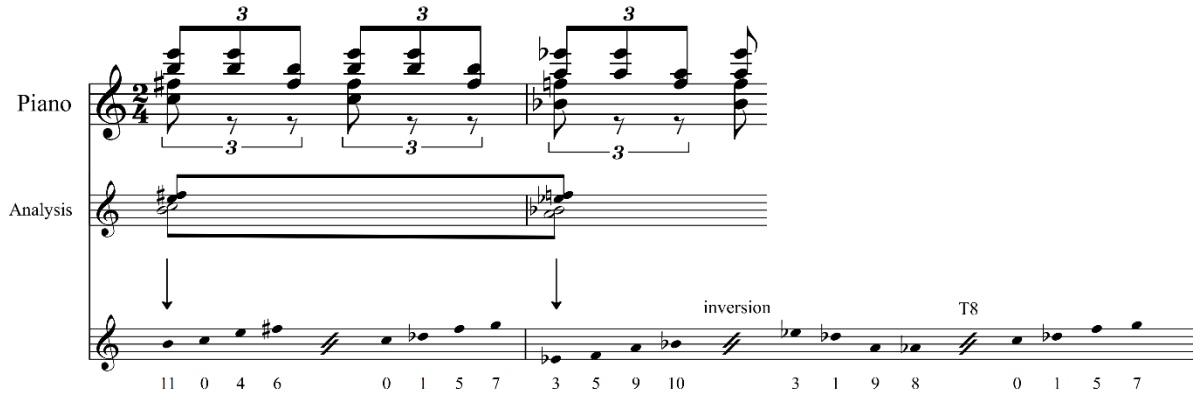


Fig. 3.28: Reduction of aligned cycle in *Concert Paraphrase*, iii), bb. 180-182



[63] For clarity, and consistency with existing research in this field, post-tonal analytical tools have been used. As the music example demonstrates, an i-11 and an i-10 aligned cycle is a descending chromatic scale over a whole tone scale. As mentioned in Chapter 2, performers unfamiliar with post-tonal analysis are advised to consult Straus (2005)

Fig. 3.29 Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, iii), bb. 1-2 and analysis of T1 and T2 related i-10 and i-11 aligned cycles



Stoecker claims that Adès's use of aligned cycles in *Powder Her Face* is "primarily to generate brief harmonic and motivic structures", but an investigation into this aspect of the opera reveals that this is not the case.[64] Vast portions of the opera are composed using this technique, and although there is existing scholarship identifying its use in Adès's output in general, its consequences for harmony and musical effect remains largely unexplored.

Adès's voice-leading in aligned cycles is parsimonious: it rarely comprises cycles featuring intervals larger than a whole tone, and almost exclusively built using i-11 or i-10 cycles for descending streams, or i-1 or i-2 cycles for less common ascending streams.[65] However, the colouristic effect they have on the music depends entirely on with which intervals they begin – their harmonic alignment – and for how long they continue through the cycle.[66] Shaw's analysis concerning the opening of the 'Fancy' aria falls short in two ways (and again at the end of the aria, as shall be shown later): he erroneously identifies the examples shown in Fig. 3.29 as T2 relating pairs of aligned i-10 and i-11 cycles when in fact they are T1 and T2 relating pairs;[67] more importantly, however, he does not examine the effect these cycles have

[64] Stoecker (2015). p. 205
[65] Straus (2005), p. 50
[66] Stoecker uses the term 'harmonic alignment' to denote the intervals at which aligned cycles begin: so i-10 and i-11 cycles beginning a major second apart would be a 2/10 [10,11] cycle. See Stoecker (2015), p. 208
[67] Shaw, Kyle, *Promiscuity, Fetishes, and Irrational Functionality in Thomas Adès's Powder Her Face* (DMA thesis, University of Illinois Music and Performing Arts Library, 2018), p. 70

on the characteristic sound of the music on account of the point at which they begin, and their harmonic alignment.

Examples of aligned i-10 and i-11 cycles abound throughout the opera, but they clearly do not all sound the same nor serve the same function. It is the harmonic alignment of the cycles, not only the cycles themselves, which yields the distinctly under-nourished sound of tritones and major sevenths, imbuing the beginning of the 'Fancy' aria with its austere colour.[68] Shaw does not inform us that the two vertical harmonies are in fact both (0,1,5,7) – the second chord an inversion of the first at T8 – nor does he offer any suggestions as to what we may infer from this, musically. The consequence of oscillating between this pair of transposed inversions is that the music is effectively stuck in a rut, and not a particularly comfortable one. In an opera that is hyper-alert to minute indices of class, one might argue that this is suggestive of the Waitress being trapped by her situation.[69] That the music is constructed purely from such a pragmatic compositional device, as opposed to being treated with the kind of lavishness seen elsewhere in the opera, perhaps also speaks to the social class of the Waitress – she is almost a kind of automaton, a mechanical object, and her music is more poverty-stricken than that of the Duchess's. The distortions which Adès has applied to the waltz rhythm's foundation units, by means of additions and subtractions (e.g. bb. 6-7, 8-9, 9-10 etc.), make the music even more lumpen and inelegant.

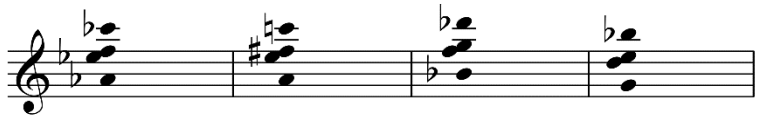
However, at key strophic moments in the libretto, when the Waitress sings about the Duchess, Adès uses significant harmonic signposts. As Shaw points out, many of the Duchess's aligned cycles are at T5 relations (or harmonic alignment 5/7) and the sound of perfect fourths and fifths (often accompanied by the harp) is a distinctive 'Duchess sound' throughout the

[68] These oscillating chords echo those which open the second movement of Stravinsky's *Three Pieces for String Quartet*, and the deforming techniques applied to rhythms from popular music which Adès uses in this aria obviously have precedent in Stravinsky's music.
[69] An obvious reference is the performance direction in Scene 7 that the Duchess, when singing the word 'often', does not pronounce the 't', but the Maid as Journalist does.

opera. The Duchess's first entry in the opera, in fact, sounds like a cycle of fifths – an archetypal form of harmonic motion in musical language.[70] In the 'Fancy' aria, after the Waitress sings "Fancy being her", Adès uses T5 relating i-10 cycles to evoke the Duchess's sound (from b. 37) before she lovingly describes the abundance of food preserved in aspic. When, however, she sings about the Duchess not looking happy, thus returning to a form of spiteful jealousy, the music comes back to the static harmonic gestures described above with its inherently 'mean-spirited' colour.

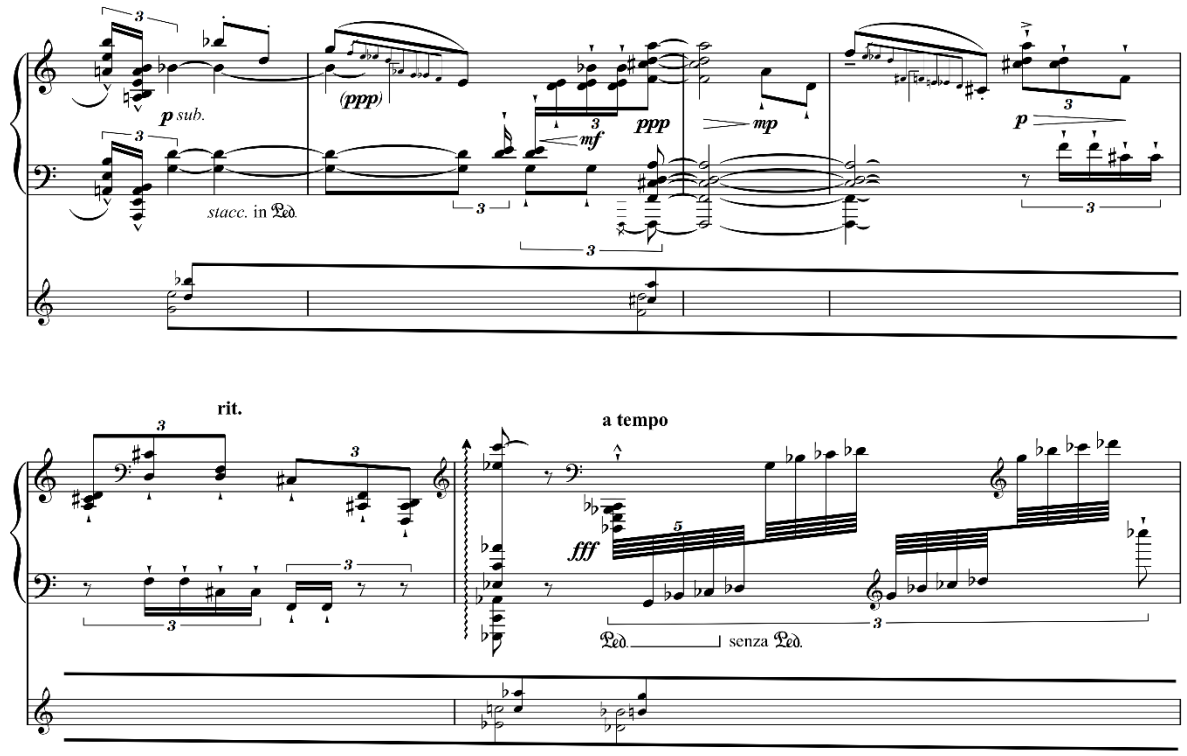
There appear to be other vertical harmonic devices at play which tip a hat to features of the libretto. Adès engineers aligned cycles to arrive deliberately at vestiges of diatonic harmony: for example, bb. 16, 33, 65, and 107 all feature (0, 2, 5, 8) chords – an inversion of the 'Tristan chord', perhaps a symbol of longing, or unsatiated desire (see Fig. 3.30). At these four moments the Waitress sings the words "wedding", "fancy being her", the chord in the third example falls between "I'd be like her" and "I'd marry rich men", and the last example "that's what I want". Furthermore, at the end of the aria, he continues the pair of T3 related i-10 aligned cycles and T4 related i-11 aligned cycles from the 'Tristan chord' to form a cadential arrival on an A-flat major chord (albeit in second inversion, with the E-flat in the bass) as seen in Fig. 3.31. This clearly points to a cadential moment as the end of the aria, but Adès continues the cycles as a bridge into the ensuing Interlude, again suggesting that he engineers his use of aligned cycles to arrive at, and depart from, certain midway points.

Fig. 3.30: Vertical harmonies in *Powder Her Face*, Scene 3, bb. 16, 33, 65, & 107



[70] Refer to Scene 1, bb. 238-240

Fig. 3.31, Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, iii), bb. 107-112 and analysis of T3 and T4 related i-10 and i-11 aligned cycles



Whilst Shaw helpfully illuminates the T5 relations to interval cycles in the Duchess's material, he does not volunteer an opinion about the effect these T5 relations have on the music. Nor does he explore the T relations of the other characters' aligned cycles. The above thoughts on the characterisation of the Waitress are just one aspect of this. Adès's use of specific harmonic alignments of aligned cycles bears comparison with the technique that Berg used in *Lulu*, in assigning each character their own series. In fact, the [0, 5, 6] trichords in the 'Fancy' aria at bb. 18, 35, and 73 arguably recall the harmonic colour of Basic Cell I in *Lulu* with which the trombones open that opera's prologue;[71] and the (0,2,7) trichords which permeate the Duchess's material produce a cold stability – neither major nor minor, nor in need of resolution.

Because the aligned cycles often arrive at, or pass through, vertical sonorities from diatonic harmony, Adès is able to weave in and out of other tonalities and even use them as

[71] See Jarman, Douglas, *Alban Berg: Lulu* Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 72

points of "stylistic modulation".[72] The use of this technique in this way generates quite heterogenous (and somewhat unpredictable) sonorities, and is not used as a vehicle for the kind of harmonic unity found in much other post-tonal music, but rather as a vehicle for *dis*unity, stimulating the composer's mind and memory to move elsewhere. Consequently, this particular type of 'automatist' harmonic apparatus might be compared to the surrealist techniques discussed by Albright and Kramer in Chapter 2.

A useful metaphor for these aligned cycles is to think of them as functioning as escalators, and whilst we are inhabiting the world of 'Fancy', let us imagine they are in a grand department store. Adès might use the escalator to take the Waitress to the bargain basement, and use it to take the Duchess to the luxury floor. It is the planning of these aligned cycles – their harmonic alignment and duration – that endows them with their unique colours and effects (i.e. the distinctive characteristics of each floor). An exhaustive investigation into this aspect in the opera is, sadly, outside the remit of this project, but would certainly make for an interesting and enlightening study.

The use of tonal centres or "fetish notes" in the opera also illuminates certain aspects of the *Concert Paraphrase*.[73] For example, although largely non-functional, the closing tango is essentially in D minor, but concludes in B-flat minor. As Shaw points out, these are the first two notes in Adès's quotation from the Gardel tango in the opera's overture (see Fig. 3.35a).[74] The interplay between the two tonalities appears throughout the opera with the former suggesting the Duchess's reverie in her false world (recall that the Jack Buchanan pastiche – representing perhaps her heyday, or her moment of dreamiest nostalgia – is scored in D major), and the latter representing her ineluctable destiny. Shaw cites the pedal note (A-sharp enharmonic equivalent) that accompanies the entry of the Judge in Scene 6 by way of example,

[72] See Dickinson, Peter, 'Style-Modulation: An Approach to Stylistic Pluralism' in *The Musical Times, Vol. 130, No. 1754*, pp. 208-211 (Apr. 1989)
[73] Service (2012), p. 48
[74] Shaw (2018), p. 95

but we may direct our attention to the interlude between Acts 2 and 3, the pantomime wedding, that also alternates between these two tonalities: it begins in D minor and the music, which pre-empts the Hotel Manager's 'It is too Late' aria in its melodic outlines, has repeated, punctuated B-flat minor triads, and it concludes on a bass B-flat. The Interlude at the end of Scene 3 also slithers down and culminates on a repeated B-flat. Perhaps most telling of all is the end of the 'Paperchase', when the Duke and Mistress discover the incriminating polaroid, which ends catastrophically on B-flat minor with a lingering D-natural, marked ***ppp*** – a symbol that her downfall is imminent, and that hope is diminishing.

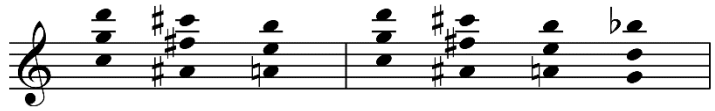
B-flat minor has precedent in music literature as being associated with death or ill-fate. Chopin's Funeral March from his *Piano Sonata No. 2 in B-flat minor, Op. 35* would spring to mind among most pianists. The 'Lacrimosa' settings from both Verdi's *Requiem* and Britten's *War Requiem*; Grieg's *Funeral March in Memory of Rikard Nordraak, EG 107* (for brass choir); Thalberg and Gottschalk's *Marches funèbre* (*Op. 59* and *61* respectively, for solo piano); Shostakovich *Symphony No. 13, Op. 113;* 'Juliet's Funeral' in Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*; and Paderewski's *Elegie, Op. 4* (for solo piano) are all pieces written in B-flat minor and directly concerned with the theme of death.

One may probe further into exactly when these fetish notes are used and with which characters, rather than simply see them as representing fantasy and fate. The Duke's first entry at the end of Scene 2 is preceded by B-flats and D-flats; as highlighted above, the Judge's entry in Scene 6 in preceded with B-flats; when the Waitress sings "Fancy purchasing a Duke" in the 'Fancy' aria, there is a chord founded upon A-sharps; and the Hotel Manager's final insistence on her vacating is in B-flat minor. All the powerful male figures in the opera are accompanied or associated with B-flat. Much of the music throughout the opera is used to portray the Duchess's fantasy, with the quotations and allusions often seeming to sympathise with her

being at the mercy of stronger forces, but men bring about her downfall, and this B-flat catches up with her, silencing her permanently as the opera ends with three B-flat minor chords.

As we have seen both above and in Chapter 2, Adès adopts a flexible attitude in his use of compositional devices, but speculation on meaning when he does so remains absent in existing literature. For example, a particular set of 'wrong' aligned cycles appears in the opera twice (Scene 1, bb. 396-397 "and here he comes", and Scene 3, bb. 106-107 "Fancy purchasing a Duke"). On the two occasions indicated above, 'the Duke's chord' appears in the middle, with the open fifths of the 'Duchess sound' either side; the top lines also form the melodic contours found in both the wedding interlude and in the Hotel Manager's aria, 'It is too Late'. Clearly Adès breaks rules, to make specific musical points and tonal associations.

Fig. 3.32, Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 1, bb. 396-397 & Scene 3, bb. 106-107



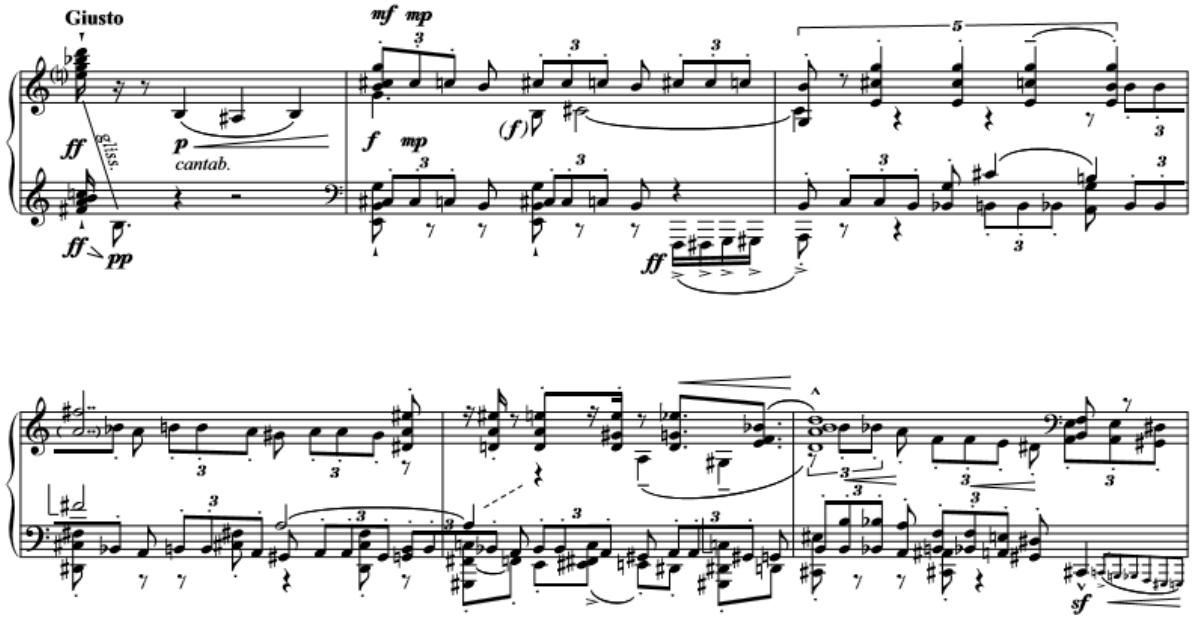
Aligned cycles are clearly not, as Stoecker claims, simply used to generate brief harmonic or motivic gestures. They are vital parts of the musical apparatus. The specific harmonic alignments that Adès chooses for them deliberately reinforces certain aspects of the opera's characters and they have significant effects on the tonal and harmonic colour of the music.

3. Polymeters and temporal asynchronicity

Examples of temporal asynchronicity and multiple temporalities in the *Concert Paraphrase* show that the simplest possible means of notation have been used throughout to make the alignment of the musical material clear to the performer. As Gloria Cheng commented, there

is “much metrically unhinged music”, but Adès has “cast it in rather simple time signatures”.[75] The acoustical effect of the passage below is that the melody is heard in simple 4/4 time and the other parts operate independently in their own meters

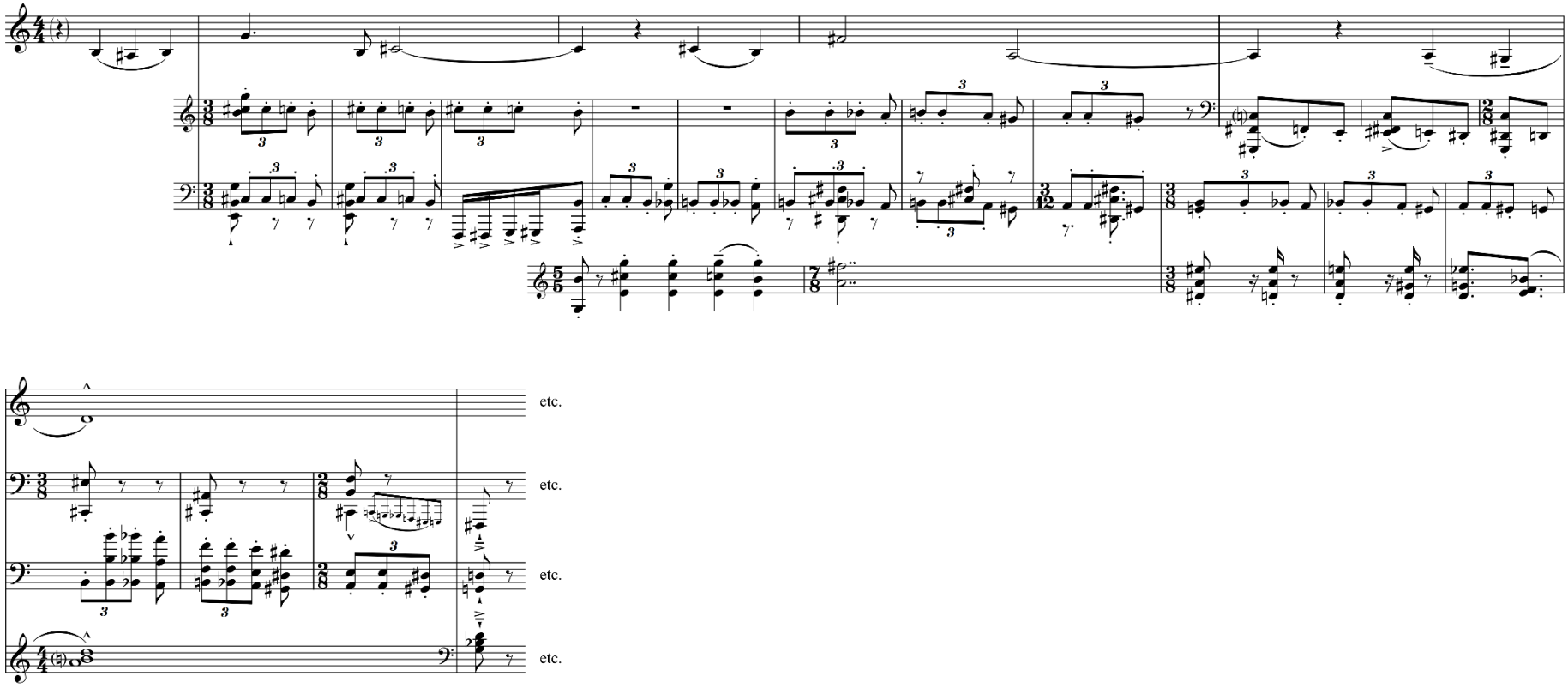
Fig. 3.33a: multiple temporalities in the *Concert Paraphrase*, i), bb. 39-44



Re-notating the parts according to their own rhythmic structures might yield the following notation:

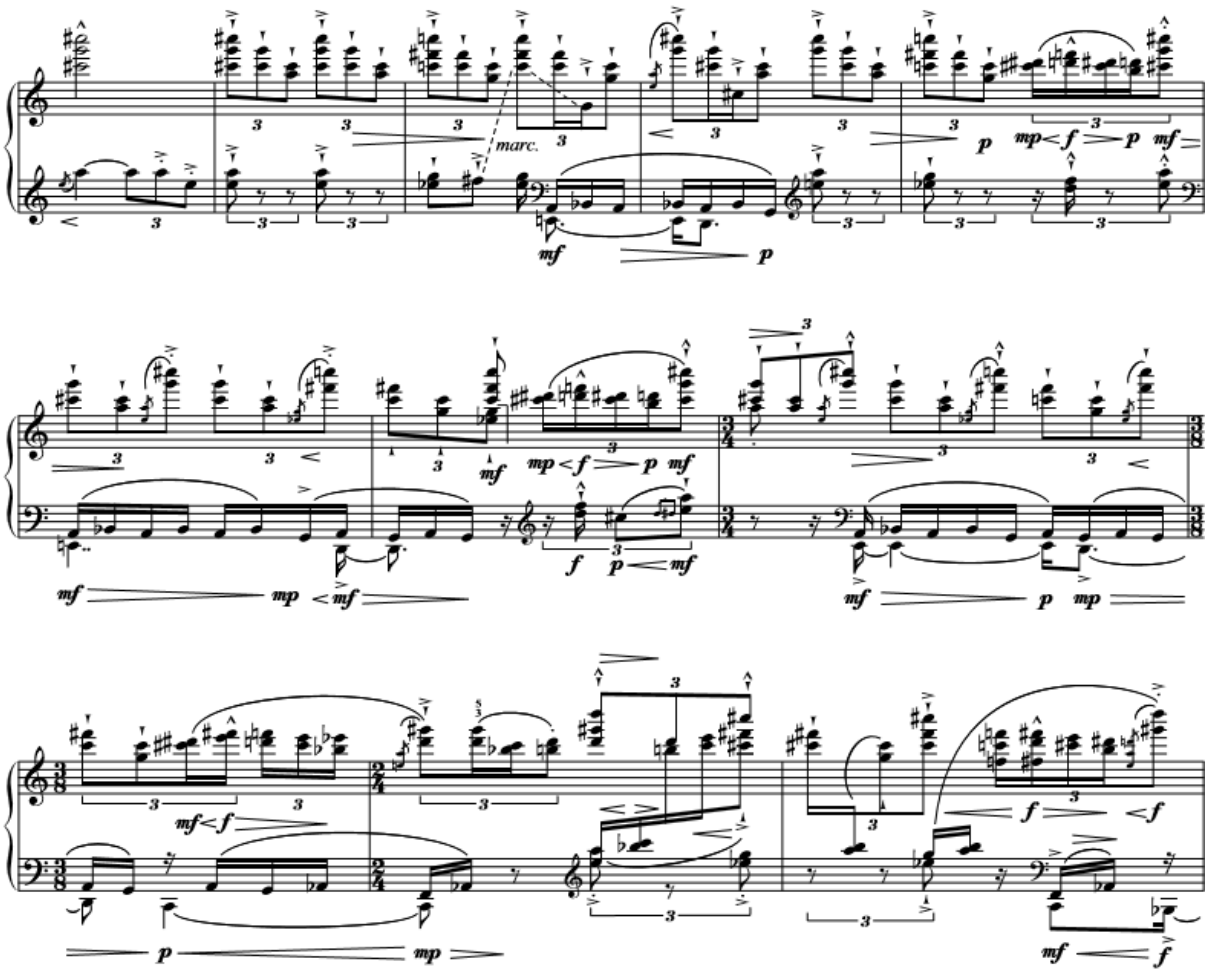
[75] Cheng (2015)

Fig. 3.33b: alternative notation for *Concert Paraphrase*, i), bb. 39-44



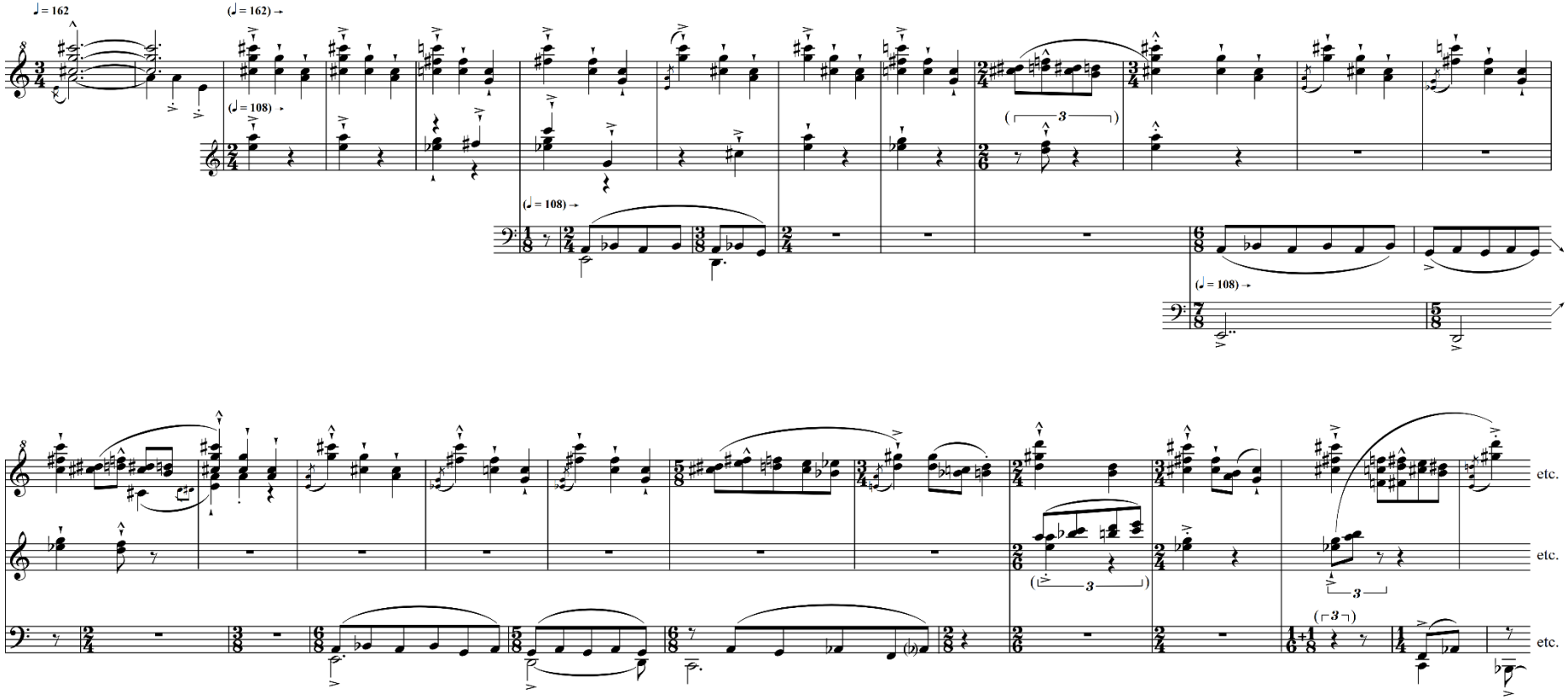
In the figure below, Adès's use of cross rhythms give the temporal effect of simultaneous different tempi, as in Nancarrow. The waltz rhythm in the upper register is heard (mostly) in 3/4 time and the material beneath is heard in duplet time. The use of contrasting articulation and syncopation within each separate component enhances this effect. This is arguably another example of musical surrealism: Adès has taken the waltz rhythm and distorted it by both expanding and contracting the 3/4 units and placing them against metrically irrational material.[76]

Fig. 3.34a: multiple temporalities in the *Concert Paraphrase*, iii), bb. 88-98



[76] In the original opera and the *Concert Paraphrase* this passage is all notated in 2/4, with the waltz rhythm in triplet quavers. However, in the *Powder Her Face Suite* (2017) Adès re-notated it in 3/4. In my alternate reading figure, I have opted to notate it in 3/4 since most examples of waltzes are notated in that time signature and that, I contend, is how this material is heard. The 2/4 notation in the original must be considered a purely practical matter for the staged version.

Fig. 3.34b: alternative notation for *Concert Paraphrase*, iii), bb. 88-98



4. Quotation and allusion

A brief outline of Adès's use of intertextuality was provided in Chapter 2. Appendix 1 surveys how widespread public commentary is on *Powder Her Face* with regard to its extensive use of the technique. These remarks come, in the majority, from sources which Edward Venn would describe as 'musical appreciation' and belonging to a public sphere – sources worthy as starting points for research when recurring themes and concepts of extra-musical meaning are so prevalent.[77] Despite the acceptance of the opera's referential nature, there is little specificity in existing sources of what these allusions and quotations might mean, and the effect they have on interpretation.[78] With the exception of Venn, Adès's use of quotation has been discussed in recent literature mostly in terms of the borrowing of compositional techniques by composers such as Ligeti, Stravinsky and Messiaen, rather than on the meanings and implications for the interpreter.[79] We may argue that it is important for the performer to be aware of the quotations and actively to engage with the question of whether, or how, to communicate them.

In *Powder Her Face,* the musical allusions have a variety of forms, functions and effects. That 'happy promiscuity' Adès talked about bears irrefutable parallels to the behaviour of the Duchess. Adès's decadent and seemingly flippant use of musical quotations and allusions is suggestive of the casual encounters the Duchess so frequently enjoyed: musical objects are played with and nonchalantly discarded like the Duchess's lovers and indeed reflects her apparent attitude to most people. Of course, in the same way the opera's dramaturgy is narrated through a series of flashback tableaux, the musical quotations also appear as memories,

[77] Venn (2006), p. 93

[78] Venn (2006) justifiably refers to musical allusion as "veiled correspondence rather than using a direct quotation" in the context of *Asyla*. "Allusion" may be preferable since, particularly in *Powder Her Face*, it is suggestive of something more deliberate, and better inclined toward the varied use of this technique throughout the opera. Shaw (2018) addresses a number of quotations found in the opera, but only those which are already discussed by Adès in existing interviews.

[79] See Belling, Huw – *Thinking Irrational: Thomas Adès and New Rhythms* (Royal College of Music, London, 2010); Fox (2014); Wells (2012), Whittall, Arnold, 'James Dillon, Thomas Adès, and the Pleasures of Allusion' in *Aspects of British Music of the 1990s, pp. 3-28,* 1st edn (Ashgate Publishing, Hampshire, England, 2003) etc.

"alluding to the music that would have furnished the Duchess's glamorous life".[80] Adès directly engages the audience's own memory and recollection of musical quotes, drawing us directly into her giddy world of warped nostalgia.

In many instances throughout *Powder Her Face*, the allusions are not only used to provide narrative gestures as a commentary, or to provide the sense of musical memorabilia from the Duchess's reverie in her cluttered past, but they are used as sources for parodic methods of subversion. Parody plays a crucial role throughout the opera and is, as Kramer says, one of the key traits of postmodernism: irony as opposed to the nostalgia of antimodernism.[81] Denisov catalogues a variety of ways in which something may be parodied, offering plenty of examples of the different outcomes these can produce.[82] Parody can have a deforming purpose, whereby any number of constituent parts from the original text can be modified, distorted or hyperbolised for comic or grotesque effect. Material can also be subjected to what Denisov describes as 'agglutination' – the juxtaposing of disparate elements or qualities – to produce parody. Just as Venn had argued that the semantics of references depended on the listener's prior understanding of the material in question, Denisov states the same is the case for parody. He argues that the original has to be clearly identifiable in order for the original-parody relationship to be appreciated and the parody to have effect.[83] Denisov also argues that "the effect of parody is possible only when the parodied original itself is topical", and either from the present, or very recent past.[84] He provides literary examples demonstrating this, and one

[80] Oliver, Michael, Adès Powder Her Face Review in *Gramophone* (Aug. 1998)
[81] See Kramer (2016), Chapter 2.4 *Irony and Parody*.
[82] Denisov, Andrey V., 'The Parody Principal in Musical Art' in *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music 46/1, pp. 55-72* (Croatian Musicological Society, Jun. 2015)
[83] Saint-Saëns's *Carnival of the Animals* serves as an excellent example of music parody, for it employs musical quotation, distortion and agglutination: *Tortoises* uses a slowed-down version of the *Galop infernal* (or the *Can-can*) from Offenbach's *Orphée aux enfers*; The Elephant combines elements from the *Scherzo* from Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Berlioz's *Dance of the Sylphs* from *The Damnation of Faust* but in the double bass and extremely slow and pompously; *Pianists* caricatures Études by Hanon, Czerny etc.; and *Fossils* quotes Saint-Saëns's own *Danse Macabre*, a variety of French nursery rhymes and popular tunes, as well as *Una voce poco fa* from Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* – a mosaic of musical 'fossils' from Saint-Saëns's time.
[84] Denisov (2015), p. 67

could readily accept the argument at face value on the subject of, for example, political satire where exaggerative and ironic techniques are used to parodic effect. However, given the contemporary phenomenon of having ready access to all music from all periods in history, one could argue that either all music is 'topical', or that audiences are more widely capable of understanding the parodying of 'non-topical' works from any period in history.

When attempting to inventory the borrowed material in a musical work such as *Powder Her Face*, one must readily accept that 'quotation' is too narrow a term adequately to encompass the different types of musical borrowings.[85] Shaw argues that quotations can take the form of allusion, imitation, paraphrase, transcription, and parody among many other terms more nuanced terms than 'quotation'; 'borrowing' better harbours the breadth of forms and purposes of musical quotations.[86] A researcher into this facet of *Powder Her Face* must therefore locate not only direct quotations, but also those which are pastiche, parody or veiled allusion etc; and there are inevitably those which may be so heavily contorted or woven into Adès's own fabric that their presence may not be discernible. Adès remarked that "what often happens with those things - it can be when my own material… can sometimes edge so close to something odd or remarkable in an existing thing, and… I would think 'should I actually let that one fall in' – whoops! – you know, and often I would do".[87] Accordingly, an exhaustive catalogue of the musical borrowings is an impossible task when undertaken by an individual. Shaw partly addresses this problem by admitting that the allusion to Verdi's *La Traviata*, which Adès himself listed as a source for borrowing, remained unidentifiable to him, confessing that it was too heavily veiled to find or to warrant discussion, even though its exact location had been indicated by Gallon. Often, material sounds familiar or resemblant of a particular style without being a direct quotation, making it difficult or impossible to provide concrete

[85] See Burkholder, J. Peter, 'The Uses of Existing Music: Musical Borrowing as a Field' in *Notes 50, Issue 3*, p. 851-870 (Mar. 1994), p. 855
[86] Shaw (2018), p. 10
[87] Adès (webinar, 2020)

examples. Adès has, himself, said that "a lot of the time they are fake quotations, red herrings, *pour tromper l'ennemi*".[88]

The reception of quotation is always open to ambiguity too, and, as Ballantine says in the context of a discussion of the music of Ives, there is "the possibility that any listener could bring his own private associations to the derived materials; the meaning of the piece for him would then be to some extent of his own making". Concerning the process of musical quotation, Ballentine examines the "original utterance or 'linguistic act'" (i.e. source text), the "audition (reproduction) of that act" (i.e. the new composition incorporating the quotation), and "the utterance of the new composition".[89] For his analysis he merges the last two categories of his own volition for practical purposes. However, for the interpreter and performer of the 'new composition' it is important to reinstate that category of utterance as independent from the work itself, in order to examine how best to convey the meaning of the used quotation in performance. The interpreting performer must also acknowledge that some of, or indeed many of, the quotations and references may be lost on audience members as well as on themselves.

If the act of locating allusions in a work such as *Powder Her Face* is to be of value to the performer, then the function of the allusions, as well as their sources and meanings, must be scrutinised, as should the composer's intention in using them. For example, in the overture to *Powder Her Face,* Adès disclosed that he "robbed" from a tango by Carlos Gardel, but did not volunteer to reveal which one.[90] Jake Wilson incorrectly identifies it as Gardel's 1935 hit *Por una cabeza*, whereas, along with Shaw, we may confidently identify the tango as 'Cuesta abajo' (1934), which was also featured in a musical film of the same title.[91]

[88] Service (2012), p. 153
[89] Ballantine, Christopher, 'Charles Ives and the Meaning of Quotation in Music' in *The Musical Quarterly, Vol. 65, No. 2*, pp. 167-184 (Apr. 1979), p. 168
[90] Service (2012), p. 153
[91] Wilson (2016), p. 45; Shaw (2018), p. 22

Fig. 3.35a: Adès, *Powder Her Face, Overture*, bb. 7-11 (vocal score piano part)

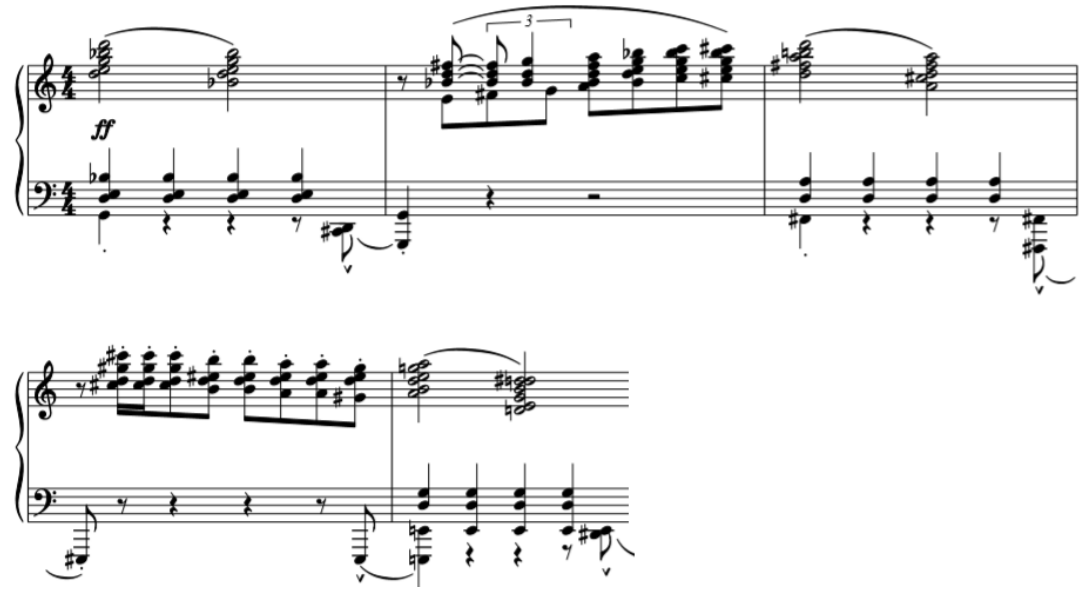
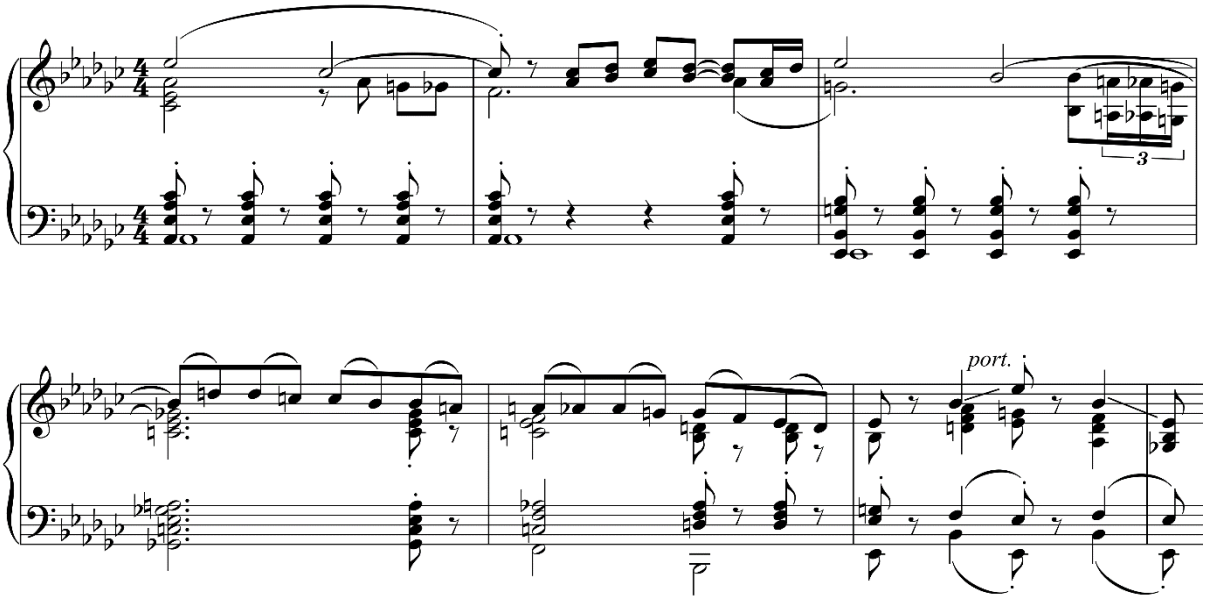


Fig. 3.35b: Gardel, 'Cuesta abajo', introduction[92]



The opening of Gardel's tango affords Adès the opportunity to build upon his preoccupation with expanding intervals.[93] The first and third bars of the melody have descents

[92] Transcribed by the author from a recording available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zTBnN-IMVaQ&t=535s accessed 1/4/17

[93] Adès: "I'd been playing around with a region of expanding harmonies and I heard a narrow sequence of two of them in a tango I was listening to, and the opening of that had one in it, so I took it… Quotation is the wrong word. It's robbery… It's a Carlos Gardel tango". See Service (2012), pp. 152-153

of a major third and a perfect fourth respectively. The material which becomes the laughter motif in *Powder Her Face* additionally bears undisputable resemblance to the falling gesture in the Gardel. It is at that point where Adès's score diverges from Gardel's, when he further expands upon the interval of a fourth to create a tritone, and flits back into more typically 'Adèsian' waters. The use of punctuated crotchet beats in the accompaniment, complete with sliding descents on the fourth beats of the bars in both Gardel and Adès, make the comparison increasingly compelling. Furthermore, the story of *Cuesta abajo* traces that of a man married to a flirtatious wife and in love with another woman. The title translated into English is *Downward Slope* (although 'downhill' more accurately reflects the Spanish meaning). The similarities to the plight of the Duke of Argyll are more than striking – if Adès knew all of this, it is witty and entertaining; if not, it is a tickling coincidence.

A consideration of why Adès chose to use this particular tango gives rise to further questions. Whilst he may well have used it for its expanding interval properties and to evoke the sound world of a 1930s tango, the intention of delivering the extra-musical reference of *Cuesta abajo* might not have been there for him at all. That Adès appears to have been surprised when an audience member recognised the tune suggests he expected the specific reference to go unnoticed.[94] Shaw reinforces this by arguing that the average demographic of an opera-goer means it unlikely that the tune of a 1930s Argentinian tango would be known.[95] From this information, we might be left to believe that Adès simply wanted us to hear a tango, and perhaps infer the Duchess's era. We must not deny, though, that composers must surely be allowed to insert private jokes or allusions – and in this instance there are simply too many similarities between the Gardel tango and its meaning and *Powder Her Face* for Adès not to

[94] Ibid., p. 152-153
[95] Shaw (2018), p. 34

have known exactly what he was doing. He possibly just assumed the listener would not get it on account of the tango's obscurity.

Other clear references in the opera include the music from Baba the Turk's unveiling from Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* at the close of the divorce trial in *Powder Her Face* Scene 6; there are also the woodwind triads which accompany the presentation of the silver rose in Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier* – distorted in Scene 7 of *Powder Her Face* when the Duchess is presented not with a silver rose, but with a ridiculous hat "piled high with chicks and daffodils and perhaps even a stuffed rabbit" along with her accumulating hotel bill.[96] In these examples, their appearances are more convoluted than the overt theft of the Gardel tango. The orchestration in each of these cases has changed, leaving only the rhythmic and approximate pitch contours remaining. Adès has removed the diatonic thirds from Stravinsky's text and applied an aligned interval cycle whereby the top voice moves in semitones, and the bottom two voices in whole tones. Nonetheless, these two allusions are still much more likely to ring in the ears of a *Powder Her Face* audience than the Gardel, and Adès appears to have used them in a calculated fashion, anticipating their received semantic inference.[97]

Fig. 3.36a: Stravinsky, *The Rake's Progress*, Act 2, R. 146 (Baba the Turk's unveiling)

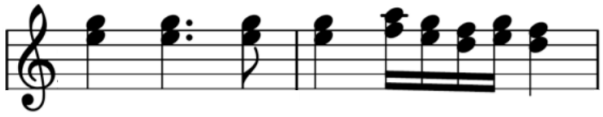


Fig. 3.36b: Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 6, bb. 362-363 (vocal score piano part)

[96] Hensher (1995), p. 35

[97] Adès's score includes the stage direction "Duchess coming forward slowly unveils herself. Baba the Turk showing herself to her audience", information with which the audience is not furnished. Also, as Appendix 1 shows, most commentators incorrectly stated that the opera references Astor Piazzolla, not Gardel, despite the quote being so literal, yet the commentary on Stravinsky and Strauss is consistently accurate despite the manipulations Adès applied to the parent texts.

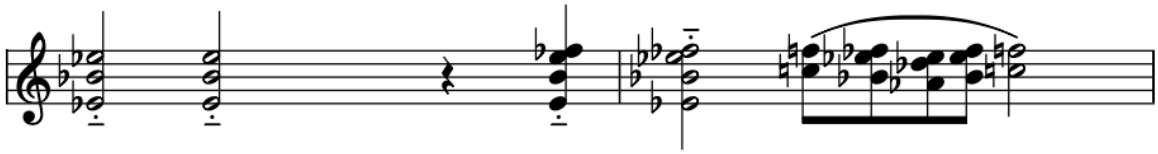


Fig. 3.37a: Strauss, *Der Rosenkavalier,* Act 2, RM. 25, b. 2

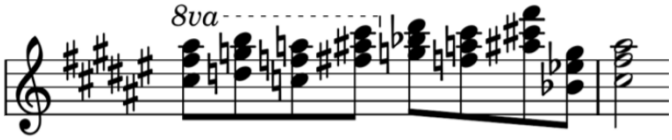
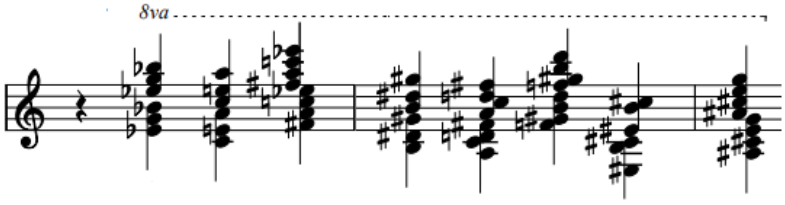


Fig. 3.37b: Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 7, bb. 127-129[1] (vocal score piano part)



There is a 136-bars-long passage in Act 1 Scene 2 of *Powder Her Face* which is written in the style of a Jack Buchanan song. It is neither a parody nor quotation, but a pastiche. In the opera, it is playing on a gramophone and, complete with the expressive indication *in modo popolare 1930*, it serves to date the scene acoustically. It is also the only place in the entire opera which has a key signature (D major), reinforcing the notion that the music is, in a way, separate from the opera. Adès said of it that

> *I wrote a whole song of my own in an absolutely straight-as-I-could-manage Jack Buchanan style. Some people would say, 'Why isn't it more satirical?' Because it's a gramophone record. Why would it be satirical, particularly? It's supposed to be a Twenties song, a Jack Buchanan song. A really specific thing. But it's as in a dream, a*

dream Jack Buchanan song…But there is an illusion on the surface that it is the real thing. [98]

Whilst the above examples provide an indication of the type of quotations which occur throughout the opera and their connotations, a comprehensive catalogue of the allusions in the full opera is not relevant to this investigation. We will now proceed to catalogue those references in the *Concert Paraphrase* that have been identified during the course of this research.

The opening melody of the *Concert Paraphrase*, a transcription of the music sung by the electrician in drag with its cabaret implications, carries a strong scent of Kurt Weill, and particularly to the *Zuhälterballade* (Act 2, No. 13 from the *Threepenny Opera*), if only for the rhythmic structure:

Fig. 3.38a: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, i), bb. 1^2-2

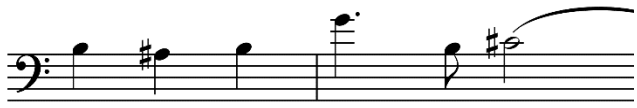
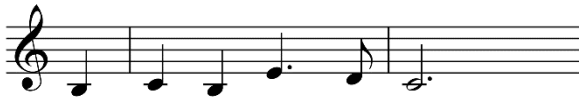


Fig. 3.38b: Weill, 'Zuhälterballade' from *Threepenny Opera*, Act 2, No. 1, bb. 3^4-5



Whether or not Adès was directly referencing the '*Pimp's Ballad*' can only be conjectured, but Macheath and Jenny's nostalgic song in Weill's 'play with music' has more similarities with Adès's music than just the melody. The opening lyrics of the song, "In einer

[98] Service (2012), p. 153

Zeit, die nun vergangen ist",[99] is echoed in the Duchess's text "There was a future once, because there was a past", and its tango form is a further parallelism.

The triplet quavers-duplet quaver gesture first introduced in b. 2 and which recurs throughout bb. 40-44 is redolent of the Habanera (Act 1 Scene 5, 'L'amour est un oiseau rebelle') from Bizet's *Carmen*. Again, whether intentional or not, it is another operatic reference and one which reinforces the sultry, tango-soaked ambience of the opera.[100]

Fig. 3.39a: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, i), b. 2

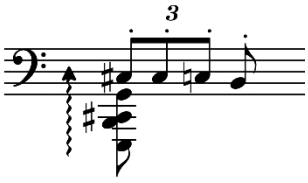
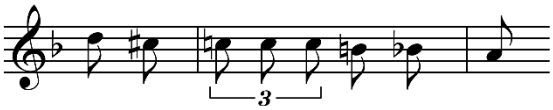


Fig. 3.39b: Bizet, *Carmen*, Act 1, Scene 5, bb. 4^2-6 (Carmen)



The tango rhythm from b. 8 is so conspicuous as to almost be cliché, complete with the standard articulation and intervallic contour. The distention of that rhythm and the overlapping of its units, however, creates a dimension of instability beneath the languid triplet crotchets and metric modulation of the material presented in the right hand, symbolic of the moral fracturing that will unfold throughout the opera.

[99] "There was a time, and now it's all gone by".
[100] For obvious reasons to do with its fame and the essence of the rhythm, most habaneras might cause listeners to recall Bizet's.

Fig. 3.40a: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, i), bb. 8-10

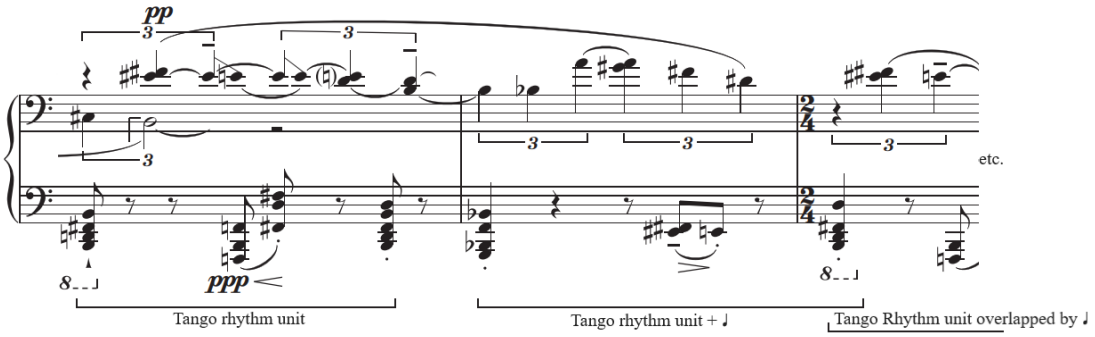
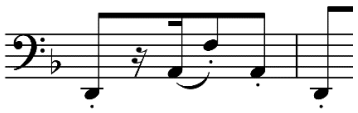


Fig. 3.40b: Bizet, *Carmen*, Act 1, Scene 5, b. 1 (cello part)



The cadenza-like flourishes in bb. 12 and 15 do not appear in the opera, and are suggestive of the way in which Liszt would ornament much of his freely composed operatic paraphrase/introductions.

Fig. 3.41a: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, i), bb. 11-15

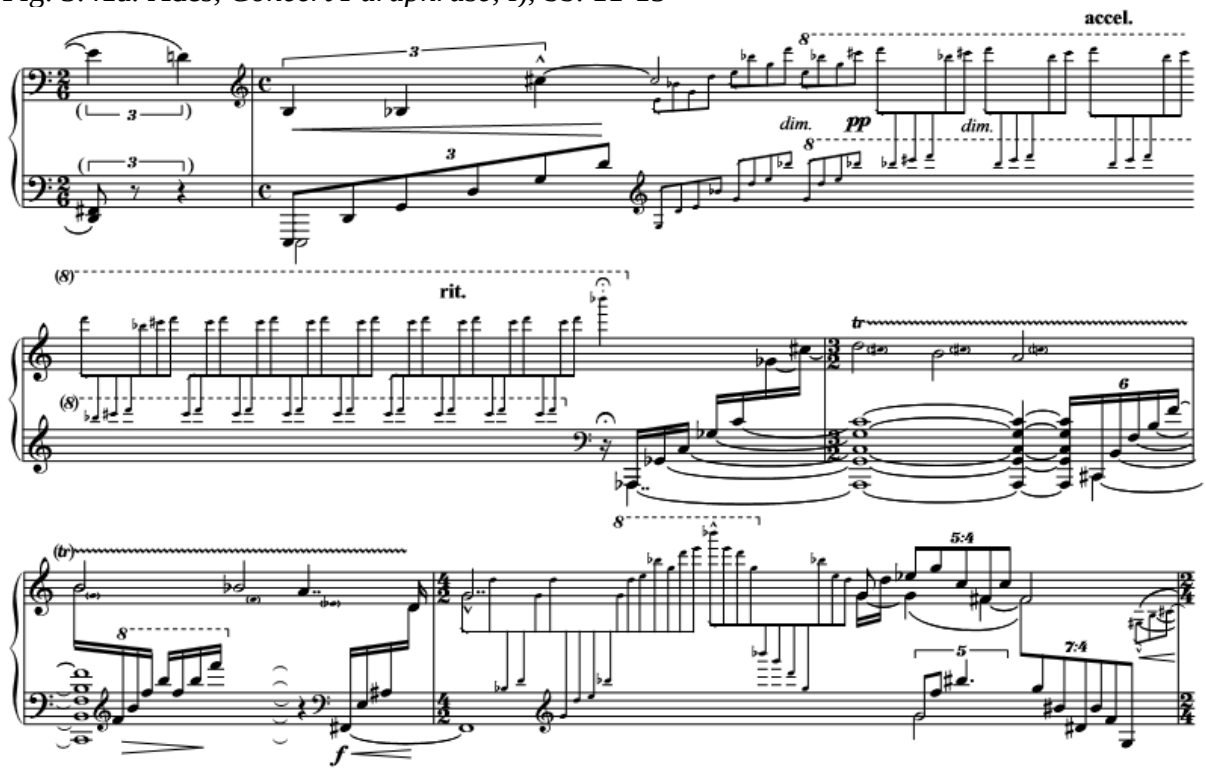
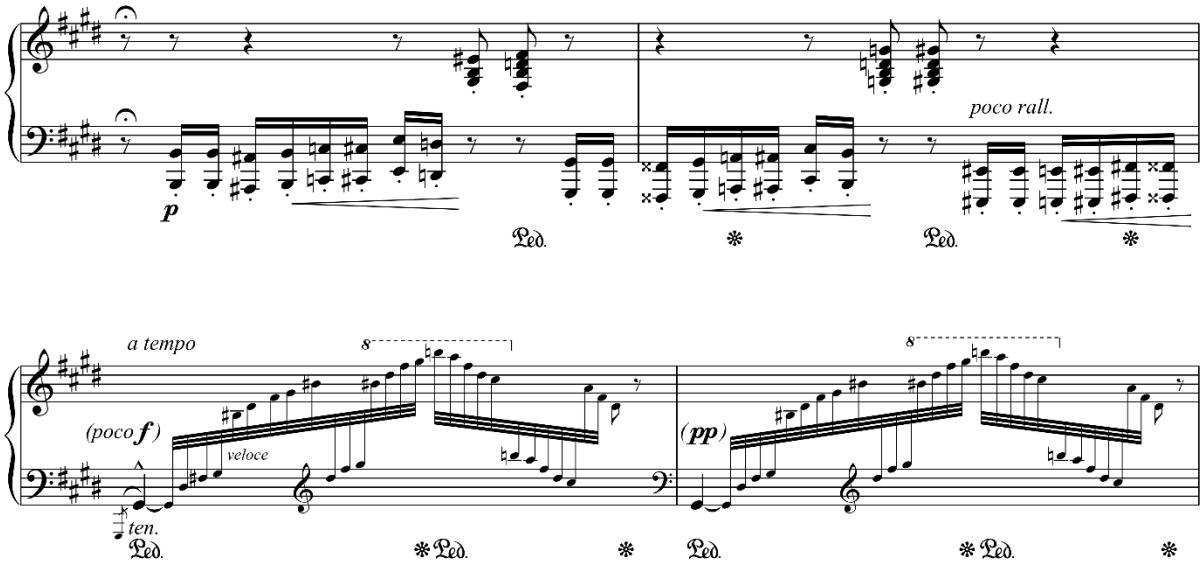


Fig. 3.41b: Liszt, *Paraphrase de concert sur Rigoletto, S. 434*, bb. 5-8



The music of the Electrician's drag rendition of the Duchess strongly echoes the world of Kurt Weill, particularly his 'Youkali Tango' (1935). Weil's song is not only a tango, making a convenient comparison with Adès's own parodic example, it is a song with lyrics steeped in nostalgia, forgetfulness and is about dreams to escape the real world and life's tedium. 'Youkali', too, incorporates a range of styles from cabaret, to jazz and the popular 'Berliner song', with some of the melodic gestures seemingly hinted at in *Powder Her Face*.

Fig. 3.42a: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, i), bb. 18-19

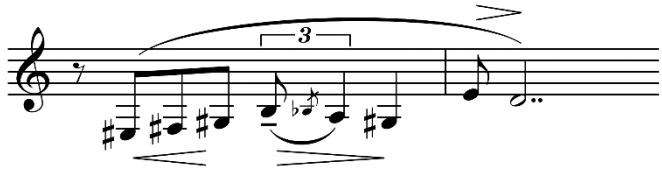
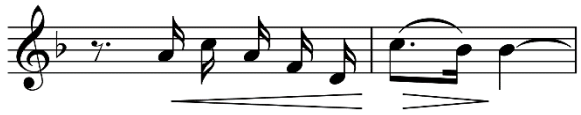


Fig. 3.42b: Weill, 'Youkali Tango', bb. 9-10



The first appearance of the laughter gesture in the *Concert Paraphrase* is in its orchestral form and, as in the opera's overture, appears before it is heard as sung laughter by the Maid. Even though the humanising of the gesture is retrospective in the opera (i.e. the orchestra plays it first, the Maid laughs with it later), it provides a key reference point for the development of the motif throughout the opera. Its first appearance is, rhythmically, its most simple appearance, and it becomes increasingly complex and splintered throughout the work. Not only does the gesture's outline strike a likeness to the cadential descent in Gardel's 'Cuesta abajo' discussed above, it is also similar to some of the writing seen in Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier*.[101]

Fig. 3.43a: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, i), bb. 20-21

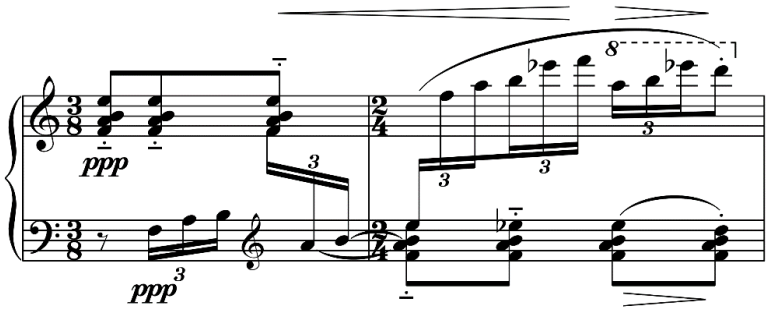
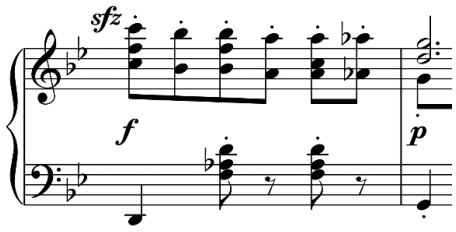


Fig. 3.43b: Strauss, *Der Rosenkavalier,* Act 1, RM 136, b. 1



[101] Of course, as Belling points out, laughter has precedent in opera, citing the crowd's disquieting laughter in Britten's *Death in Venice*. See Belling (2010), p. 17. The Prince's laughter in Act 2 of Prokofiev's *Love for Three Oranges*, *The Laughing Song* from J. Strauss's *Die Fledermaus* and the laughter at the end of Shostakovich's *The Nose* are among many other instances of notated laughter in opera.

Fig. 3.43c: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, i), bb. 33^{2}-34

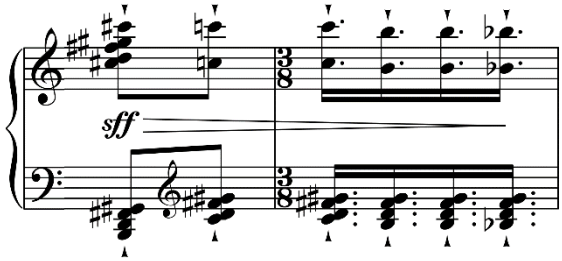
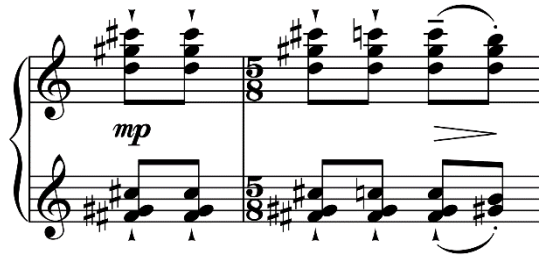
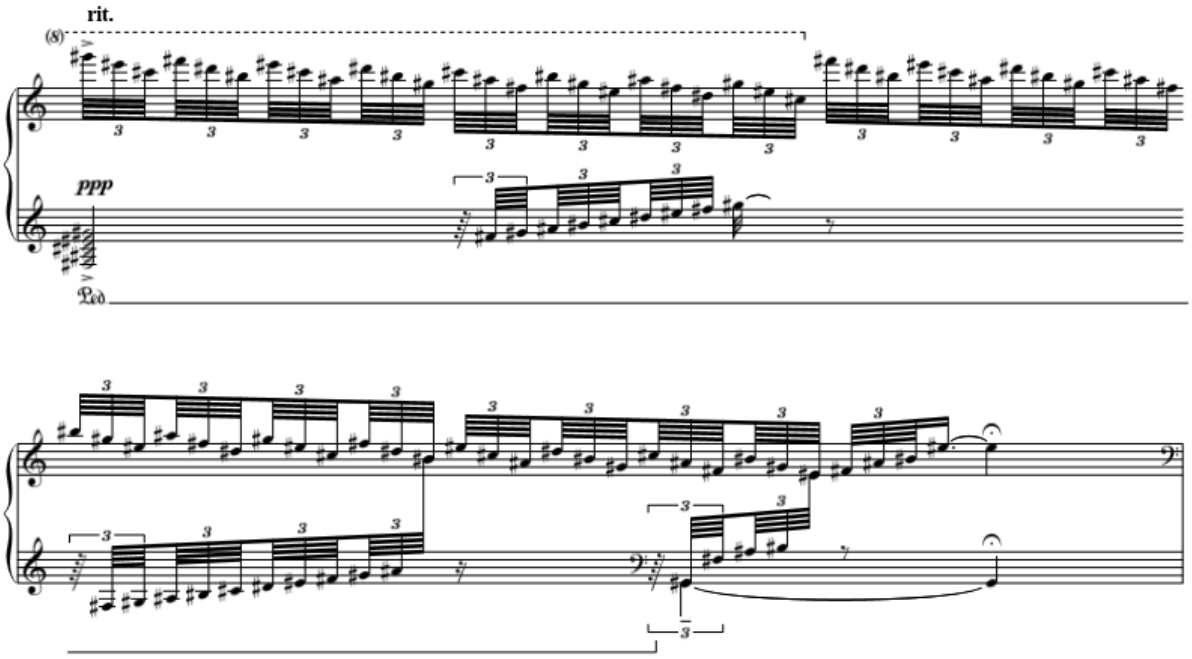


Fig. 3.43d: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, i), bb. 46^{4}-47



Whilst the author has been unable to find concrete score examples for comparison, the figuration below has the stamp of Hollywood, with strong kinship to the schmaltzy sentimentality associated with twinkling, falling, broken triads often used to denote flashbacks in film. This material does not appear in the original opera, and, as commented upon above, it is the point at which the movement transitions to another section from Scene 1. The almost shamelessly simple piano writing can be seen as a jibe at the superficiality of the Duchess's vanity and obsession with her (waning) youth and beauty.

Fig. 3.44: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, i), b. 56



Much of the rest of the first movement seems to be less directly quotational, and more veiled in its allusion to other musical works and styles, either continuing to expand upon the references found earlier, or consisting of more typically 'Adèsian' text.

The second movement, taken from 'Is Daddy Squiffy?' is a drunken waltz. Not only do the lyrics suggest it, but the frequent silence on downbeats, and indeed the removal of beats altogether (in bb. 5, 13, 16, and the rhythmic displacement between bb. 21-26 etc.) create an intoxicated, stumbling take on the Viennese dance form. What is more, Adès again mines Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier* for both melodic quotation (in the original key, though without its function), and a source for brazen parody with the Duke's breathless melody. The use of text from *Der Rosenkavalier* for a waltz is particularly intriguing, since Strauss featured a number of anachronistic examples in his own opera.

Fig. 3.45a: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, ii), bb. 33-36

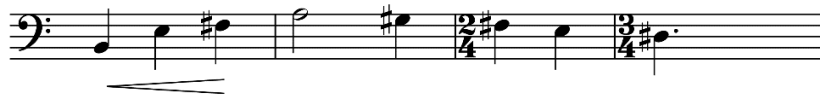


Fig. 3.45b: Strauss, *Der Rosenkavalier*, Overture, bb. 3-4

Fig. 3.45c: R. Strauss, *Der Rosenkavalier*, Act 3, RM 300, b. 7

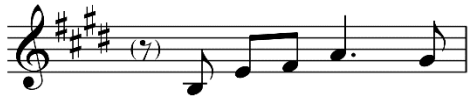


Fig. 3.46a: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, ii), bb. 44^{3}-53

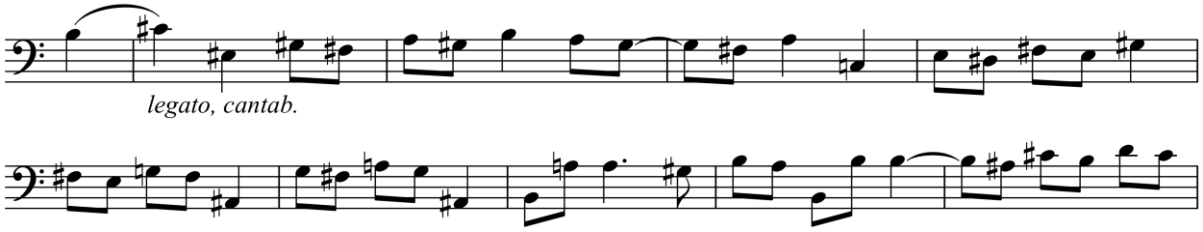
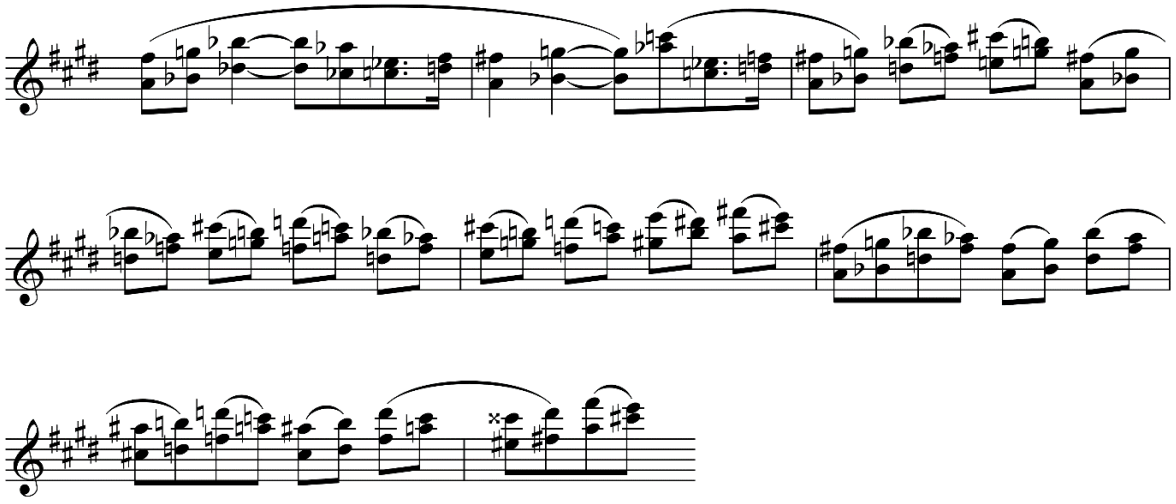
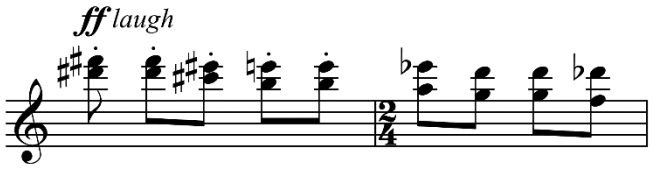


Fig. 3.46b: Strauss, *Der Rosenkavalier*, Overture, bb. 21-28



Adès also makes the return of the laughter motif unequivocally clear with his English performance indication; the laughter motif returns twice more in the movement in bb. 42-43 and 65-66.

Fig. 3.47: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, ii), bb. 24-25



There appear to be no quotations or allusions in the section of the third movement of the *Concert Paraphrase* which forms the 'Fancy' aria. As discussed above, the compositional devices used to create material for this scene are very constrained, and the mechanical nature of the music reflects the image of the Waitress as merely a functional object, and the absence of decadence in the form of quotations is a further commentary on social class. The *Paperchase* scene which resumes from b. 113, sees the re-quotation of the material found in the second movement and laughter motifs, but with increasing menace and fracturing.

Fig. 3.48a: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, iii), bb. 126-129

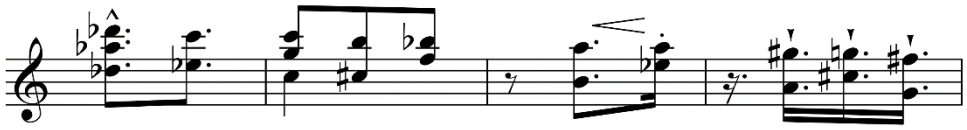


Fig. 3.48b: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, iii), bb. 131-136

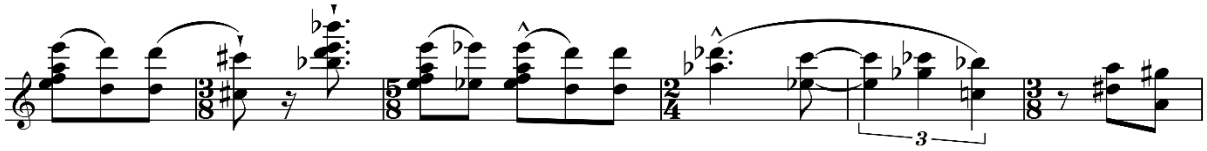
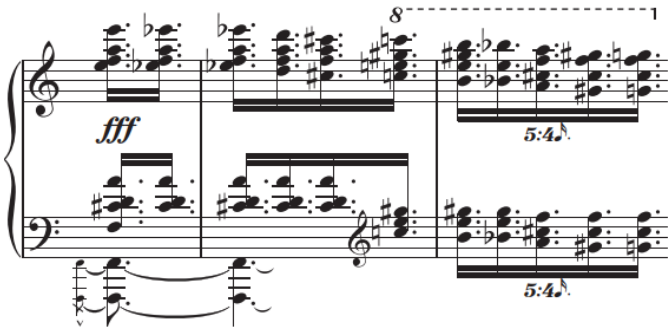


Fig. 3.48c: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, iii), bb. 156[2]-158



The final section of the third movement of the *Concert Paraphrase* is the Hotel Manager's aria, 'It is too Late', during which he evicts the Duchess. The scene depicts her metaphorical removal from high society and is a symbol of her loss of power and depleted wealth; it is the death of her life as she has always known it. This is represented in the score not only by Adès's use of the compositional devices discussed above, but the Duchess's calamitous change in circumstance and position is portrayed through musical quotation. The first of which is the melody from Schubert's *Der Tod und das Mädchen* and then a cadential point from the 'Berceuse' in *Songs and Dances of Death* by Mussorgsky.

Fig. 3.49a: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, iii), bb. 162-170

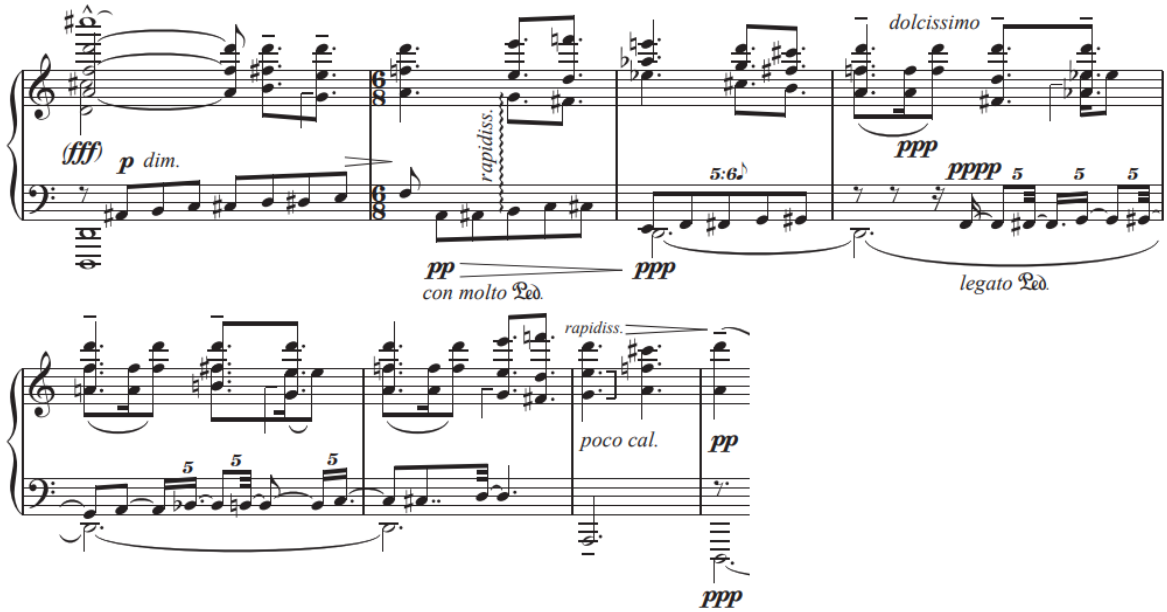


Fig. 3.49b: Schubert, *Der Tod und das Mädchen, D. 531*, bb. 1-8

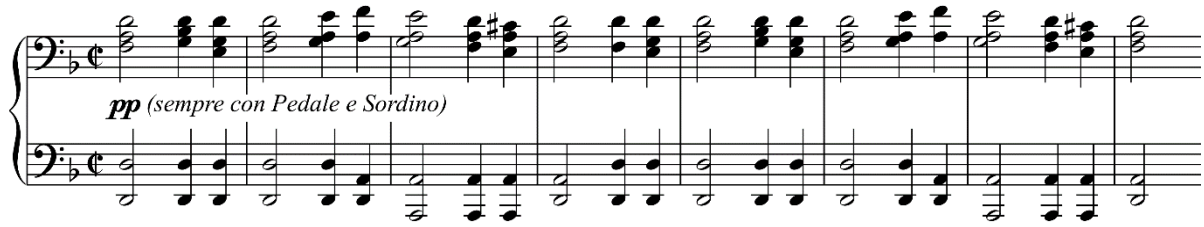


Fig. 3.50a: Adès, *Concert Paraphrase*, iii), bb. 178-179

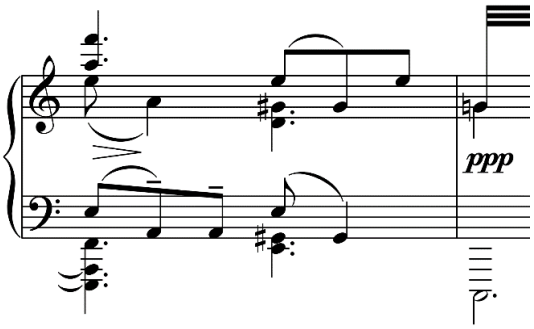
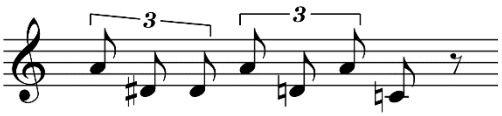


Fig. 3.50b: Mussorgsky, *Songs and Dances of Death*, i) Berceuse, b. 37



As has been demonstrated, throughout the *Concert Paraphrase* many of the musical allusions are veiled or manipulated. The examples shown in Figs. 3.49a and 3.50a are, however, the most transparently conveyed. They are neither stylistic parodies nor pastiches, nor subjected to any form of distortion, but are undisguised quotations, making the meaning powerfully obvious: the emotional crux of the work, a moment of sincere, sympathetic expression, is the occasion for which Adès composes the most unadulterated musical quotations into his score. The lyrics Mussorgsky set this cadence to – 'Bajushki, baju, baju'[102] – echoes the metaphor for death in the opera, with sleep being a widely-used poetic allegory

[102] This might be roughly translated as 'Hushaby, hushaby-hush'. See https://www.oxfordlieder.co.uk/song/2105 accessed 20/04/20

for it. Might there be some irony in the instruction to sleep, given that the Duchess is in fact being evicted from her bedroom? This is the pivotal moment, though. What she perceives to be her death – to be stripped of her status and rendered 'ordinary', condemned to live out her days in a nursing home – is actually her awakening; her self-imposed imprisonment in the walls of her fake reality has finally come to an end. That is the essence of the entire work. Her 'death' is her being forced to come to terms with life, with reality and with truth: the most honest quotations in the opera appear when reality breaks apart her fake nostalgia. The Hotel Manager is the deliverer of this fate: he is Mephistopheles demanding his payment from Faust, he is Death, he is the Commendatore dragging Don Giovanni down into Hell. What is more, Hensher has previously commented that *Powder Her Face* was, in part, "a grim memento mori, with Death making a personal appearance at the end"[103] and Adès expressed (specifically about the Mussorgsky quotation) that he was "really pointing out that the Hotel Manager is the figure of her Death".[104] Consequently, these faithful quotations in this section of the *Concert Paraphrase* play an integral role as symbols in the narrative of the music.

The closing tango of the opera appears not to reference any specific example from the genre. Rather, tango is evoked through characteristic aspects of rhythm and harmony (and in the original score through the use of accordion). One such example is the exploitation of falling sequential writing found in one of Gardel's most famous tangos, 'Por una cabeza' (compare Figs. 3.51a and 3.51b). The allusion to gestures such as these seems to be the very deliberate seeping of tangible elements from what Allbright might call 'real' music into 'imaginary' music. As we have seen, much of the opera's material is built using descending motifs. It is therefore easy for the incorporation of such elements into Adès's score, which makes prolific use of those apparatus, to blur those boundaries.

[103] Hensher (1995)
[104] Adès (webinar 2020)

Fig. 3.51a: Adès, *Powder Her Face*, Scene 8, bb. 359-362 (vocal score)

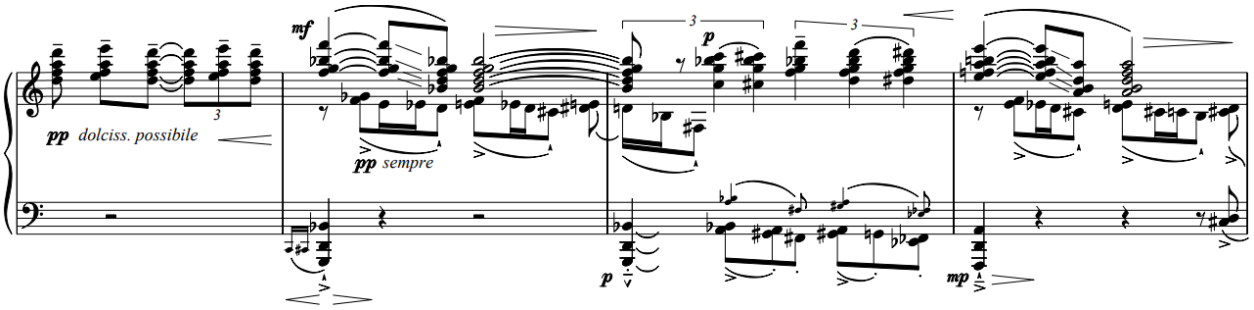
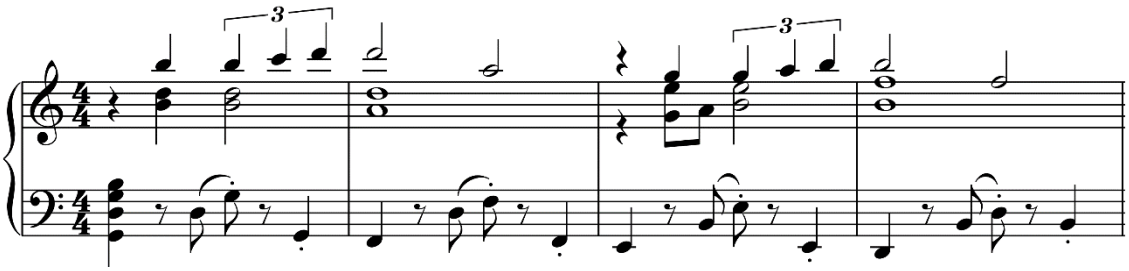


Fig. 3.51b: Gardel, 'Por una cabeza', refrain[105]



Reinforcing the notions of finality, as the Electrician and Maid scramble about to the end of the tango, their only sung words are a quotation from William Blake's 'Proverbs of Hell' from *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* – "Enough! or Too Much".[106]

The catalogue that is compiled here may well not be complete. One of the teasing but thrilling aspects of *Powder Her Face* is that so much of the decoding of musical allusion is in the hands of the individual listener and equally, every interpreter is likely to find different references. Referring back to Albright's comment on Cocteau's *Les mariés de la tour Eiffel*: just as in that work confusion arises between what is 'real' music and what is 'imaginary' music, so is it the case in *Powder Her Face*. Many of the allusions and references are red herrings, and some are so disguised or removed from the original source that they cease to be

[105] Transcribed by the author from a recording available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SJ1aTPM-dyE accessed 12/11/20
[106] Blake, William, *The marriage of Heaven and Hell*, available at http://www.gutenberg.org/files/45315/45315-h/45315-h.htm accessed 14/11/20

noticeable.[107] Thus it reflects the Duchess's blurred boundaries between her version of the truth and reality.

3.5 Conclusion

In summary, the *Concert Paraphrase* draws on features of the nineteenth century virtuoso operatic paraphrase tradition, but not necessarily in the ways in which Adès might lead us to believe. We have aligned the professional circumstances surrounding its composition to those of composer-pianists in the nineteenth century. There is, however, no particular evidence, when we compare the two texts, to support his idea that he explored the music more, as though visiting a place a few years after just glimpsing at it through a train window; there is nothing that really leads us to believe that he translated it "into a piano Paraphrase rather in the manner of Liszt or Busoni".[108] We have seen that it is reasonable to conjecture that much of the opera was composed at the piano from the fact that extremely few alterations were made in the process of arranging it for the *Concert Paraphrase* (in any case, certainly not enough to justify calling it a reworking or a creative misremembering to find a new path in the way Busoni, Godowsky, Sorabji etc. did). The *Concert Paraphrase* has four-hundred and sixty bars, but only thirteen and a half of them are not in the original opera, and even those are mostly based on material from other parts of the opera. Pace scathingly talks about Adès's "utterly vacuous and cynical careerist compositions", and in this instance one cannot help but wonder if the piece was simply made because it was convenient.[109] After all, there was a whole opera's worth of pianistically-conceived (and popular) music ready at hand for him to fulfil the

[107] Albright (2000), p. 286
[108] Adès, Thomas, *Concert Paraphrase on Powder Her Face: Programme Notes*. Available at https://www.fabermusic.com/music/concert-paraphrase-on-powder-her-face-5420 accessed 20/10/16
[109] Pace, Ian, *Michael Finnissy Verdi Transcriptions* (programme note for performance at Great Hall, King's College London, Friday December 9th, 2005), p. 8 [page numbers are not printed in the document]

requirements of an important debut and a commission, with minimal demand for practical effort.

As with any postmodern artwork, it is neither possible, nor necessarily desirable to form a definitive conclusion. It is undeniable that the opera's material is not altered a great deal in its solo piano version, but the reordering of it and the inclusion of the introduction create subtle but important differences to the way in which the *Concert Paraphrase* might be understood by the listener, when compared with the opera. Since its premiere, there has been sustained criticism of *Powder Her Face* for its misogynistic aspects. Matthew Boyden commented that "some have seen the grotesquerie of [the Duchess's] depiction as crudely misogynistic",[110] and in her recently published book on the productions of director Peter Sellars, Susan McClary cites *Powder Her Face* (along with Mark-Anthony Turnage's *Anna Nicole*) as examples of the "explosion of misogynist operas… that have emerged recently in our post-political-correctness era"[111]. It is plausible that, in the wake of this widespread commentary, Adès has chosen material from the opera which highlights the societal hypocrisy in the story more than the original, and is consequently more sympathetic towards the Duchess's plights. That this was noticed by the *Concert Paraphrase*'s first audiences is evidenced by critic Guy Dammann's review for The Guardian, in which he reflected that "it was of a tenderer cut than the opera".[112]

As we have also seen, the reordering of the material has created a whole new range of possible readings by viewing the work as a form of 'director's cut' in cinematic terms. The postmodern toying with temporality in this way even suggests that the *Concert Paraphrase* is *showing* us something, like a show-reel, rather than *telling* us something in the manner of a literary narrative, the jumps/connections between scenes having more in common with the use

[110] Boyden (2002), p. 626
[111] McClary, Susan, *The Passions of Peter Sellars: Staging the Music* (University of Michigan Press, 2019), p. 24
[112] Dammann, Guy, Thomas Adès: Barbican, London in *The Guardian*. Available at https://www.theguardian.com/music/2010/apr/29/thomas-ades-review accessed 13/03/18

of match cut and jump cut in cinema. So, whilst Adès has drawn inspiration from, and alluded to, nineteenth century traditions, this is most definitely a postmodern work: simultaneously a reworking of the music of the opera to create a huge variety of new meanings, but also a convenient career vehicle which needed almost no reworking at all. So, not only for the Duchess, but for Adès and the *Concert Paraphrase*, "there was a future once, because there was a past".[113]

[113] Hensher (1995), p. 9

CHAPTER 4

4.1 Interlude – a masterclass with Thomas Adès on his *Mazurkas, Op. 27*

In April 2019 I attended the International Musicians Seminar, held at Prussia Cove, UK. Among my activities there, I took a masterclass with Thomas Adès on his *Mazurkas, Op. 27*. Whilst I was not playing the *Concert Paraphrase* for him on this occasion, the masterclass offered a valuable insight into his thoughts about interpreting his music, and I felt it too important to omit a record of the experience from this project. Not only might it be useful for any performers wishing to study those pieces, but as I shall demonstrate in Chapter 5, it has subsequently influenced the way I play the *Concert Paraphrase*. I have chosen to adopt an autoethnographic framework in this chapter to provide an account of the masterclass, based on the detailed notes I took either during or immediately after the session.

In the masterclass, Adès afforded me the opportunity to perform all three mazurkas in their entirety, before offering his feedback. As a result, many of the issues raised are direct comments on my interpretation (e.g. 'should not be played too quickly' would mean that he clearly felt that, in my performance, I played too quickly), and I have tried to highlight these as such. Often, I have paraphrased what he said in order to convey certain points; there are a number of instances where he used particularly colourful language or metaphors to express something, and I have tried to replicate these word-for-word when I remembered them clearly and have written these in inverted commas (" ") for clarity; and on some occasions I have sought to express what I inferred from his demonstrations when he did not necessarily make a point verbally.

The environment for the classes at Prussia Cove, held at the Porth-en-Alls estate near Penzance, is idyllic, both in terms of its exceptionally beautiful and inspiring location as well as the informality of the classes. The room in which the masterclass took place had two grand

pianos and was filled with a combination of chairs, armchairs and sofas to encourage an informal atmosphere. Adès's demeanour was generally very relaxed, but focused, and he was his usual charming, enthusiastic self. The audience for the masterclass in question consisted of about twenty people, comprised of other students (not only pianists, but string players, too) and members of the public or volunteer staff at the seminar. Adès sat on the sofa, among the audience, to listen to my performance before moving beside me on the second piano, so that he could easily discuss and demonstrate, and I could either experiment or imitate accordingly.

Although almost two-hundred years separate Adès's Mazurkas from Chopin's, they pay homage and engage with them far more than simply in terms of genre. They are clearly compositional studies of sorts, written to commemorate Chopin's bicentenary, and allude to earlier examples in terms of their form, rhythmic and melodic devices as well as their pianism.[1] (For a bar-by-bar summary of the comments below, please refer to Appendix 3). On 17 June 2020, Adès also discussed the Mazurkas in a webinar with Kirill Gerstein and when that provided more information which did not arise in the masterclass detailed below, I have included salient parts of it and referenced it accordingly.

4.2 First Mazurka – Moderato, molto rubato

Adès pointed out that the opening drew inspiration from the central section of Chopin's *Mazurka in B-flat major, Op. 7, No. 1*[2]

[1] Adès likens the act of alluding to earlier examples in this fashion with a horticultural metaphor: "...you take a cutting from a plant... you split it at that particular place and then my piece begins to grow out of it". Refer to Adès (webinar 2020). See also [1] Maxwell, Jennifer A., *Tracing a Lineage of the Mazurka Genre: Influences of Chopin and Szymanowski on Thomas Adès' Mazurkas for Piano, Op. 27* (Boston University, 2014) for a detailed analysis of these pieces.
[2] Adès (webinar 2020)

Fig. 4.1a Chopin, *Mazurka in B-flat major, Op. 7, No. 1*, bb. 45-47

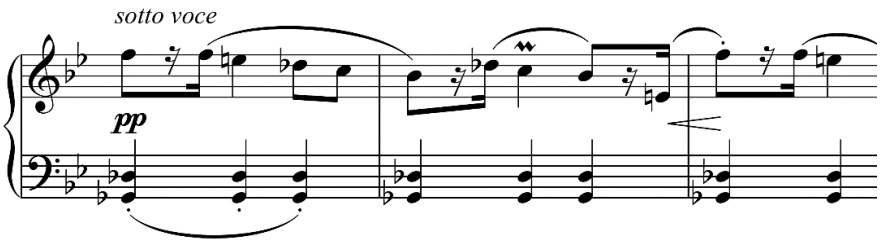
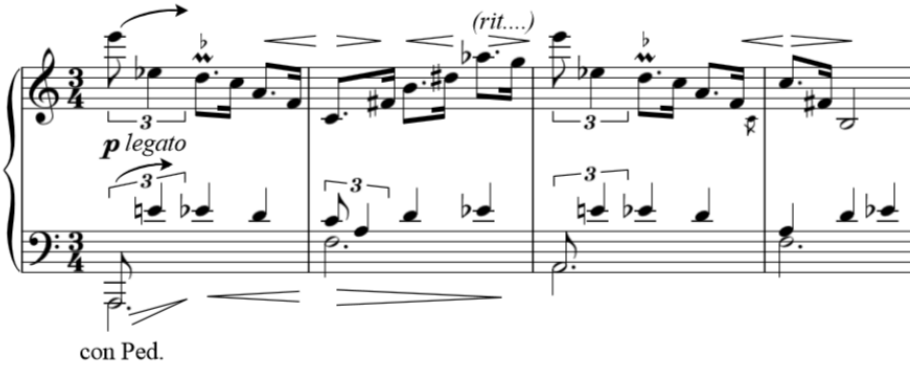


Fig. 4.1b: Adès, *Mazurka No. 1*, bb. 1-4



Adès was keen to emphasise that changes in register and the variation of material must always be coloured accordingly. For example, the first beat of b. 1, compared with the first beat of b. 5: the high E on the downbeat in the right hand must shine brighter, occupying a more elevated perspective than its lower counterpart later in b. 5, whilst the left hand's lower A in b. 1 should be quieter than the higher A in b. 5. This gives a sense of the material becoming more condensed and closer together.

Fig. 4.2a: Adès, *Mazurka No. 1*, b. 1

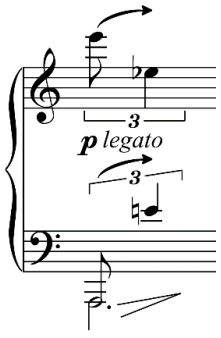
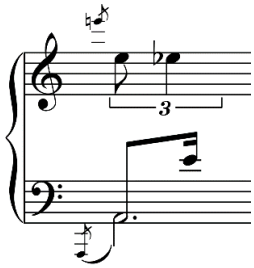
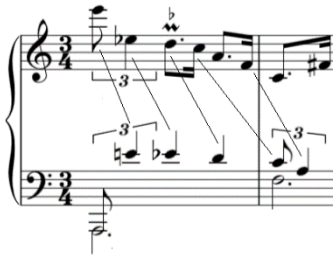


Fig. 4.2b: Adès, *Mazurka No. 1*, b. 5



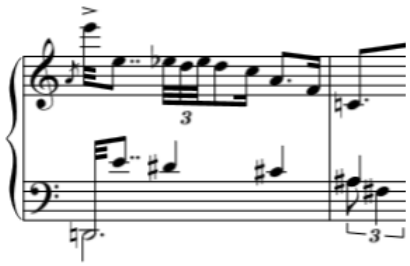
The entry of the left hand canon, starting one triplet quaver after the right hand, must be made clear, and feel almost quirkily misplaced against the right hand.

Fig. 4.3: Adès, *Mazurka No. 1*, bb. 1-2



Adès was keen to emphasise that the hairpin markings are suggestive of things getting closer (<) or further away (>), not only louder or quieter. He suggested I brought out even more of the left hand in b. 9, as the pitch stream diverges from being a canon of the pitch stream in the right hand. Compare the left hand pitch stream in the example in fig. 4.3 above with that in Fig. 4.4 below

Fig. 4.4: Adès, *Mazurka No. 1*, bb. 9-10



Also in b. 9[2], Adès stressed that the right hand's written-out mordent must absolutely begin on the beat to differentiate it from the previous ones which are to be played before the beat, adding to the sense of rubato. He also pointed out that, in b. 13, the right hand E should be accented and played clearly and precisely on the beat, a distinguishable difference from the usual performance practice of Chopin's arpeggiated chords with appoggiaturas.

Fig. 4.5a: Adès, *Mazurka No. 1*, b. 13

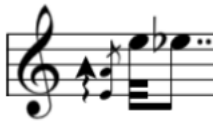
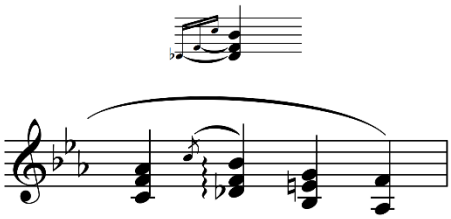


Fig. 4.5b: Chopin, *Nocturne in G minor, Op. 37, No. 1*, b. 51 (with Chopin's usual performance practice indication)



Adès described b. 15 as the apex of this section and cautioned that one must not rush but rather savour the expanding registers; the top G is the highest note so far.

In spite of the tempo change and the double barline at b. 17, Adès counselled that one must avoid the temptation to accelerate into *giusto, poco moderato*. He said it must sound like somebody turning a corner and suddenly encountering something completely different. Throughout this central section, he said he was referring to Chopin's *Mazurka in B-flat major, Op. 7, No. 1*, especially with its playful dissonances. Not only does the rhythm bear close resemblance, but the melodic contours are reminiscent of this Chopin Mazurka, as well:

Fig. 4.6a: Chopin *Mazurka in B-flat major, Op. 7, No. 1*, bb. 7-8

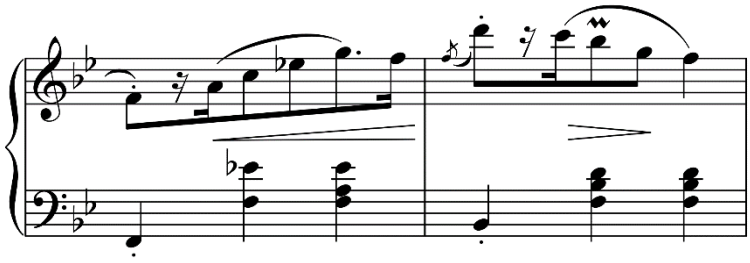
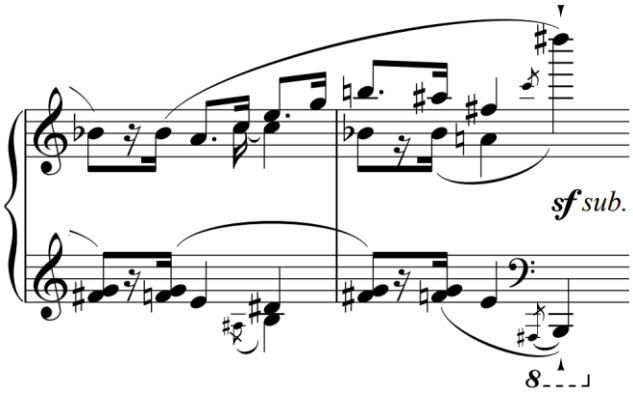


Fig. 4.6b: Adès, *Mazurka No. 1*, bb. 19-20

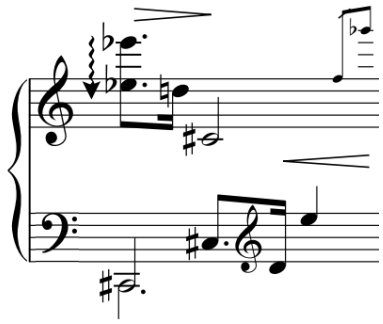


Throughout this section he was also keen that I should experiment with the sound to imitate muted trumpets. He asked that all the left hand grace notes (e.g. bb. 17, 18, and 19) should be crushed and played as quickly as possible, unlike the dotted rhythms (e.g. bb. 22, 23 and 24) which must be very precise. With an almost childlike wonder, he exclaimed that the *sf subito* indication in b. 20 must sound like dancers shouting "Hey!" whilst stamping their feet (and the same idea applies to that in b. 28). He said that I needed to observe the *poch. calando* marking in b. 24 more: the time signature already cuts the bar short, so he was especially keen to make sure that all the voices were given time to speak and for the music to subside naturally. Between bb. 25 and 32 he said that he never imagined, when he wrote it, that it was physically possible to play it absolutely in time (!), which is what I had done in my performance. He confessed that he had written it to be deliberately uncomfortable to force the performer to take

time for the accumulating texture to grow in terms of dynamics, time and the sense of it occupying more space in the acoustic, and it therefore should not feel hurried.

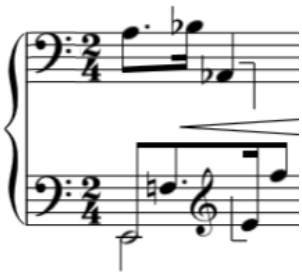
I took the grace note octave A-flats written in the right hand at b. 33 with my left, which pleased him. He had no scruples about rearranging material between the hands and encouraged me to do "whatever feels best".[3] Despite the *avanti* marking at b. 33 he said it should neither push too much, or be militant in its rhythmic drive. Again, this was a comment based on my playing which, at this point, had clearly been too literal in its rhythmic execution. He said that the displaced descending chromatic line, with its downward arpeggiations and grace notes, should slither down, almost like glissandi. When the melodic part is in the same register as the left hand, or indeed even lower, time must be taken to make sure that the voicing is clear. This is especially the case when crescendo hairpins are written, as in the examples below, to make sure that the sustained melody note is not overpowered by the crescendo in the accompanying material.

Fig. 4.7a: Adès, *Mazurka No. 1*, b. 34



[3] There are a number of instances in the *Concert Paraphrase* where I also redistribute material between the hands, and I recall a similar *laissez-faire* attitude from the composer when I played it for him in the past.

Fig. 4.7b: Adès, *Mazurka No. 1*, b. 40



The dynamic indications at the re-entries of the falling gesture in bb. 37, 39, 43, 45 and 47 should sound like progressively quieter echoes, rather than be a continuous diminuendo.

Adès said that the return of the *giusto* material must sound distant, but that bb. 51 and 52 have to expand the acoustic "into the stratosphere". When demonstrating this, he maintained a very hushed dynamic in the left hand with an almost-imperceptible diminuendo, but the right hand had a noticeable crescendo with increasing brilliance/sparkle to the tone. The effect was that the right hand soared and sounded as though from "another part of the cathedral" as he put it. *Tempo primo, più moderato* (b. 53) should sound "more like a memory of the opening" rather than new material, with his right hand demonstrating almost at a ***mf*** dynamic level, with a bright and glistening sound. He also said that the written-out mordent should sound like a glissando, from which I inferred that my execution had too much clarity in articulation and that he wanted me to focus on the intervallic trajectory and the legato rather than on each individual note. He pointed out that the diminuendo in the right hand of b. 56 is there to indicate that one should yield to a more prominent left hand canon. He said that the *giusto al fine* in b. 58 "shouldn't start, even though that's technically what I've written", with the demi-semiquavers not crushed, but the whole passage to be played *cantabile*. He was most insistent that the final bar sounded extremely deliberate and placed, in spite of the ***ppp*** marking. Special weight should be given to the right hand's final top A, by slightly extending the length of the semi-quaver rest preceding it and carefully observing the intention of the final slur.

4.3 Second Mazurka – prestissimo molto espressivo

Charmingly impressed that I was playing the set from memory (even though he has heard me play his *Concert Paraphrase* from memory numerous times), he told me that he always felt that playing this *Second Mazurka* from memory was more dangerous than ice skating! Not only does it pay specific homage to Chopin, as I shall address below, but to Nancarrow, with its tempo canons and abrupt ending. The challenge in memorising this piece, at least for me, lies in Adès's use of cyclical pitch mechanisms which, whilst they *mostly* follow a trajectory of falling thirds, do not appear to follow a traditional sense of directionality and unfold at different paces between the hands. The text is littered with mordents reminiscent of the heavily ornate French Baroque, but their placement does not appear to follow a regular pattern, and they certainly do not fall in the same place with each recurring statement of the fourteen-note series in the right hand, for example. As Maxwell points out, "each series utilizes a different scalar collection, with no evident overall pattern or design to the succession of scales. There are pitch modifications to accommodate new collections, as well as some shifts ahead in the sequence".[4] As a result of her last point, the sequences almost never re-align between the hands and, for the memorising performer, there is somehow the impression of navigating a labyrinth, making it very easy to get lost or take a wrong turn. One recalls Taruskin's description of Adès's use of "fast ostinatos, often of a tricky, ear-beguiling complexity, coexist at varying speeds in contrasting colors and registers, evoking not linear distance but gyres and vortexes: sound in motion but not going anywhere".[5]

In the masterclass, Adès confirmed my suspicions that he drew inspiration from, and clearly alludes to, Chopin's *Mazurka in C major, Op. 24, No. 2*, both in the melodic contour (the first six notes are the same, if you include those which make up the mordent in Adès's

[4] Maxwell (2014), p. 83
[5] Taruskin (1999)

example and transpose accordingly), and each gesture falls by a third (bb. 1-2 and 3-4 in Chopin, and the same in Adès's).

Fig. 4.8a: Chopin *Mazurka in C major, Op. 24, No.2*, bb. 1-4

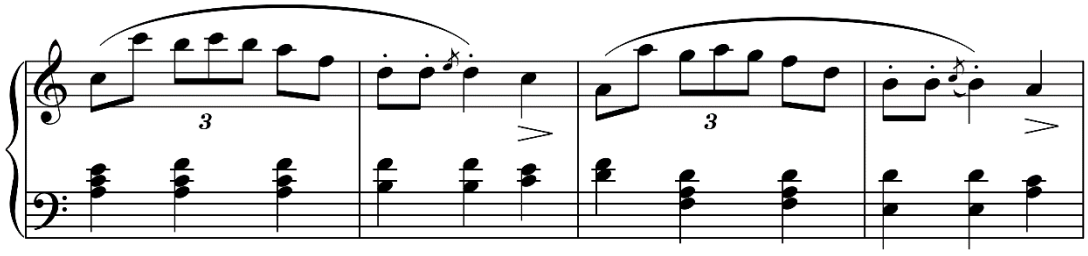
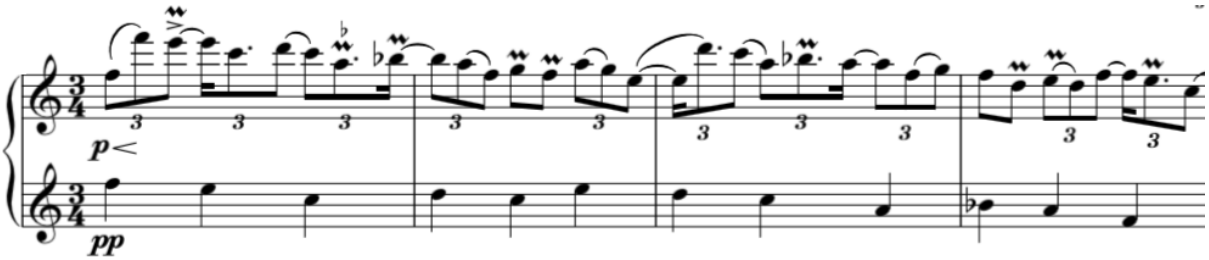


Fig. 4.8b: Adès, *Mazurka No. 2*, bb. 1-4



Despite the *prestissimo* tempo indication, and the acoustical flurry of notes, Adès said that this Mazurka must still have time. He likened it to watching butterflies which flutter their wings about seemingly with great speed, yet they are never in a hurry to go anywhere. The notes and mordents should be *prestissimo* and crystalline, but the overall pace of the music should rather be more moderate. He wanted the first of each group of duplet quavers in the right hand (and from b. 19 the full-length crotchets in the left hand) to have a strong impulse, markedly accented. This enhances the effect of the 5/12 against 3/4 time, and, later the 5/12 against what is, acoustically at least, 5/6 time in the left hand.

Adès said that the long, loud notes in the left hand (eg. at bb. 19, 25, 29 etc.) should ring and the rest of the material is to bloom out of it, and so observance of the pedal and careful

gradations of the texture are essential.[6] The long diminuendo from b. 30 should have the music sounding as though from farther and farther away. It is difficult to achieve extremely quiet playing (around bb. 40-41 etc.) through the long pedals which, by nature, tend to accumulate sonority. It is both instinctive and tempting, both to myself and to the two pianists for whom I have coached these mazurkas, to change pedal, or flutter-pedal slightly throughout these bars to aid the diminuendo. Adès said, however, that he absolutely likes the accumulating "noise" and that it was better to take a little extra time to control the diminuendo than to change the pedal where he hasn't indicated to do so; he likened changing the pedal to "taking out all the dirty words" in one's vocabulary. I have often been somewhat sceptical when composers detail extremely prescriptive pedal markings, since so much of the effect depends on the instrument, the regulation of its dampers, and the acoustic of the performance space. The level of detail found in many of Adès's early piano works seems almost perverse, and he even said himself during the course of the lesson that he realises now that the time spent fastidiously marking everything was perhaps unnecessary, since pedalling depends on the factors I have mentioned above – and, he said casually, that almost nobody does them exactly as they are written in performance anyway. However, the markings in this Mazurka are not specific to that degree, and the block pedalling certainly serves to create a stark contrast to the *senza pedale* passage which begins at bar 47.

The passage marked *boisterously* should still be playful, not angry. I recall that Adès had a sort of boyish enthusiasm for getting his hands dirty in music like this. The ***ff*** notes indicated with a marcato symbol (∧) played by the right hand thumb (bb. 49^2, 52^2, 54^1, 55^3, 57^3 etc.) must, however, be extremely strong, almost vulgar. The more markedly I played, the louder Adès's excitable cries "yes" became! The diminuendo in b. 65 must be the gradual gradation of colour into the ***pp*** at bar 67, as opposed to a sudden change at the arrival of b. 67.

[6] The apparent structural significance of these long bass notes is discussed in Maxwell (2014), pp. 87-88

The impulses on the duplets must be reignited, even within the ***pp*** dynamic, as discussed above. Pedalling from b. 86 to the end must be strictly observed, the music getting further and further away, then a strong, accent on the very last F! I take the final F with the left hand. This helps to both keep the last bass note *staccato* and to try to imitate a slur from the penultimate note.

4.4 Third Mazurka – Grave, maestoso

"Well, it's that sound that Chopin has, that sort of C-sharp minor sound" Adès said about the opening.[7] It is indeed very evocative of Chopin's works in C-sharp minor and he went on to give the slightly misleading example of Chopin's *Waltz in B minor, Op. 69, No. 2,* which he played in C-sharp minor. I had likened the opening material to Chopin's posthumously published *Nocturne in C-sharp minor*.

Fig. 4.9a: Chopin, *Nocturne in C-sharp minor, Op. posth.*, b. 46

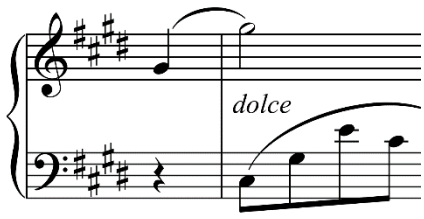
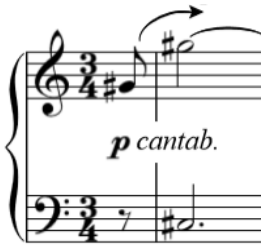


Fig. 4.9b: Adès, *Third Mazurka*, b. 1



[7] Adès (webinar 2020)

Given the doleful quality of this music, my tendency in my performance was to slightly elongate the upbeats as an expressive device to play the large intervals more *cantabile*. Adès was, however, eager to stress that the rhythm must be accurately played in six equal quavers to a bar with each upbeat belonging to the following downbeat and each gesture sounding in another register giving the impression of the music speaking from different corners of a vast room. Adès said that the *lontano* passage (bb. 20-47) should not sound like actual bells, but rather "the *memory* of bells". The *clear* indication is more to do with the brightness, golden glistening of the sound quality, rather than clarity of notes. Here, he encouraged generous washes of pedal, but re-statements of the falling gestures should have an especially bright impulse. Here, he explained that he felt this passage to be a "distant descendant" of another Chopin Mazurka:

Fig. 4.10a: Chopin, *Mazurka in A-flat major, Op. 7, No. 4*, bb. 33-36

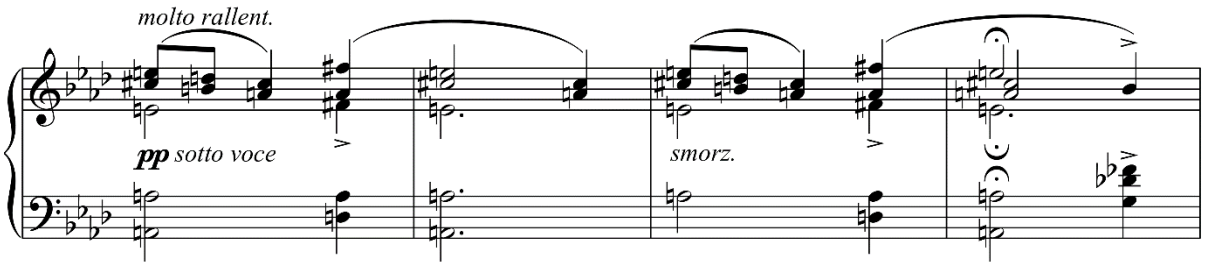
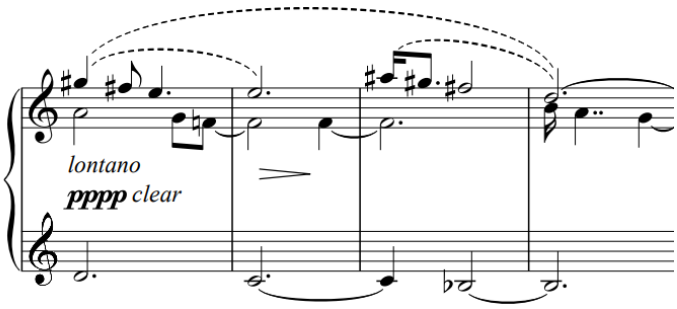
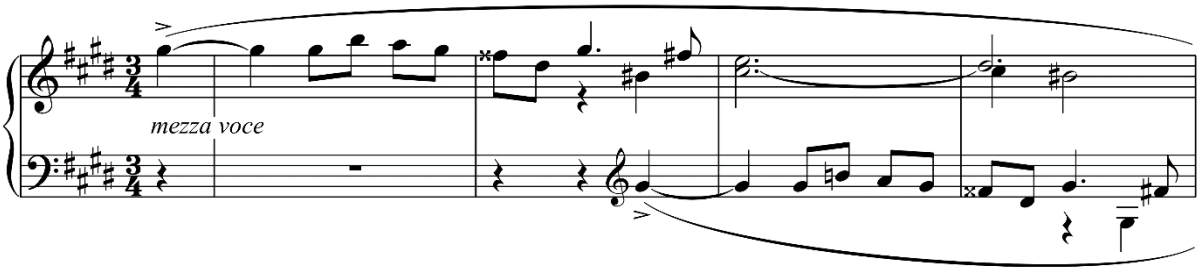


Fig. 4.10b: Adès, *Mazurka No. 3*, bb. 20-23



I had mistakenly identified this as a reference to Chopin's *Mazurka in C-sharp minor, Op. 50, No. 3* on account of the part-writing and melodic contours:[8]

Fig. 4.10c: Chopin, *Mazurka in C-sharp minor, Op. 50, No. 3*, bb. 33-36



Adès did not have any particular comments on the last page of the work. When I complimented him on these pieces, and how I find the ending of the *Third Mazurka* especially 'chilling', he said, bright-eyed, that 'chilling' was what I achieved and exactly what he was hoping for when he wrote it.

Irrespective of the informal atmosphere, performing for a composer and pianist, especially one whom one holds in such high esteem, is still a pressured task. When playing music which is so detailed in its notation, expressive indications and rhythmic complexity, there is a heavy burden to realise all of this. However, one of the key messages I took from Adès's teaching and demonstrations is that he encourages a healthy abandon and gives permission for artistic freedom in service of musical character and pianistic colour. He is not at all prescriptive, as his scores might sometimes suggest, but regards the score as a "map to an invisible landscape or realm".[9] It is a starting point for exploration into the life of the pieces,

[8] The similarities are still present, to my ear, whether Adès acknowledges them or not (by e-mail communication after the fact when preparing this chapter, he did say "actually your example is very apt for the effect!"). It does call to mind a letter Rachmaninov wrote to Medtner in 1926 when he said "I also notice that the theme of the second movement is the theme of the first movement in Schumann's concerto. How is it that you didn't point this out to me?". See Bertensson, Sergei & Leyda, Jay, *Sergei Rachmaninov: A Lifetime in Music* (Indiana University Press, 1956, repr. 2001), p. 246

[9] Adès (webinar 2020)

and that the playing must be descriptive – be that in terms of orchestration, a metaphorical narrative (e.g. a person turning a corner, dancers shouting, or butterflies in flight) or acoustical space. Sound is almost something he ‘sees’, in that dynamic and register are inextricably linked to a three-dimensional space of infinite creative possibilities.

CHAPTER 5

5.1 Forming an interpretation

Having investigated Adès and the *Concert Paraphrase* in the ways we have seen in Chapters 1-4 above – working through Silverman's 'variables' (structural, expressive, referential, historical styles and so forth)[1] – we have answered many of this project's fundamental research questions: we have been able to categorise the work, having investigated historical models and by studying its relation to its source; we have employed a variety of analytical tools to help us understand the construction of the music and considered what we may interpret, musically, from the information that has been presented; we have also assessed possible new musical logics of the *Concert Paraphrase* based on Adès's choice of scenes from opera and his treatment of the material. As the project draws to a close, my experiential knowledge contributes to a more well 'informed intuition'[2] and one would expect that I am now in a position to deliver a more 'thickly contextualised' interpretation than the one presented in my 2013 recording.[3] This chapter attempts to document and reflect upon the implications this has had on a developing interpretation of the piece.

Despite the efforts of the many performance scholars referred to in this project, it is a relatively recent phenomenon that performers are now writing about their artistic processes. Arguably, this is not helped by the attitude of writers such as Pace who, in his article on Ligeti's *Études*[4], adopts a somewhat condescending view towards the use of metaphor or invented narrative to describe the music. In that his article aims to address issues of interpretation and the technical concerns of performance, it is puzzling that he apparently fails to grasp the value

[1] Silverman (2007), p. 103
[2] Rink (2002), p. 36
[3] Walls (2002), p. 23
[4] Pace, Ian, 'Maintaining Disorder: Some Technical and Aesthetic Issues Involved in the Performance of Ligeti's Études for Piano' in *Contemporary Music Review, Vol. 31, Nos. 2-3*, pp. 177-201 (2012), p. 182

of imagery to the performing musician. Adès himself has drawn inspiration from Ligeti's music (particularly the *Études*) and, whilst Adès's music is more referential than the *Études*, one cannot argue that it is any less complex.

One of the arguments Pace puts forward is that a descriptive writing style which uses poetic metaphors betrays "a certain unease towards the complexities and ambiguities of the music"; yet, as we have seen in Chapter 4 and in countless interviews, however, Adès talks about his music almost entirely in metaphorical and descriptive terms as a way to enhance understanding and performance of his music. Other performing musicians regularly use created metaphors or narratives to help develop a sense of form and character in performance. Rothstein wrote about performers' practice of inventing more conventionally conceived "narratives, tableaux and programmes for the works they play";[5] Murray Perahia said that "it is important to try to sketch what's happening – the drama of the tones – into a kind of metaphorical drama, so that it speaks to you on as many levels as possible, not just the musical level".[6] And reaching back further, Liszt's use of metaphor in his masterclasses is also well documented, as it is in the writings of other musical and pedagogical figures such as Heinrich Neuhaus, Alfred Cortot and Alfred Brendel.[7] In the practical elements of Pace's article, which offers technical solutions to realise empirically identifiable interpretative outcomes, he does not give especially nuanced or complex examples to project his analytically/theoretically sophisticated thoughts, and the musical outcomes of his solutions would surely differ depending on who is playing, their physiology, the instrument on which they perform, the acoustics of the venue and so on.

[5] Quoted in Rink (2018), p. 94
[6] Rink, John, 'Chopin in Performance: Perahia's Musical Dialogue' in *Musical Times Vol. 142, No. 1877*, pp. 9–15 (Winter 2001), p. 15
[7] See, for example, Neuhaus, Heinrich, *The Art of Piano Playing*, trans. by K. A. Leibovitch (Kahn & Averill, London, 1993); or the instructive introductions to works by Liszt and Chopin by Alfred Cortot produced by Editions Salabert. See also Rosen (1998); Brendel, Alfred, *On Music* (JR Books, London, 2007)

Pace's dismissal of the value of imagery and narrative to the performer undervalues the contribution to musical understanding and performance practice that a host of musicians, who have documented their use of invented narrative, have given us. Bradley-Kramer writes about creating narrative, placing herself as character, when playing postmodern music. She writes:

> *Perhaps a psychologically based approach could provide guidance, one with which I was familiar through study with certain Russian teachers, orienting the performer as an actor within a narrative. Stanislavsky[8] considered a character's existence on the printed page there "for analysis only"; the real interpretive work was fluid, involving a search for the self as she immerses herself in the inner life of the character, working off the resonance with other actors and vicissitudes of time and space. Some of this seemed relevant to performing Kramer's postmodern musical prisms, as they reflected so many others. Thinking not about a fixed object of practiced precision, but about fluidity and engagement in a unique sonic environment allowed risk to enter the playing field, and seemed germane to the performing experience.*

This approach seems especially well-suited to interpreting and performing a work like the *Concert Paraphrase* not only because of its 'postmodern musical prisms', but also because it stems from a stage work and the interplay between the different characters is a vital part of bringing the work to life. Through the lens of Bradley-Kramer's suggestion, there is also implicit acknowledgement of the cultural process and the etymological meanings behind the word 'play'. We *play* music and musical instruments, and it is an activity – as Silverman stresses in her comparison to Rosenblatt's transactional theory – which produces or stimulates something of human and cultural value, of pleasure, but also of risk. This is inherently denied by the *formalist* attitude.[9]

[8] Konstantin Stanislavsky was a seminal Russian theatre practitioner whose theories formed the basis of the 'method' school of acting, taught by Lee Strasberg at the Actor's Studio in the US.
[9] Silverman (2007), p. 105

Coincidentally, some of the most revelatory moments I have had with the work have been with my professor, Maestra Eliso Virsaladze. Virsaladze is a pianist and pedagogue who has not only been a professor at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow for over 50 years, but she is a legendary performer whose career has taken her around the world for decades and who speaks multiple languages (I have heard her speak with others in nine languages with impressive fluency).[10] It is her knowledge of music, cultures, her monumental pianism and her ability to instinctively 'feel' or 'find' sources of reference that led to a staggeringly natural understanding and approach to teaching the *Concert Paraphrase*. In a way similar to Bradley-Kramer's proposed method of adopting the idea of finding a character within postmodern music, Virsaladze talked in metaphorical/dramatic terms and did not instigate discussion on form or musical cohesion. Instead, she focused on characterising details and relating material throughout the piece (e.g. the changes to the laughter motif throughout the work, the allusions to various styles and how one might go about playing each aspect 'stylistically' or 'parodically', the descending harmonies in the 'It is too Late' section of the third movement etc.).[11] This ultimately satisfying approach is based on her 'intuitive knowledge' which, given her experience, is formidable.

Readers will have noted my conscious decision to omit from discussion Adès's own interpretation of the *Concert Paraphrase*.[12] There are several reasons for my having done so. Firstly, and as Kramer notes, postmodern 'listenings' (and therefore also performances) occur in the wake of Roland Barthes' *The Death of the Author*. In his famous essay, Barthes argues:

> *We know now that a text is not a line of words releasing a single "theological" meaning (the "message" of the Author-God) but a multidimensional space in which a variety of*

[10] See http://www.mosconsv.ru/ru/person.aspx?id=31505 accessed 20/12/20
[11] The inevitable understanding Virsaladze has of the polystylism and parodic treatment of material in twentieth century Russian music, for example in Shostakovich and Schnittke, must also have had a bearing on her ability to grasp similar treatment to recognisable styles in the *Concert Paraphrase*.
[12] Adès, Thomas, *Adès: Anthology* (EMI Classics, 5099908856029, 2011)

> *writings, none of them original, blend and clash. The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from… many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation, but there is one place where this multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader, not, as was hitherto said, the author. The reader is the space on which all the quotations that make up a writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination.*[13]

Whilst, as Silverman suggests, listening to recordings and different interpretations can enlarge awareness of interpretative possibilities, we cannot, and should not, hold the composer's own performance as the most authoritative account.[14] Postmodern aesthetics also resist the idea that there is a 'correct' reading, or a 'right' answer, and there is nothing learned or enjoyed in playing for the sake of imitation. Secondly, whilst the technical ease with which Adès dispatches a virtuoso work like the *Concert Paraphrase* is impressive, I have often found his playing of his own music to be rather *dégagé* (this is absolutely not the case for his playing of other composers' works, such as Janáček, which I find deeply moving). This matter-of-factness is echoed in his programme note for the piece, which is not entirely accurate in detailing what material appears in the *Concert Paraphrase*, and we have already seen that he is not a consistently reliable witness. I have thus documented my developing interpretation in accordance with my response to the research and material that I have presented in line with the approaches set out by Silverman, Bradley-Kramer and Rink at the beginning of this project, and in line with the tropes of postmodern music and postmodern listening.

A balance somewhere on Silverman's spectrum between *formalist* and *subjective* approaches to interpretation is vital to finding a satisfying, artistic experience: one which can only be considered after weighing up what the score can tell us and what other factors need to

[13] Barthes, Roland, 'The Death of the Author' in *Image-Music-Text*, pp. 142-148, trans. by Stephen Heath (Noonday, New York, 1977), pp. 146 & 148. Quoted in Kramer (2016), p. 118
[14] Silverman, Marissa, 'A Performer's Creative Processes: Implications for Teaching and Learning Musical Interpretation' in *Music Education Research Vol. 10, Issue 2*, pp. 249-269 (Jun. 2008), p. 266

be considered to enrich interpretation. The *formalist* expressionist view does not consider, for example, that a waltz or a mazurka are notated identically on the printed score, but the dances' inflections must be learnt about and brought to bear in performance. The interpreter's position on Silverman's spectrum will necessarily vary according to the repertoire. Musical interpretation and performance is a cultural phenomenon: as we have seen, performers draw on their knowledge and their cultural and practical experience – their 'informed intuition' – to decipher the symbols the composer has left him or her, to form an interpretation which represents what they believe to be the meaning of the music. An interpreter preparing works by Haydn and Adès, for example, undergoes essentially the same process, but the outcome of realising identical markings of the scores would, however, be different on account of the music's period and performance aesthetic, the instruments for which the works were composed and so on – the contextual information.

Some researchers at the forefront of the field of musical interpretation interrogate performing artists to better understand the working processes behind forming an interpretation, including Silverman. These sources frequently demonstrate that interpretations are nourished by a variety of sources and practices, that they are constantly developing, and that they can be largely understood according Kolb's learning cycle theory which demonstrates how knowledge is acquired through the transformation of experience, reflection, and conceptualisation (Fig. 5.1).[15] However, I have found that there might be a better way to represent the process of developing an interpretation of a musical work like the *Concert Paraphrase* (Fig. 5.2), which recognises the continually growing cultural experience – or 'informed intuition' to use Rink's rather poetic term again – of the interpreter, as well as the addition of information external to the cycle.

[15] See Kolb, D. A., *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development* (Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1984)

Fig. 5.1: Kolb, Experiential Learning Theory

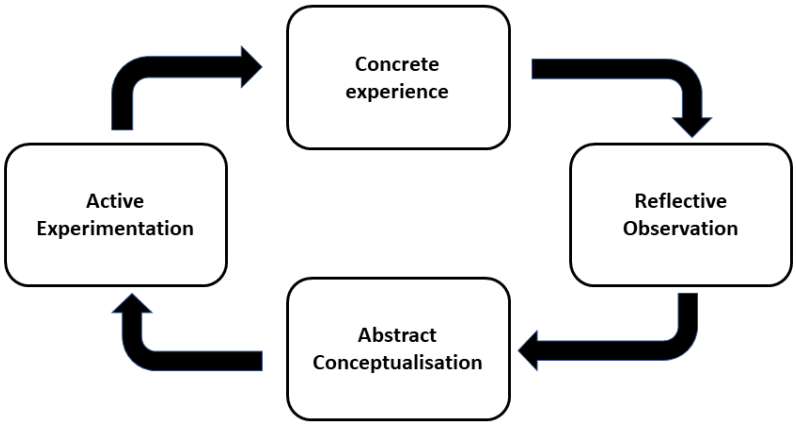
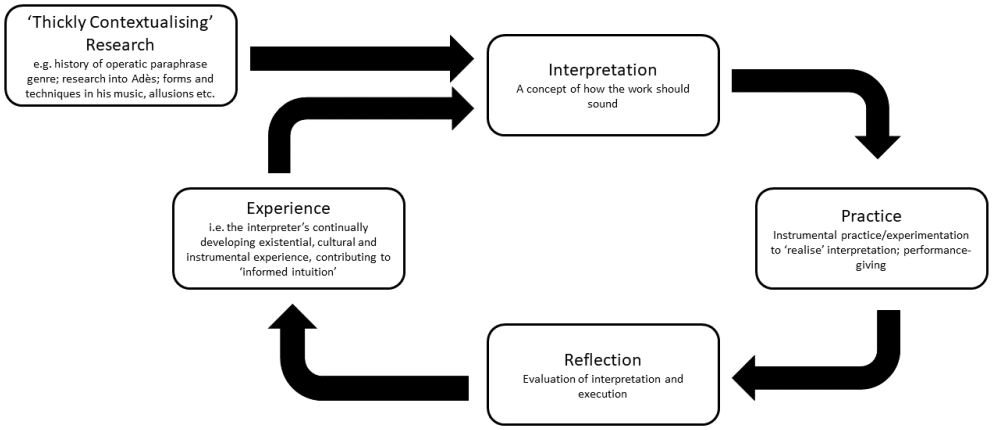


Fig. 5.2: A developing musical interpretation



The interpretation is already contributed to from the interpreter's cultural and instrumental experience and is informed by how they decipher the score and 'feel' the music.[16] 'Thickly contextualising' information found outside the score, such as the research laid out in Chapters 1-4, is added to the cycle and contributes to the interpretation. This latter part is, however, not a constant part of the following cyclical process:

(a) the interpretation is the concept

(b) practice is undertaken to bring the concept of the work to life; performances may be given

[16] Rink (2018), p. 104

(c) there is self-reflection on the successes and failures of the interpretation and its execution

(d) the practice and reflection processes (b and c) constantly contribute to the interpreter's experience which then feeds back into shaping an increasingly refined interpretation and adds to experience which may feed into refining the original concept (as well as the interpretative process of other repertoire). Non-practice-based research cannot necessarily be considered a part of the cycle, and the *Concert Paraphrase* demonstrates that. Conclusions may be reached as to why composer-pianists wrote operatic paraphrases in the nineteenth century, why Adès chose to invoke that form for one of his own pieces, and an understanding of the compositional devices in the music. Much of that will not change. However, in the future, one might discover another musical quotation/allusion in the work which will then get fed into the cycle shaping an aspect of the interpretation. Before that might happen, however, there may have been many cycles of the practice, reflection and experiential growth process.

As Fig. 5.2 suggests, an interpretation of any work is a never-ending process which is contributed to by many factors and over time. Postmodern aesthetics would also deny that the interpretative results this project has had on my interpretation of the *Concert Paraphrase* are authoritative and final, but the results do point towards answering the fundamental research questions in seeking a more 'thickly contextualised interpretation'.

Another aspect I have considered is the degree to which one studies the full score when learning a paraphrase or transcription of an orchestral work. That will vary between performers; I have opted to include in the table below comments based on observations in the score which may be particularly interesting in the light of the still-growing corpus of works based on material from *Powder Her Face*. These include examples where problems of interpretation may be solved by studying a different version, or indeed remain unsolved by that process.

However, issues surrounding orchestration have generally not been included, except for a few examples where I have chosen to adopt specific ways to imitate the original.[17]

This chapter has been a self-reflective and practice-based exercise. It has involved noting conscious changes in my approaches to the *Concert Paraphrase* throughout the course of this project (a practice encouraged by Rink) with the aim of piecing them together in a commentary.[18] I have also studied and compared recordings of the work I had made (a 2013 live recording in the presence of Adès when my interpretation was in its infancy, and a 2018 commercially released recording) as a way to highlight aspects of developing change. There have also been instances when Adès has made informal comments to me (such as backstage after my CD launch concert in September 2018; whilst the performance on that occasion was not recorded, I was certainly able to take something from those comments). I have concluded the best way to present this information is to offer a bar-by-bar commentary and these can be found in Table 8 below.

5.2 Considering how historical models and professional circumstances have shaped a general conception

The professional circumstances surrounding the composition of the *Concert Paraphrase* have had implications for how I feel about the piece and merits comment. On the one hand, that Adès has deliberately invoked a style which has been, for a time, associated with self-serving virtuosity and musical extravagance, calls for a certain degree of chutzpah. The links between this and the themes of excess and hedonism in the opera have been discussed at length, and the fact that Adès clearly used the work at a turning point in his career makes a strong case for

[17] See Brendel (2007), pp. 284-287 for his discussion on his techniques on how to imitate certain orchestral instruments on the piano

[18] Rink (2018), p. 104. Similar research practices are discussed in Davidson, Jane W., 'Practice-based Music Research: Lessons from a Researcher's Personal History' in *Artistic Practice as Research in Music*, pp. 93-106, ed. by Mine Doğantan-Dack (Ashgate Publishing Limited, Farnham, 2015).

fashioning the performance into a virtuosic showcase in the same way we have seen his early nineteenth century counterparts did. Yet, on the other hand, the scenes from *Powder Her Face* which appear in the *Concert Paraphrase* are transcribed rather literally when compared with many nineteenth century examples such as the Lisztian réminiscenses. Whilst the latter would suggest faithfulness to the text and the type of sincerity associated with the Wagner-Liszt transcriptions, which were arguably intended to promote Wagner's music accurately, I have come to the conclusion that the *Concert Paraphrase* should still be performed with all the flair of the earlier, more flamboyant paraphrases of Liszt and his contemporaries. This is not only on account of the subject matter, the parodic nature of *Concert Paraphrase*, but for two other important reasons: firstly, the original opera, its melodies and musical gestures are not recognisable enough to the general public for any extra embellishment to add value or effect (except, perhaps the obvious quotations);[19] secondly, much of the music already distorts other genres, and musical meaning is often dependant on keeping these as they are in the original opera.

Another defence for viewing the work through this virtuosic lens is how Adès's performance directions are far less ubiquitous in the *Concert Paraphrase* than in many of his other works, especially those for piano. A survey of his earlier piano scores shows a fastidious attention to detail in terms of articulation, voicing, and often considerably prescriptive pedal markings. The *Concert Paraphrase*, however, is far more liberal in this respect, with the score having a visual appearance more like a score of a nineteenth century paraphrase than a typical score by Adès.[20] By default, that invites more artistic license to the performer than his other scores might do.

[19] Consider Denisov's argument that the original text or subject needs to be known/topical for a parody to be understood. See Denisov (2015). There are fewer than a handful of examples of additional "flourishes" written into the *Concert Paraphrase* which do not appear in the opera, and two of them appear on the first page, which helps establish the Lisztian pianism Adès is so clearly keen to allude to.

[20] Readily accepting that this is a somewhat blanket statement, I thought it worth attempting to define what I mean by these two things. Firstly, many of Liszt's paraphrases often look, at first glance, as though they require

The two-piano version of the *Concert Paraphrase* must be considered a transcription of the solo version. There is not a great deal of extra material in the two-piano version which does not appear in the solo version. Adès himself said that he was keen to unshackle the music from the constraints of ensemble playing, but the two-piano version reinstates at least some of the associated problems.[21] As we have seen, pianists who composed (as opposed to pianists who did not compose) were held in high esteem when the genre was enjoying its heyday and benefit concerts often included pianists who improvised on melodies or works called out by the public.[22] From that, we might deduce that a significant part of an audience's thrill must have stemmed from seeing the solo pianist conjure music up out of thin air, whether it was an improvised or a composed work played from memory. Although Soares correctly claims that there is an unspoken expectation for pianists to perform from memory, contemporary music is has generally been excepted from this 'rule'. However, I argue that there is an element of the operatic paraphrase genre which is lost when the *Concert Paraphrase* is performed from the score, and even more so when performed in the version for two pianos.

5.3 Awareness of Adès's musical style(s)

At the time of my performance of the *Concert Paraphrase* in 2013, I was largely unaware of Adès's music style(s). I was too literal in my rendition of the text – not an unforgiveable

more than two hands to play based on the placement of notes across the registers including the use of the "three-handed technique"; the embellishments/flourishes are often based solely on broken chords, chromatic scales and so on; they have occasional, suggestive and not prescriptive pedal markings; and are almost always composed on two staves. Adès's *Concert Paraphrase* has all of these features and whilst they are not unique to operatic paraphrases, obviously, they are certainly uncommon to Ades's solo piano works up to the *Concert Paraphrase*. The reference through the visual appearance of the score is clearly deliberate. Compare the *Concert Paraphrase* to his earlier piano works, such as *Darknesse Visible* (1992), *Still Sorrowing* (1993) *Traced Overhead* (1995-96) which are almost all written on a minimum of three staves (of the 16-page long score, *Still Sorrowing* has just three systems written on two staves, and *Traced Overhead* has passages with as many as five staves); the pedal markings are precise and comprehensive with changes and depth of use specified in fractions; tempo indications are given with utmost precision (see *Traced Overhead* p. 10, where tempo indications are provided within a rallentando).

[21] Cheng (2015)

[22] See Ritterman (1985), p. 172

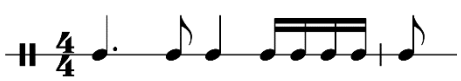
mistake to focus on issues of pianistic and 'musical' control over freedom when performing music of this complexity in the presence of the composer.[23] However, being uninformed as I was of the postmodern juxtaposing of disparate musical material, I frequently smoothed over the 'corners' of the music to find a different type of unity than the *dis*unity the music calls for. This very problem is described in the writing of Deborah Bradley-Kramer who, when she first encountered Jonathan Kramer's works, said that she found "the level and intensities of discontinuities called into question many time-honoured aspects of classical music pedagogy, which tends to foster an awareness of structure and unity within a master framework", and that she also sought to find meaning by finding unity.[24] She eventually concluded that "the resistance of material should be demonstrated (both sonically and physically), while facile interlacings leading to cohesion should be avoided".[25] The study of Adès's use of temporality, of the cinematic cutting devices in the *Concert Paraphrase*, and the compositional tools – such as aligned interval cycles – has shaped the way I prioritise or even characterise certain material and this is discussed in Table 8 below. Also, whilst in the opera there are what Shaw refers to as "fetish notes", there is no evidence of a long-term harmonic structure in the *Concert Paraphrase*. In fact, all the quoted scenes appear at their original pitch-levels, and Adès has made no effort to connect any of the movements in this sense. This is clearly at odds with some of the nineteenth century examples from the operatic paraphrase genre in which the keys of scenes were changed so that the connections between them could be smoother.[26] This is another strong argument in favour of retaining the sharp angles in the music.

[23] See Chapter 4 for more discussion on this topic
[24] Bradley-Kramer (2016), p. 299
[25] Ibid., p. 303
[26] This is an issue discussed frequently throughout Hamilton (1989)

5.4 Interpretative commentary

The following table highlights the specific musical and pianistic details which have changed in my interpretation as a result of the research in this project. The live recording from 2013 and commercial recording from 2018 are referred to as Recordings 1 and 2 respectively.

Table 8: Interpretative commentary on Adès, *Concert Paraphrase on Powder Her Face*

Movement: bar number	Comment
i:1	Adès said the opening glissando should sound like a bitch-slap.[27] I now make it more shocking and 'hard' in sound with a loud dynamic, firm fingers and bringing out more of the start of the glissando and diminuendo earlier. In the 2013 recording, the first chord sounds well, then the middle of the glissando 'bulges' in sound. I use my thumb for the glissando now instead of the side of my fingers, so that it is stronger and easier to control with the weight of the arm.
i:2	Even though the marcato sign appears above the RH melody note, I bring more of the LH triplets out to introduce the 'habanera' gesture to immediately establish the allusion to the tango. I also now exaggerate the fourth beat marcato in the LH to better convey the tango rhythm which appears between it and the preceding three notes of the RH melody, whilst still keeping the music noticeably more 'veiled' than in Recording 1: 

[27] Public masterclass with Adès at Milton Court Concert Hall, Barbican, London 4/11/13

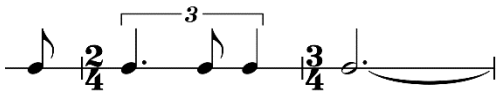
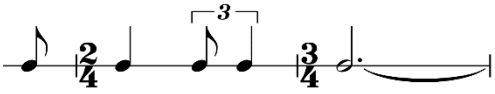
i:4	Adès is clearly fond of glissando effects and I have, more recently, opted for a slower chromatic glissando in the RH to better convey the seductive quality of it. The fourth beat marcato principle is the same as in i:2. I feel it is especially absent in both the Recordings 1 and 2. It is also for this reason that I feel that *tempo rubato* is best exploited in bb. 1, 3 & 5 and bb. 2 and 4 be kept somewhat stricter to highlight the tango rhythm.
i:6	The sung word on the long RH D is "young". Given the jibe at the Duchess's lack of youth, I feel it works best to elongate this bar slightly, to stress the meaning of this word and to better bring out the LH Lisztian flourish and emphasise the effect of the music descending into the lowest register of the piano (much in the same way Adès talked about exploiting register/spatial elements when teaching his *Mazurkas, Op. 27*). The fourth beat, however, is better played in tempo, to re-establish the tango upbeat gesture.
i:8-11	Although possibly just for the irony of the libretto at this moment, this is the first accurately quoted material from the opera. I therefore try to make the music sound more 'real' – this is helped by playing the LH tango motif more than ***ppp***, imitative of honking bass clarinets. Especially given the distortion of the tango fundamental rhythm through the distension and overlapping of its units, I have found the music calls for an exaggerated playing style: gruffer grace notes and marcato at the start of b. 8, slurs as legato as possible, staccato notes as clipped as possible etc. Also, given how the RH is imitating portamento string writing, I am less concerned now with the release of the tied notes as they are written, than with the overlapping of them as much as possible (even beyond the score's suggestions), and the discreet entry of each

	new note. Both previous recordings are too clear. Very subtle use of the pedal when the LH is not playing helps.
i:12	In order to keep the C♯ melody note in the RH audible for as long as possible, I play it heavily and with my thumb. Considering Adès's attitude towards register and dynamic expressed during the masterclass on the *Mazurkas, Op. 27*, I delay the diminuendo during this Lisztian flourish in order to highlight the sudden ascent into the stratospheric register, and then imagine the music getting further away.
i:13-14	Adès's use of expanding intervals/aligned cycles here is a means of creating passing material. I therefore no longer place such emphasis on these bars. Instead, I let them shimmer distantly. As pointed out in Appendix 2, when Adès revised the *Concert Paraphrase* he added an accelerando marking here, which also encourages one to play through this passage without too much weight. It also helps make the entry of the Electrician in b. 15 more arresting.
i:15	From this point to b. 55, I feel it is important to keep the grotesque drag act of the Electrician in mind, with clear parodying of the cabaret style through an exaggerated playing style and a less *dolce* treatment of the melodic line than in both Recordings 1 and 2.
i:16-18	As shown in Appendix 2, Adès introduced articulation to the descending chromatic line, so I now play these notes crisper, with each one giving the impression of the material getting further away.
i:20-21	***ppp*** and giving the impression of sounding from further away. Considering that this is the first appearance of the laughter motif, and how it develops throughout the *Concert Paraphrase*, it is important almost to understate it here: it comes many more times and it needs to be given space to develop

	later. RH embellishment should glitter to the top with the crescendo hairpin. These two bars are 'commentary' in nature, and in my Recording 1 there is almost no audible distinction between this gesture and the melodic writing before or after, and still not enough in Recording 2. This is also unaided by too great a diminuendo towards the close of the phrase in bb. 18-19. I now do not taper the phrase off as much so that it is easier to colour the contrasting material.
i:28	In both Recordings 1 and 2, the final A in the RH does not speak clearly enough. I was too preoccupied with the LH (bass D♭ has a marcato sign, which clearly needs to be in the context of accompanimental material, and not the overall priority). I also rush in Recording 1.
i:29	In the light of the lesson on the *Mazurkas*, I no longer play the RH ***f*** chord louder than the main melodic material (marked ***p***), but rather simply bring out the top of the chord more to emphasise the registral colour. It is ***f*** in the context of accompanying material, not to dominate the texture as a whole.
i:31	In both recordings I play this too loudly. It must be acoustically separated from the Electrician's material (and its accompaniment) and treated as commentary material. Focus is also drawn to the RH top note (B), whereas this only appears in the piano part of the full score; therefore I now do not spotlight this as much and bring out more of the Es and E♭s which appear beneath.
i:35-38	Adès's use of the aligned interval cycles here is clearly a means to create material and is 'decorative'. Also, because the Maid is singing here rather than the Electrician, I feel it is better to convey the sense that the music is

	happening in a different space/from a different perspective. Adès's use of a higher register here provides this automatically, but to play it with shorter articulation and a more flippant character can help enhance this. In both Recordings 1 and 2, the aligned cycle material is too present, and the Maid's line not spotlighted enough. I have found it helpful to visualise that the aligned cycle material in the uppermost voice is written in small typeset, as seen in examples by Liszt and Grainger in Chapter 1, and to slightly elongate the articulations in the Maid's melodic line.
i:40-44	In order to convey better the multiple temporalities, I have opted to play the melody more strictly in time than I used to, and to moderately accentuate each rhythmic unit in the accompaniment (i.e. accentuate the first of the triplet quavers and diminuendo throughout the unit, as it is notated in b. 2), and make sure that the articulations are well delineated: staccato dots in the accompaniment and the melodic line as legato as possible. The LH ***ff*** in b. 40 must be loud, but still not overpower the tied C♯ in the RH, as it did in Recording 1.
i:45-46	Adès emphasised that each time this four-note gesture appears (e.g. bb. 7-8, 32-33, here, 75-76 etc.) it must be different, noting the varieties in articulation, dynamic and phrasing.[28] Compare, also, the laughter gesture in b. 33 which is notated ***sff*** with a diminuendo hairpin throughout, and here it is ***mp*** with only a hairpin on the final two chords.
i:48	The RH second note (F♯) falls on a beat of the bar and I used to accentuate it slightly, unconsciously; this is especially manifest in Recording 1. In the original score the notes are written across three triplet crotchets rather than

[28] Public masterclass with Adès at Milton Court Concert Hall, Barbican, London 4/11/13

	two duplet crotchets, and the lyrics sung are "[what] more do they [need]"; clearly, 'do' is not an emphatic word in the phrase and I now play this as though it were written with the original notation. Further reinforcement in favour of this comes from the fact that the downbeat in the sung part (D), has both marcato and tenuto indications. Original:  *Concert Paraphrase*: 
i:56	Considering his teaching on the *Mazurkas*, I also make sure to create a more glistening sound on the top accented G♯ (b. 56, first RH note), and play in such a way as to suggest a glissando effect, especially with the ascending LH scales; also, full observation of the long pedal marking. This passage must resemble a schmaltzy flashback and so I try to play it as simply, as naively as possible. In a way, I feel that Recording 1 captures the essence here slightly better than Recording 2.
i:57	The first appearance of the Duchess calls for a special kind of attention. As we have seen, her lines are longer and more *sostenuto* by comparison with the Electrician and Maid's material from this point, so as to emphasise her higher social position. I now believe her line should have fewer expressive inflections than in the Electrician's part up to this point, to better convey her (self-imagined) grandeur and superiority 'which outlasts time'. Recording 1 does not capture this at all, but it is improved in Recording 2.
i:60	Adès stressed the demands on layering the texture and characterisation of material here. He particularly focused on how the LH should have strong

	rhythmic drive and how we should hear its descent to the low E.[29] By contrast, the RH quintuplets should be veiled, and of course the melody the most prominent aspect, played as simply as possible.
i:63	The final trombone glissando is notated as grace notes immediately preceding the last quintuplet semiquaver of the bar in the LH. In the full orchestral score, the glissando takes place over three quintuplet semiquavers, and in the two-piano version it is notated over a whole quaver, with staccato dots, suggesting Adès was keen to have it played in a more declamatory fashion. Considering this, I take the three notes with the RH and take a little more time over them.
i:64	Because I wish to maintain the aristocratic quality or the Duchess's line, I now feel that I tapered the phrase off far too much in both Recordings 1 and 2.
i:65-73	Studying the full score in more detail has had a strong bearing on voicing and characterisation of these bars for me. Delineating the separate parts would certainly be easier were the music notated across three, or even four staves. For example: b. 65 the Duchess's part sings three repeated Es in the top of the LH and then moves into the bottom of the RH without any indication. This is not clear in Recording 1 which gives priority to the top of the RH. b. 70 the Electrician and Maid's parts are stemmed/grouped with interspersing material from the accordion and strings and with different articulation to the original (tenuto markings in the *Concert Paraphrase*, whereas they have accent marks in the opera score). As such, I now play these parts quieter, but

[29] Public masterclass with Adès at Milton Court Concert Hall, Barbican, London 4/11/13

	with more pointed articulation to characterise them separately from the Duchess's line. b. 72 the continuation of the Duchess's part is not even notated as primary material, but the notes do feature, stemmed downwards within in the interspersing chords of the accordion part. I now bring them out more than in Recordings 1 and 2. Again in consideration of the different qualities of the Duchess's part from the hotel staff's, I try to differentiate between them through a more exaggerated use of articulation and minimal accumulation of sound in the LH with shallower pedalling than before.
i:81-83	Considering the constraints of notating tremolandi on more than two notes on the piano, and Adès's prioritising of colour over the pedantic realisation of the score verbatim, I no longer count the LH broken chords. The original score has string tremolandi and it is important to convey that effect and keep the Duchess's melody line clear. Adès's notation in the *Concert Paraphrase* makes for the convenient alignment of the parts. It is comfortable to play it as it is written, but counting the notes prescriptively should not be a priority.
i:84	As discussed in Chapter 3, the voicing is not clear in the way the music is notated. Not knowing this, in my 2013 performance, I clearly give priority to the RH top D. It is better in my 2018 recording, where focus is given to the B-flat in the LH to play the Duchess's sung note more clearly.
i:86-89	In the corresponding material to b. 89, the full score has hairpin swells in the double bass part, and the two-piano version has the tied low B repeated on the final crotchet of the bar. Given the accumulation of texture, and that Adès clearly wants to draw attention to that bass note, I have opted to retake the

	note silently and to half-change the pedal in the last beat of the bar. This helps to clear the middle register of the accumulating 'noise' whilst keeping the bass note present. The difference can be heard between Recordings 1 and 2
i:90-94	The alteration to the notation at this point, discussed in Chapter 3, does not make clear whether Adès wanted this passage more rhapsodic, or simply wanted to avoid overcrowding the score were he to notate the melodic line with its original rhythm. I choose to adhere closely to the original rhythm, which is inherently rather free. In Recording 1 I play it as it is notated, and in Recording 2 as it is in the original. In both recordings the Electrician and Maid's interspersions are not characterised independently from the Duchess's enough (even allowing concessions for the requirement of the long pedal).
ii:1-4	The perspective gained from working with Adès on the *Mazurkas, Op. 27* has informed the way I understand the dynamic gestures found in these bars. His propensity for aligning dynamic with spatial perspectives gives the hairpin markings added musical effect here. The music is an unstable, 'squiffy' waltz and the ***p*** < ***mp*** ***p*** [*subito*] > markings give the impression of the music stepping forward, falling back and stepping back further. Therefore, I conceive these indications in a visual sense to convey their comic quality. This is all the more effective as it stresses the different type of humour – the first movement is largely a spiteful parody, a send-up of the Duchess, whereas this is flirtatious and the drunkenness is characterised through distorting the waltz base rhythm.
ii:16	Corresponding bars in the two-piano version and orchestral score give a better indication as to correct voicing of this bar. The RH upper slur is somewhat

	misleading, as the RH G must lead to the LH B♭. This is not clear in Recording 1, but better in Recording 2 – though still not enough.
ii:24-25	The laughter gesture in the first movement does not have the indication *laugh* as it does here. In the opera overture Adès prescribes laughter for the Maid with the added performance direction *harsh*. Also knowing that, here, Adès uses an aligned interval cycle to create this material suggests more that the gesture is more commentary than primary. It is also noteworthy that in the original score (Scene 5, bb. 24-25) it is scored for accordion and marked ***mf*** with accents and staccato dots on each note. In the *Concert Paraphrase* it is written ***ff*** with only staccato dots. This would further reinforce the notion that dynamic indications can be more a spatial instruction than a true representation of balance. Because of this, I now play the laughter gesture quieter than before, but try to convey the shortness of articulation (despite the pedal marking).
ii:31^{3}-57	Given the allusion to Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier* and its obvious parodying of Strauss's long, 'unending' melodies, I no longer seek to shape the Duke's line poetically and with too much inflection and shape. The passage sounds more parodic if it is played brazenly. As the textures accumulate (e.g. from b. 45 and more so from b. 51), I did not maintain suitable structure of the sound in Recording 1, and Recording 2 is still far from ideal. The treble register of the piano often naturally glistens to the fore and overpowers the tenor register, compounded by the sheer number of notes needed to be played and the uncomfortable leaps necessary to execute this passage.
iii:1-10	Understanding the construction of the musical material here, mainly comprised of aligned interval cycles, or fragments thereof, has shaped the way

	I consider this passage. Adès's creation of material from purely mechanical devices and the implications this has for viewing the Waitress as a functional object was discussed in Chapter 3. Stripped of the words and the Waitress's part, the *Concert Paraphrase* is skeletal here, making an even more dramatic contrast to the rest of the work which is full of extravagance. Mindful of this, I keep the playing as simple and as 'dull' as possible. Compare the expressive and dynamic inflections in Recording 1 with the generally more straightforward account in Recording 2. As in Liszt's *Isoldens Liebestod*, much of the vocal part is omitted, it can be argued, to highlight the colour of the orchestral material; Adès does this, it seems to me, to highlight the tedium and sparsity of it.
iii:31	The voicing of the top part is not especially clear in the way it is notated, especially given the mono-dynamic instruction. I play the Waitress's part considerably more defined than the orchestral text beneath, and prolong the G (sixth note of the first beat with tenuto), since this is a held note in the original.
iii:49	Again, the voicing of the sung line is not absolutely clear, since it is stemmed downwards. I now play this line slightly louder than the orchestral material and less *staccato*, unlike in both Recordings 1 and 2.
iii:61	In Recording 1 most of this material is too loud and takes the ***ff*** dynamic instruction too literally. The original full score is much more nuanced with a range of dynamics for the different textural components and Recording 2 conveys them better, with more clarity between the parts. Also, in Recording 1, I included LH downbeat inner note (A♯) within the sostenuto pedal, which is not correct (same principle to inner notes F in b. 63, and D in b. 67).

iii:77 & 80	Considering Adès's visual comprehension of pianistic register, I now tend to crescendo towards the uppermost extremes of pitch in the right hand and play slightly *non-legato*. Given that the sung words at this point are detailing things which sparkle - aspic and diamonds – I think it is important to have the sound really glistening.
iii:89-103	Understanding Adès's use of multiple temporalities and the surrealist effects it can suggest, I make a considerably greater point of exactness in the independent parts here. In Recording 1 the LH is almost inaudible, with focus given mostly to the RH. Of course, pianistically speaking, the RH is the harder part with the awkward leaps, but it is much more important that the waltz rhythm be played utterly simply, observing all the accents Adès gives it for its groupings. The LH introduces the suggestion of another tempo and irregular bar lengths, and with richly contrasted articulation and dynamic indications. I now embrace the musical complexity of this passage, which subverts the nature of the graceful waltz rhythm, giving extra emphasis to the LH accents. In Recording 1, it is clear that I have rather tried to smooth over these features in the music, but Recording 2 achieves the effect better. Unfortunately, in both recordings the G in the second half of b. 100 (sung word fan-cy) is not clear enough as a distinct melodic line.
iii:105	In the two-piano version of the *Concert Paraphrase* and the orchestral suites, Adès added a chromatic glissando from the A/A♯ tremolo to the C♯ below (the moment when the Waitress sings "Fancy purchasing a Duke"). Even though it does not appear in the second printed edition of the solo *Concert*

	Paraphrase, I asked Adès for permission to include it, to which he replied "Marvellous idea to play that glissando! What terrific initiative".[30]
iii:110	The rare occasion in opera when the fourth wall is broken and the singer talks directly to the opera's observers: "That's what I want. That's what you want". I place a special stress on the F (b. 110, 'you'), slightly louder and by delaying the chromatic glissando immediately following it.[31] Adès also places a tenuto marking on this note – the sung word "you". This is not present in either Recording 1 or 2.
iii:112	Knowing that Adès engineers his aligned cycles in the ways he does, he clearly points to something cadential here. Despite the harmonic unity brought about by the continuation of the aligned cycle, the deliberate cadential gesture, should be played according to its conventional profile – an ending.[32] As such, I hold the A♭ major chord in the pedal a little longer, linger, before launching into the *a tempo* making it all the more dramatic. In much the same way Adès described the music "turning a corner" in his *First Mazurka*, this must surely be a sudden and vivid change of scene, a cinematic cut shifting unexpectedly to the 'Paperchase' scene.
iii:126	The development of the laughter motif here requires more drama than is present in Recording 2, which is generally too constrained by the rhythmic complexities of the text. Recording 1 is, whilst less refined and rushing in places, better captures the shrieking, catastrophic qualities in the music. I now think it is important not to be afraid to play ***ff***, and observe the articulation

[30] E-mail correspondence with the composer 9/11/20

[31] This raises the concern as to whether an audience will understand this meaning, without the words. I do not believe that the fourth wall can be broken, literally, in this way, but the musical detail will, even if only subconsciously for the audience, enhance the over performance. Nonetheless, a detail understood only by the performer or other performers of the work is still a detail worth pursuing.

[32] See Bradley-Kramer (2016), p. 305

	markings in their utmost extremities. For example, the staccato dots in bb. 128-129 can be much more clipped and violent; the slurs in bb. 131 and 132 given more weight, marking the first of each and then phrasing off of them; the staccato wedge on the downbeat to b. 137 in both recordings is not short and punchy enough (the pedal must be lifted, and the semi-quaver rest heard); and the unusual, English marking *animal* in b. 138 means the music can be truly wild, with an almost percussive tone.
iii:141-147	The two-piano version gives a more accurate arrangement of the rhythmic structure of these bars, and I have found that studying it helps with placement of the solo version's grace notes, and delineating the parts. That having been said, I have also found it helpful to visualise papers and objects being thrown out of drawers to help convey the chaos. Recording 1 is also rather heavy in its execution, whereas Recording 2 better conveys the skittish quality of the music here.
iii:156-158	In both recordings, the laughter gesture, here at its most catastrophic, is just not menacing enough. Considering what consequences this passage has for the Duchess, I now take much more time over these bars and almost pedantically accentuate every chord with full attack. Note in Appendix 2 how later versions of this passage insist on this: the two-piano version has marcato wedges on every single note (and a long pedal mark), and the *Luxury Suite* has both marcato and staccato wedges on every note.
iii:163-170	The quotation of Schubert's *Death and the Maiden* is the most unadulterated in the entire *Concert Paraphrase*. Although Adès does not place *tenuto* markings on all notes of the Schubert melody line, I have concluded that the line must be well-sustained and played with all the gravitas one might play

	the original song piano part. In Recording 1 it is barely perceptible and even in Recording 2 I do not quite feel it is brought out enough. I can hear that the rhythmic complexity of the LH (and the leaps it must perform to help fulfil the lower part of the stop stave) is the dominating area of concentration in these performances. Studying the LH part has shown that the rhythm is essentially a written-out *ritardando* with the RH playing in time. Having worked with Adès, I am quite sure that he would suggest prioritising the beauty and communicative power of the Schubert line over the LH rhythm, and that the murky colour of the register and the impression of it slowing down be expressed rather than being over-scrupulous were that to sacrifice the impact of the RH. Also, it is important to differentiate when the same notes are repeated but not part of the melody (e.g. the third quaver of the first beats in the RH of bb. 166, 167 and 168 – the Ds are repeated, but must not be the same dynamic or colour as the Schubert melody notes, as they are in Recording 1 and still slightly in Recording 2).
iii:170-179	Now more fully grasping the meaning of the music here, I feel that my tempo in Recording 1 is too fast, or at least the music flowing too effortlessly. The introduction of the Hotel Manager and the severity of the message he delivers calls for a particular type of 'cold' musical poise. His position is one of complete resolution and so there should ideally be no noticeable *rubato* or flexibility in the playing, and his part projected with weight and solemnity (taking the extreme dynamic markings with a slight pinch of salt). In Recording 1 it is played rather too superficially in terms of sound and tempo. Recording 2 is more successful in this sense although there are some voicing issues which are not quite correct and still too much balance in favour of the

	RH. The Hotel Manager's part here has occasional octave displacement and the omission of some notes, it is therefore difficult to truly sustain the line in the way that the original singer could. Careful studying of the orchestral score has revealed voicing issues I had previously been unaware of. For example, the *tenuto* E in the upper stave in b. 176 is not part of the sung line, despite the notation suggesting it might be, and it is too loud and present in both Recordings 1 and 2. The quotation from the *Berceuse* from Mussorgsky's *Songs and Dances of Death* in b. 179 has meant that I now play considerably more tenuto in the bass part and make much more of the *rit.* indication. Mussorgsky's score is marked *Lento funestoso* (baleful, disastrous with the suggestion of death/ill-fate) and with *allargando*. Adès sets Hensher's words "…now it has come for you", a grim suggestion of Death. In both Recordings 1 and 2, I feel that not enough weight is given to the LH – focus must be on the lower registers here, not only to convey the implied Commendatore character (also a bass role), but also to provide greater colouristic contrast with the material from bb. 180-182.
iii:180-182	Studying the orchestral score more throughout this project has changed the way I colour this passage. I now make much more of a sudden contrast at the *a tempo* and try to have the arpeggiated figures well-articulated through the pedal. Also bearing in mind the *sul tasto* performance direction in the string parts, on the piano there needs to be a greater difference between the heavy, sustained material immediately preceding this and a fragility of sound here to capture the *disperato, piangendo* marking in the omitted Duchess's part. In the two-piano version of the *Concert Paraphrase* Adès marks the passage *shimmering*.

iii:183-192	For the return to the Hotel Manager's instruction, this time a tone lower, my comments are similar to those for bb. 170-179. More emphasis needs to be given to the unwavering sonority of the melodic line, with negligible *rubato*; if anything it needs to sound even more unwavering than the previous utterance. Recording 1 again has too much spotlight on the treble register, giving the sound a somewhat superficial quality. Recording 2 achieves a better balance between the parts, but there are still voicing concerns. For example, in both recordings in b. 189 the notes which correspond to the sung word, 'madam' (LH C♯, E) are barely present, and I play the crescendo hairpin mostly in the RH. In the two-piano version that crescendo hairpin belongs only in the second piano part which has those two bass melody notes. Bb. 188 and 189 contain chords which I cannot stretch, and which would probably pose similar problems for most pianists, since I can only comfortably take tenths: the first chord in the RH in b. 188 (E/G♯/G♯) – rather than arpeggiate this and imbue an unwanted elegance, I take the lowest E with the upbeat and pedal through; the first chord in the RH of b. 189 (D♯/F♯/D♯/F♯) is playable using the thumb to play the two lower notes; and for the first stretch of the LH (G/C♯), I delay the top C♯ by a semitone and play it together with the subsequent bass C♯.
iii:193-197	See comments for iii:180-182
iii:199-201	Adès suggested that the large LH chords could be arpeggiated on the beat (i.e. the bass note played with the RH chord). In b. 201 he said that the low octave B-flats could be played much later, closer to the entry of the alto line a dotted quaver later.

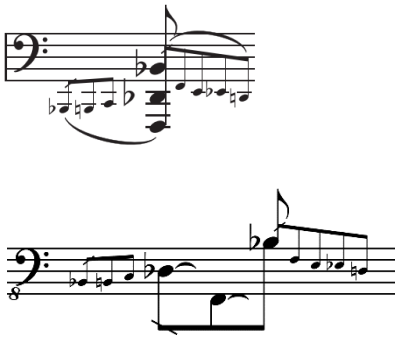
iii:199-208	The octave displacement of the Duchess's part, and the notation of it in the middle of chords (rather than a separate voice as in bb. 201-203, for example) suggests it is less important than the further appearance of the fragment from Schubert's *Death and the Maiden* which is notated with a combination of accent, tenuto and marcato indications. The arrival of the music in B♭ minor has continued important connotations to the funereal theme and this must be considered the emotional climax of the work. In Recording 1 I play this passage too quickly (rushing, in fact). As highlighted in Chapter 3, the Duchess's social position has been switched with those around her and her musical material is reduced to short, fragmentary pleas. I therefore think that this can be enhanced in bb. 205-208, for example, by maintaining the sternness, a *sostenuto* touch, and lack of *rubato* in the Hotel Manager's part whilst characterising the Duchess's material with shorter articulation, played more *parlando*, and with less rhythmically literal impulses – the Hotel Manager is there delivering an intended message, the Duchess is in a state of shock and responding in the moment. I also delay the diminuendo throughout this whole passage.
iii:211-212	Although in a different key (the only instance of transposition in the *Concert Paraphrase*), this is the last phrase the Duchess sings to the words "be kind". In light of this, and even considering the long diminuendo previously, I keep the Mussorgsky quotation in b. 209 firmer and more pronounced, exploit the fermata more at the start of b. 211 than I used to in my earlier performances, and play this as dolefully as possible – rather thinner in sound, fragile and 'weak'. In Recording 1 it is apparent that I was aware that the raunchy tango was coming and I conceived these two bars more as a flirtatious introduction

	(especially the chromatic glissando in b. 212), rather than the heartfelt plea it is. Something I changed for Recording 2 and can be heard by playing a diminuendo to the top A in b. 212, rather than being as punctuated as it is in Recording 1.
iv:tempo	♩=152 is marked, yet in the BCMG DVD version a considerably faster tempo is taken. On the occasions that Adès has heard me perform the *Concert Paraphrase* he has commented on how fast I take the last movement.[33] The tempo indication in the opera score is accompanied by *con riggore, leggierissimo* which may suggest a tautness to the pulse which could easily be lost when the tempo is too fast, such as in Recording 1 (which is, on the whole, also too loud).
iv:11-14	The chromatic scales are representations of string glissandi in the full score, and I have increasingly steered away from too much clarity, opting for more legato/overlapping of the notes between the quaver groupings.
iv:17	Whilst the RH figuration is not at all 'Chopinesque' in its design, I have found that modelling the fingering of it on Chopin's preference for hand-position fingering and gladly using the thumb on black notes helps. I use my thumb on each accented note, the first of each group.
iv:19-22	See comment for iv:11-14 on the chromatic glissando effect. The overt copying of melodic and sequential harmony gestures which are so inherent to the tango genre, raises questions about phrasing. Very similar to Gardel's 'Por una cabeza', I have found that it is most effective when the LH is kept as strictly in time as possible and with clear accents, and the RH given more artistic license: elegant phrasing (e.g. phrasing away from the top F in b. 20),

[33] I hasten to add that the comments did not come in a critical frame, but rather one of amusement.

	thus maintaining the inexorability of the tango rhythm with the seductiveness of the melodic line.
iv:29	The grace notes here obviously suggest a glissando, even though there is none written in the full score. Curious that in both the solo version and the two-piano version of the *Concert Paraphrase* that B-natural is missing from the chromatic scale, I originally took the liberty of playing the full scale, assuming it was perhaps an editorial oversight. Adès, however, explained *…that's deliberate and it will be based on my hand - I would finger the entire grace note group as 12345, then thumb on the A. These grace note glissandos want to be as fast as possible, almost a spread chord - not everything fingered exactly. It's vital they are a smudge, a gesture, a unit. So I didn't want thumbs in the middle of it. And for some reason to do with my hands it was the B that took the bullet.*[34]
iv:51-56	See comment for iv:11-14. In b. 55 of the two-piano version, Adès gives a hand-position fingering suggestion for a sequence of fifteen chromatically descending notes (first piano RH): 5-4-3-2-1/5-4-3-2-1/5-4-3-2-1. This facilitates quicker speed of execution than standard fingering for a chromatic scale and I have adopted this in my performance of the solo version. The final note of b. 56 (C♯) in both recordings is not long enough to account for the tenuto marking; it also forms part of the final utterance of the recurring tail-end of the "Duchess" theme in the opera and could be played in a somewhat more declamatory fashion.

[34] Adès, Thomas, e-mail communication 6/12/20

iv:63-66	Adès said to me, in 2013, that these final grace notes in the left hand must sound as though one sound, like a strum.[35] They must therefore be played at high speed, despite the murky register of the piano. Unfortunately, I cannot stretch the eleventh, and rather than arpeggiating the chord upwards from the bottom, I have found the following discretion serves the effect of the original better:  Adès also focused on the how to best convey the darkness of the B-flat minor tonality, when D minor is what is expected. His conclusion was to voice the RH more towards the thumb and the middle parts of the texture.

As already mentioned, many of the comments in the table above are my own reflections on how the research throughout this study has informed my own developing interpretation of the *Concert Paraphrase*. It would be improper to suggest that they are absolute or definitive. However, mindful that this project's readership will include performers who wish to study the *Concert Paraphrase*, I feel that there is value in addressing the issues that performers tackle when undertaking to perform this work, and it also serves to reinforce demonstrations on how academic research directly influences the practical results achieved by a performer.

[35] Public masterclass with Adès at Milton Court Concert Hall, Barbican, London 4/11/13

One further personal observation I wish to stress is the symbiotic relationship between musicological research and practice-based research that I have experienced throughout this project. The table above is a detailed account documenting the process by which a performer may reach a more detailed and thickly contextualised performance. My own experience and abilities as a performer are, first and foremost, what have enabled me to undertake this project in the first place: the understanding of a pianistic tradition gained through prior experience has been applied to this contemporary example and provided a lot of the direction in the research project. However, the converse has subsequently become true: the knowledge and insight I have gained throughout this project has had an enormous impact on the musical detail and contributed to a more well-rounded understanding of the *Concert Paraphrase,* richer in musical detail.

(IN)CONCLUSIONS

It is clear that, in a work as broadly referential as Adès's *Concert Paraphrase*, engaging with a large quantity of diverse material is required to get closer towards a more thickly contextualised interpretation. The range of methodological tools needed to do so have highlighted a number of shortcomings in my musical education in the UK conservatoire system. First and foremost, I am a pianist; I am not a musicologist, a theorist, a critic, or an historian, yet I would argue that a synthesis of research methods from these disciplines was essential to creating a richer reading of the music. In a similar way to Bradley-Kramer, before this project began I tried to find a musical cohesion in the music, thus softening its extraordinary edges and denying the audience their part in interpreting its non-linear narrative.[1] Music aesthetics are rarely taught or discussed to the extent necessary to arm instrumentalists with the ammunition needed to tackle music which disavows certain conventional views (or aims) of cohesion. The problem exists conversely, too: those students who are more well-versed in analytical or theoretical approaches (which, inevitably, focus on the textual aspect of music) simply do not have the time to practise a work such as the *Concert Paraphrase* or develop the kind of active performing career which would grant one the 'intuitive knowledge' to play such virtuosic repertoire.

The written material submitted as part of this project is a supplement to my research outcome which is, by its very nature, fluid and in constant development. It demonstrates the need for a truly symbiotic relationship between the many different forms of research when it comes to understanding and interpreting music. Perhaps it is a general fear of firm methodologies, or the dismissal of *implicit* as opposed to *explicit* practical research by performing musicians in musicological circles, which inhibits performers from undertaking

[1] Bradley-Kramer (2016), p. 299

projects such as this more often.[2] So too, might the apparent trend that research projects are required to have firm conclusions on subjects which often resist concrete outcomes. This is highlighted by Nelson, who points towards a divergence from the expectation of binary outcomes in practice-based research, aiming for a 'fluid knowing' rather than fixed knowledge.[3] After all, developing an interpretation is not a scientific experiment, but a process, and as Silverman says, "interpreting a score is never a finished process".[4] Rink argues that analysis takes many forms, and that the implicit analysis in practice and performance is no less valuable than the forms written about explicitly in musicological literature. He acknowledges that "to make the performance deliberately conform to and try to recreate the analysis in sound would be dubious, however valuable a knowledge of the processes and relationships implicit in that analysis might be in building the interpretation", thus weighing in favour of what we could call an intermediate place on Silverman's spectrum.[5] My methodology has been forced to adapt to the demands of my research questions throughout the project, and discoveries along the way have opened other avenues which required exploring: for example, considering the cinematic techniques used in the opera and the *Concert Paraphrase* drew me to re-evaluate the piece in relation to Abbate's work and that of her theoretical successors, which offered up a range of possible narratives. This type of flexibility is essential for anybody who is keen to get to know the music from both inside and outside its textual realm.

My research has also highlighted a number of shortcomings in existing research. We have seen how Adès's use of aligned cycles is discussed in the literature, but in-depth investigations remain to take place on the musical effects of their use in *Powder Her Face* (and

[2] See Rink, John, 'Analysis and (or?) Performance' in *Musical Performance: A Guide to Understanding*, pp. 35-58, ed. by John Rink (University of Cambridge Press, 2002), p. 41
[3] Nelson, Robin, *Practice as Research in the Arts* (Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2013), p. 39
[4] Silverman, Marissa, 'A Performer's Creative Processes: Implications for Teaching and Learning Musical Interpretation' in *Music Education Research Vol. 10, Issue 2*, pp. 249-269 (Jun. 2008), p. 265
[5] Rink, John, 'Analysis and (or?) Performance' in *Musical Performance: A Guide to Understanding*, pp. 35-58, ed. by John Rink (University of Cambridge Press, 2002), p. 39

indeed in many of his other works). We have seen how studying a few examples in the *Concert Paraphrase* can have significant impacts on possible readings into the meaning of the music, and therefore on its interpretation. There is also, to date, no existing study of the harmonic alignments of the aligned cycles for each of the opera's characters. I am quite sure that this would yield fascinating results and have major implications for those performing the opera.

The Duchess is obviously not the only extravagant subject presented in this project. We have seen how the opera is full of musical decadence, drawing on an astonishing breadth of reference and employing a range of compositional techniques; the *Concert Paraphrase* draws on a genre built upon instrumental extravagance and the career opportunities afforded by it; it also draws on cinematic models and techniques. The music is promiscuous in more senses than just its depiction of the Duchess and its intertextuality, and 'promiscuity' has been a necessary feature of my research methods. Given this scope, combined with the nature of interpretation generally and of postmodern music in particular, it is a work which can never be 'complete', and the interpreter must leave certain questions sufficiently open and unresolved for their listeners. Consequently, we end the project usure whether our research is "enough – or too much!".[6]

[6] Hensher (1995), p. 42

APPENDIX 1

Adès, Thomas	"There's also a huge plunge into pillaging from all sorts of places, and the two apparently contradictory things [discipline and instinct] are jammed together. Take the opening – I'd been playing around with a region of expanding harmonies and I heard a narrow sequence of two of them in a tango I was listening to, and the opening of that had one in it, so I took it" "It's not just a quotation. Quotation is the wrong word. It's robbery" "It's a Carlos Gardel tango" On pilfery in *Powder Her Face* – "Oh, superficial things everywhere. Gewgaws. We've talked about that allusion to *The Rake's Progress*. Well, it continues into the next interlude, the graveyard scene, and then becomes *Eugene Onegin.* But a lot of the time they are fake quotations, red herrings, *pour tromper l'ennemi*. I wrote a whole song of my own in an absolutely straight-as-I-could-manage Jack Buchanan style"	Service, Tom, *Thomas Adès: Full of Noises: Conversations with Tom Service* (Faber and Faber, London, 2012), pp. 152-153
Adès, Thomas	"There are five minutes of straight – note quite the right word – pastiche. Not a Maxwell Davies jokey thing but the sort of song Jack Buchanan might have sung… [The score has a] very, very strong flavour of cabaret but in completely my own style. It begins and ends with what cold loosely be called tangos."	'Powder Her Face' in *Time Out Magazine* (28/06 – 5/07/1995), p. 118
Adès, Thomas	"I don't see [using a variety of styles and musical tools] as a possibility, more as a necessity in the case of this piece"	Martin, Jean, *Interview with Thomas Adès* (30/07/1996)

Adès, Thomas	I like to have lots of different colours and the atmosphere of other music. That opera (Powder Her Face) is full of little bits of atmosphere that are sort of sprayed on it from other music."	Hamilton, Andy, 'Thomas Ades Sleaze Operas' in *The Wire* (Apr. 1998)
Bale, Theodore	It's like a basket full of fragments, thrown into the air all at once. Adès is clearly referencing a number of "fallen diva" operas. Alban Berg's *Lulu* comes first to mind, along with Poulenc's *La voix humaine* and Schönberg's *Erwartung*. There are numerous references to the tango of Piazzolla, nostalgic fox-trots, and other forms of "palm court" music.	'Opera Vista boosts boundaries of contemporary opera with controversial, unforgettable Powder Her Face' in *Culture Map Houston* (11/11/11)
Brown, Geoff	"…Adès's wicked and complex web of slurred tangos, his miniscule Rosenkavalier parodies, accordion wheezes and hiccupping rhythms."	' The Duchess with a Talent for Scandal' in The Times (13/6/08)
Budmen, Lawrence	"The cerebral waltz brings more than a whiff of Ravel's *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales*"	'Adès and Tetzlaff soar in Sibelius with BSO; a mixed array of modern works from TMC' in *Boston Classical Review* (23/07/18). Available at http://bostonclassicalreview.com/2018/07/ades-and-tetzlaf-soar-in-sibelius-with-bso-a-mixed-array-of-contemporary-music-from-tmc/ accessed 21/11/18
Burton, Anthony	"The brilliant, brittle chamber-scale score is distinctively coloured, permeated by the rhythms of the tango, and shot through with quotations and allusions – some merely clever, perhaps, but others genuinely telling."	'Fit for a Duchess' in *BBC Music Magazine* (Sept. 1998)
Christiansen, Rupert	"…a tapestry of mid-century musical styles. To call is "pastiche" would do it less than justice. The score offers as rich an evocation of a bygone age as *Der Rosenkavalier* or *Gloriana*. Tango, the songs of Porter and Gershwin, the schmooze of accordion and saxophone, Berg's *Lulu* and Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* are among the threads in the dazzling fabric"	'Intriguing Tapestry' in *The Daily Telegraph* (16/06/1999)

Christiansen, Rupert	"…prevalence of parody and pastiche"	'Sparkling Performances, Shimmery Shrubbery, Dazzling High Camp' in *The Daily Telegraph* (16/06/06)
Christiansen, Rupert	"…hugely colourful and virtuosically inventive score, with its brilliant Jazz Age pastiche and homages to Berg and Stravinsky."	'Opera Reviews Entertainment to be Relished' in *The Daily Telegraph* (16/06/08)
Christiansen, Rupert	The sheer ingenuity of Adès' music – with its super-sophisticated allusions to Der Rosenkavalier, The Rake's Progress and Lulu, as well as its facile pastiche of inter-war popular music – can seem too artful, too smug, too clever by half.	'Powder her Face, Belfast - finally, great acting makes emotional sense of this opera' in *The Telegraph* (29/01/17). Available at https://www.telegraph.co.uk/opera/what-to-see/powder-face-belfast-finally-great-acting-makes-emotional-sense accessed 10/10/18
Church, Michael	"…its brilliant pastiches of everything from Berg and Britten to tango and jazz still dazzle - and 'pastiche' undersells the sparkling originality of what Ades achieves with his accordion-enriched ensemble"	'Powder Her Face, Linbury Theatre, London Thomas Ades, Barbican, London' in *The Independent* (28/04/10)
Clark, Andrew	"a cleverly stitched and infinitely mobile pastiche of 20th century classical vernacular, openly parading models as diverse as Weill, *Wozzeck*, Ligeti and late Britten"	'All Powdered up with Nowhere to go' in *The Financial Times* (14/06/1999)
Clark, Andrew	"…hears all sorts of popular mid-century styles under the umbrella of Adès…"	'Powder Her Face, Barbican, London' in *The Financial Times* (16/06/08)
Clark, Andrew	"…a seamless amalgam of Berg, Britten, Stravinsky, tango, vaudeville and Noël Coward"	'Powder Her Face' in *The Financial Times* (28/04/10)
Clarke, Colin	"…some of Berg's scoring seems to have influenced Adès'. Kurt Weill is another marked influence. Outrageous big band references alongside popular dance (tango in particular) and 1930′ s ballads to make vivid initial impressions	'Compelling Adès Opera Succeeds in Subterranean Space' in *Seen and Heard International* (6/04/14)
Clements, Andrew	"…a score that ransacks 20th-century music from Strauss and Berg to Maxwell Davies and Ligeti…" "…chameleon score"	'*Powder Her Face review* – Adès's jet-black farce lights up Leicestershire' in *The Guardian* (2/07/18). Available at

		https://www.theguardian.com/music/2018/jul/02/powder-her-face-review-nevill-holt-opera-ades-duchess-of-argyll accessed 06/11/18
Clements, Andrew	"…inventing dance parodies – the opera begins and ends with a distorted, threatening tango – making a pastiche of 1930s popular song the musical centre of one scene, and weaving fleeting, teasing references to repertory operas into the mixture too. "There's a good deal of Berg in some of the harmonic working."	'Crocodile Tears before Bedtime' in *The Guardian* (3/07/1995)
Cordell, Victor	"…eclectic musical style, incorporating idioms from the likes of Stravinsky and Weill… Adès owes both musical and literary debt to Berg's "*Lulu*…"	'Some Like it Hot' in *For All Events*. Available at http://forallevents.info/reviews/powder-her-face-opera-by-thomas-ades/ accessed 12/11/18
Denford, Antonia	"The score may bristle with musical allusions…"	'The Scars of Scandal' in Ham & High (30/06/1995)
Dervan, Michael	"[The orchestra's] commentary is peppered with references to familiar styles and musical phrases"	'Powder Her Face review: Thomas Adès opera about Duchess of Argyll' in *The Irish Times* (28/02/18). Available at https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/stage/theatre/powder-her-face-review-thomas-ad%C3%A8s-opera-about-duchess-of-argyll-1.3409355 accessed 19/11/18
Dobrin, Peter	"In Powder Her Face, Adès quotes Schubert, references swing music, Berg, and *Der Rosenkavalier*, and breaks into an Ástor Piazzolla tango" "There's so much Britten in it…"	'In opera 'Powder Her Face,' a touchy soprano role' in http://www.philly.com/philly/columnists/peter_dobrin/20130604_In_opera__Powder_Her_Face___a_touchy_soprano_role (04/06/13) accessed 12/11/18
Dobrin, Peter	"Pluralism reigns. Composers have argued as much for decades, but surely no one has done so as emphatically, and so beautifully within the framework of single pieces, as Adès… its cascading pastiche now seems only more a product of our time. Any musical quote (some are vague, others overt) can and will be referenced to make a point"	'Powder Her Face a gorgeous triumph" in *The Inquirer* (11/06/13). Available at http://www.philly.com/philly/columnists/peter_dobrin/20130611__Powder_Her_Face__a_gorgeous_triumph.html accessed 12/11/18

Driver, Paul	"…the music, after music's fashion, is able to embrace the extremes of social frippery and tragic passion, 1930s dance music and Berg's chromatic astringency…" "The danceband style is guyed with the loving accuracy of a Maxwell Davies, down to the simulation of a stuck needle; and the work as a whole often recalls the preoccupations of that composer, for instance in the expressionist vocal line of the Judge… or the clever use of quotations (Schubert's *Death and the Maiden* theme casting a shadow over the end)."	'From Duchess to Dust and Powder' in *The Sunday Times* (7/09/1995)
Dunleavy, Will	"[Adès's score] demonstrates a remarkable breadth of feeling in a style that moves from atonality to pastiche to more conventional operatic fare.	'Powder Her Face, a Performance with Promise', in *The University Times* (Ireland, Mar. 2013). Available at http://www.universitytimes.ie/2018/03/powder-her-face-a-performance-with-promise accessed 19/11/18
Evans, Everett	"It's contemporary classical meets Astor Piazzolla meets Richard Strauss."	'Opera Vista stages controversial opera about the Dirty Duchess' in *Chron* (9/11/11)
Fairman, Richard	"…snatches of popular melodies from the 1930s, rather like the terribly busy bits of Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier*"	'Powder Her Face' in *The Financial Times* (11/06/06)
Finch, Hilary	"…tortured tangos… a whole world of music is assimilated and subsumed into [the] score…"	'Concert - Powder Her Face' in *The Time*s (12/06/06)
Gomez, Jill	"This duchess goes from a girl in her twenties to a *grande dame* in her late seventies, from a kind of Isolde-like rapture to Cole Porter insouciance – yes, I can promise you an Adès popular song which will stay with you long after the opera is over – and then I'm into an Ella Fitzgerald scat-style, and from that to the fragile hauteur of a Richard	Seckerson, Edward, 'Lipstick on her Collar: Jill Gomez Has Been Getting Her Mouth Around Ades's New Opera' in *The Independent* (30/06/1995)

	Strauss heroine, and ultimately to a manic *Erwartung*-like psychodrama.”	
Griffiths, Paul	“…recalls the wonderful scene in *Siegfried*… the audience hears both the intentions (in the words) and the unctuous disguise of those intentions (in the music)… But Powder Her Face is full of far more blatant references to other operas. Much o f the first act swims close to *Der Rosenkavalier*… Then the whole trial scene is framed by shameless quotations from *The Rake’s Progress*…” “The piece snatches at allusions…”	'We Are Here! Look at Us!' in *The Times Literary Supplement* (7/06/1995)
Griffiths, Paul	“The popular idioms he evokes -- the tango that starts the opera and often comes back, a wonderful 30's-style song for crooning -- are recreated with as much fastidious workmanship as everything else in the score”	‘Everyone Wants a Piece of Ades: This Piece’ in *The New York Times* (6/12/1998). Available at https://www.nytimes.com/1998/12/06/arts/music-everyone-wants-a-piece-of-ades-this-piece.html accessed 17/11/18
Groover, D. L.	“Rhythm is very much a part of Adès's impressive vocabulary, like elemental Stravinsky, but it's Benjamin Britten whose distinctive voice Adès's resembles, and, I think, admires. Like Britten, it's not always pleasant to listen to, even with its teasing little hints of Piazzolla-like tangos and riffs from Kurt Weill”	‘Fellatio and Fishing Reels in Powder Her Face from Opera Vista’ in *Houston Press* (11/11/11)
Hall, George	“Ades’s score remains a brilliant achievement - wild, witty and sophisticated in its use of parody and a wide range of references to other musical style”	‘Powder Her Face’ in *The Stage* (3/04/14)
Hall, George	“…the multiple parodies and references Adès's score indulges in”	'Review: Powder Her Face Made Memorable by Roocroft's Duchess' in *The Guardian* (3/04/14)
Hamilton, Andy	“Astor Piazzolla exerts an influence to the extent of direct quotation.”	'Thomas Ades Sleaze Operas' in The Wire (Apr. 1998)
Hamilton, Andy	“This is a through-composed opera on the model of Berg and Britten”	'Sex Scandal Makes High Class Opera' in *Classic CD* (Oct. 1998)

	"The overture moves rapidly to a tango feel…" "…dreamy clichés of film music…" "…the Ghost Epilogue especially reminiscent of the tango-master's (Astor Piazzolla) compositional style."	
Harlow, John	"… [*Powder Her Face* mixes] up different musical themes that would have been important in her life. These range from a tango to Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*…"	'Opera Does the Dirty on the Duchess' in *The Times* (2/08/1998)
Harvey, Jay	"Adès's *Powder Her Face* music is brittle and retro-stylish… disturbingly addresses the fantasy sensualist in most of us. It evokes with twisted abandon the 1030s popular dances and songs some of our recent ancestors may have got naughty to."	'ISO Guest Artists Offer Powderful Debuts' in Indystar (13/01/09)
Hensher, Philip	"…it ended up being an opera full of quotes…"	'Sex, Powder and Polaroids' in *The Guardian* (29/05/08). Available at https://www.theguardian.com/music/2008/may/29/classicalmusicandopera accessed 12/10/18
Hunt, Brian	"Adès has woven quality fabric from elements of Twenties dance music. Yes, it therefore recalls Maxwell Davies's foxtrots."	'A camp and Cramped Curiosity' in *The Daily Telegraph* (5/07/1995)
Jeal, Erica	"…1930s popular song, tango and slow waltz course through the score, along with quotations from Richard Strauss, Stravinsky and Schubert…"	'LSO/Adès' in *The Guardian* (12/06/06)
Jones, Roger	"…the music incorporates a range of song styles. Audiences may detect elements of Strauss, Cold Porter and even Ella Fitzgerald in the opera."	'Meteoric Rise of a Brilliant Talent' in *The Gloucester Echo* (1995, date unknown)
Jones, Roger	"…profusion of rhythmic styles"	'No Escaping from the Scandals' in The Echo (3/07/1995)

Jorden, James	"…nerve-jangling score, which sounds like Stravinsky, Ravel and Alban Berg run through a Cuisinart"	'Scandalous Opera Bares All' in *The New York Post* (19/02/13)
Inverne, James	"…echoes of Kurt Weill and the Alban Berg of Lulu…"	'A Most Auspicious Star' *in Opera News*, Vol. 69, Issue 11 (May 2005)
Joseph, Jerry	"…redolent of Strauss at his most carnal…"	'Performance Reviews' in *The Musical Times, Vol. 136, No. 1831, Early Music Issue* (Sept. 1995), pp. 511-512
Karpińska, Iwona	"Adès weaved Schubert's "Death and the Maiden", as well as Gardel's and Piazzolla's tangoes into the fabric of his composition, but the way he did it stresses his original music as the foundation of the entire work, a medium through which Adès tells the story of the characters, and the borrowings feel as though they were being played on the radio, or performed by a separate orchestra at some ball or other social occasion"	'Poland, the National Opera in Warsaw: Powder Her Face, Thomas Adès. Premiere' in *Online Merker* (22/05/15). Available at https://onlinemerker.com/warschau-teatr-wielki-powder-her-face-von-thomas-ades/ accessed 21/11/18
Kennedy, Michael	"…Ades has a mind that obviously absorbs other composers' music like blotting-paper. The score is a phantasmagoria of swift, witty allusions – not only to the tango so popular in the Duchess's heyday, but to Strauss, Schubert, Berg, Wagner, Puccini, Stravinsky, Kurtág, Maxwell Davies and probably to others I missed."	'British Opera Diary: Powder Her Face' in *Opera*, pp. 1110-1112 (Sept. 1995)
Kennedy, Michael	"He is also very good at alluding to other composers. Strauss, Wagner and Britten are pastiched, if such a word exists, and the score sometimes has an East European tang, so that must be Kurtág…"	'Was it Worth it, Darling' in The Sunday Telegraph (7/09/1995)
Kennedy, Michael	"Too much of the score I pastiche – admittedly very superior, brilliant, witty and evocative of a period…"	'Sympathy for the Devil' in The Sunday Telegraph (20/06/1999)
Kosman, Joshua	"A chamber ensemble of 15 instruments gives the piece an acidic, Kurt Weill-ish tone, and Adès dips easily into various invocations of popular styles."	'Brilliance Lies Behind Powder' in *San Francisco Sunday Examiner & Chronicle* (17/12/1998)

Lebrecht, Norman	"Powder Her Face is a strangely neutral work, the music showing no more sympathy for its sordid heroine than Weill's did for Polly Peachum in Threepenny Opera. Echoes of Noel Coward, Alban Berg and quirky György Kurtág percolate the score, but Adès is good at burying his traces. Deception and subterfuge are part of his armoury"	'Is Thomas Adès destined to become the first major composer of the next Millennium?' in *The Telegraph* (12/10/1998). Available at https://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/4715932/Is-Thomas-Ades-destined-to-become-the-first-major-composer-of-the-next-Millennium.html accessed 10/11/18
Levang, Rex	"Adès gives the listener a lot to digest - he's a great includer. Not that he writes musical collages…" "Imitation and pastiche are usually subtle tools for Adès, but in this theatrical context, he wields them boldly. One big number is a 1930s pop song, a la Noel Coward. And when Death comes to the Duchess, in the form of a formidable Hotel Manager, the orchestra blares out a phrase from Schubert's *Death and the Maiden*"	'Classical Music's New Phenom' for *Minnesota Public Radio* (Jul. 1999). Available at http://music.minnesota.publicradio.org/features/9907_ades/ accessed 10/11/18
Levy, Paul	"As music, the critics here, searching for points of comparison, have mentioned Strauss, Janáček, Stravinsky, Berg and Weill, and one, inevitably, in a preview, Mozart."	'Opera: Thomas Adès's Powder Her Face' in *The Wall Street Journal* (14/07/1995)
Maddocks, Fiona	"The score sizzles with jazz, tango and a myriad of allusions"	'Classical CDs' in *The Observer* (30/08/1998)
Maddocks, Fiona	"…a swirling mud of 1930s-ish dance music…" "…plundering music from Berg to Ives to Cole Porter…	'Lightening Conductor' in *The Observer* (20/06/1999)
Maddocks, Fiona	"…from tango to two-step via Berg and Stravinsky"	'Powder Her Face; Through His Teeth – review' in *The Guardian* (6/04/14). Available at https://www.theguardian.com/music/2014/apr/06/powder-her-face-through-his-teeth-review accessed 10/10/18

Malafonte, Judith	"the dazzling variety of Adès's witty score, with shades of Strauss, Britten and Stravinsky overtaken by tangos and pop sounds of the early twentieth century"	Malafonte, Judith, 'Powder Her Face: West Edge Opera' in Opera News (31/07/16). Available at https://www.operanews.com/Opera_News_Magazine/2016/10/Reviews/OAKLAND,_CA__Powder_Her_Face.html accessed 4/4/20
Martin, Gale	"…a pastiche of musical influences"	'Opera Phila's Powder Her Face a shiny triumph' in Bachtrack (12/06/13)
Mellor, David	"Adès's score is rich, ripe and full of allusions, from the sleazy, Weimar Republic world of Kurt Weill at the beginning to the moving, Astor Piazzolla-inspired tango that ends the piece."	'A Face to Remember' in The Daily Mail (2/05/10)
Milnes, Rodney	"He knows his 20th-century repertory and is not ashamed to pay homage – to Walton for a pastiche tango, to Weill for parody, to Poulenc for soprano leaping on top of a slushy chord with a harp whoosh, to Britten (the *Budd* chords), to Berg for atonal lyricism, to Strauss for any number of near-quotes."	'Pilloried to Music' in The Times (3/07/1995)
Molleson, Kate	"There's no question that *Powder* is cleverly written, with its showy tropes of jazz and tango, its fiendish vocal lines and brash Weill-esque orchestration…"	'Powder Her Face' in *Opera Magazine*, p. 865 (Jul. 2010)
Morley, Christopher	"There is an exuberant wealth of invention in Adès' score, with particular emphasis on the smouldering sexuality of tango and the heart-on-sleeve sentiment of 1930s dance music."	'Heart-on-Sleeve Smoulderings' in *The Birmingham Post* (3/07/1995)
Morley, Christopher	"Adès…pays homage to earlier models, Strauss, Berg, Britten and others, in a joyously liberated post-modern kind of way. He also makes telling use of 1039s pastiche popular songs – Cole Porter referred to Margaret in *You're the Top* – and Argentinian tango…"	'CD of the Week' in *The Birmingham Post* (22/08/1998)
Morrison, Richard	"*Powder* is a score rich in period allusions…"	'Her Grace and her Disgrace' in *The Times Arts Section* (14/06/1999)

Morrison, Richard	"Adès's score (written when he was just 23) has such clever things — stunningly embellished pastiches of interwar songs and dances; sly allusions to Rosenkavalier, The Rake's Progress and much else."	'Powder Her Face at the Linbury Theatre, WC2' in *The Times* (28/04/10)
Morrison, Richard	"… Adès writes dance music, wonderfully evoking the Thirties…"	'Powder Her Face Review' in *The Times* (30/01/17)
Murray, David	"…Dance-music of the 1930s is never far from Adès's music here…"	'Powder Her Face' in *The Financial Times* (4/07/1995)
Norris, Geoffrey	"…cunning musical allusions…"	'Classical CD of the Week in *The Daily Telegraph* (8/08/1998)
O'Brien, Geoffrey	"Adès drags in tango and 1930s pop music and 1950s jukebox percussion along with inescapable echoes of Berg, Janáček, and Stravinsky"	'In My Lady's Crowded Chamber' in *The New York Review* (18/02/13). Available at https://www.nybooks.com/daily/2013/02/19/my-ladys-crowded-chamber/ accessed 4/04/20
Oliver, Michael	"He [Adès] cannot, of course, resist alluding to the music that would have furnished the Duchess's glamorous life – the score is pervaded with tangos – but he can use it to convey menace and desolation as well as picturesque period evocation."	Ades Powder Her Face review in *Gramophone* (Aug. 1998)
Pettitt, Stephen	"…there is a lot of real Adès beneath the parodies of Coward, of racy tangoes, that permeate the piece."	'Doubting Thomas' in *The Sunday Times* (20/06/1999)
Picard, Anna	"Powder Her Face is a showy-off score: breathtakingly confident in its parody of 1930s dance music and popular song…"	'The Dirty Duchess Plays for Sympathy. It's a Lost Cause' in *The Independent on Sunday* (22/06/08)
Poole, Elissa	"…Adès has corrupted enough Kurt Well…" "There are stylistic references to Berg and Strauss, and quotes from Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*…"	'Powder Her Face Review' in The Toronto Globe & Mail (3/10/1998)
Porter, Andrew	"…the orchestra cites two bars of Baba the Turk's unveiling'" "'Influences' are evident, not dominant, and readily owned: Kurt Weill in the cabaret-like structure and texture; Alban Berg and his Lulu… Mussorsgky, Janáček, Ligeti with his etched precision are composers	'Ades and Powder Her Face' in *Opera*, pp. 775-778 (Jul. 1995)

	Adés admires… *Der Rosenkavalier*, of which Adés is fond, has probably left a trace; also *Capriccio*… Flexible, versatile, they yielded such unexpected results as an appearance, unbidden but apt, of the *Tristan* chord, they could embrace the '30s pop song, the only pastiche in the work; they gave unfamiliar twists to familiar triads. Adés has ensured that what we first need to hear, in the way of references, allusions, developments, will be apparent, and that plenty remains for subsequent discovery."	
Reinhard, Gillian	"Adès' unconventionally sexual opera was rooted in the modern tradition of Britten, Weill, and Berg. The latter particularly inspired the composer, and "Powder Her Face" has remnants of Berg's "Lulu" in the score."	Opera Profile: Thomas Adès' Sexually-Charged "Powder Her Face" in *Opera Wire* (1/07/20). Available at https://operawire.com/opera-profile-thomas-ades-sexually-charged-powder-her-face/ accessed 21/11/20
Rosenberg, Marion	"its music… darts between "high" and "low" styles (tangos, a thirties-style popular song, urbane allusions to Strauss and Stravinsky)"	'New York City Opera goes down and gets dirty with "Powder Her Face"' in *The Classical Review* (18/2/13). Available at https://theclassicalreview.com/2013/02/new-york-city-opera-goes-down-and-gets-dirty-with-powder-her-face/ accessed 4/4/20
Ross, Alex	There were clear parallels with Alban Berg's epic of degradation, Lulu..." "With a few incredibly seductive stretches of thirties-era popular melody, Adès shows the giddy world that the Duchess lost…"	'Roll Over Beethoven' in *The New Yorker* (26/10/1998). Available at https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1998/10/26/roll-over-beethoven accessed 22/06/18
Ruhe, Pierre	"Adès's score is a bona fide masterpiece, combining a broad palette of styles and influences, from tango and Cole Porter to Berg's *Lulu* and mordant atonality…"	Powder Her Face in *Amazon Review* (19/11/1998)

Schuth, Brian	The music is packed so tight with allusion, and the material is so constantly stretched, distorted and transformed, that one cannot really attend to the orchestra while also listening to the voices. The original scoring for the opera required 15 instrumentalists. For the Suite, which was commissioned by no fewer than six major organizations (five orchestras and Carnegie Hall), Adès enlarged the forces dramatically: the orchestra barely fit on the stage, and the battery of percussion was intimidating. The Suite is in eight movements; most of the musical material appears as fragments of popular-sounding music, mostly from the 30s and 40s, but it is almost never delivered straight. The opening movement, Overture, presents a tango (openly stolen by Adès from Argentinian singer Carlos Gardel)	'BSO Both Buttoned-Up and Unzipped' in *The Boston Musical Intelligencer* (26/01/18). Available at https://www.classical-scene.com/2018/01/26/bso-buttoned accessed 21/11/18
Seckerson, Edward	"rejoicing in exhaustive 1930s pastiches of sleazy saxophone slurs, and even a song-and-dance routine. There's a touch of Britten's Death in Venice about the multiple caricatures…"	'Powder Her Face, Royal Opera House: Linbury Studio Theatre, London' in *The Independent* (23/10/11). Available at https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/classical/reviews/powder-her-face-royal-opera-house-linbury-studio-theatre-london-846195.html accessed 15/11/18
ap Siôn, Pwyll	"The opera pillages from all manner of forms and styles, including a Carlos Gardel tango and other popular dance forms, 1930s light song and the repertoire associated with the Palm Court Orchestra, Jack Buchanan, Paul Anka, 1950s pop songs, Walton's Façade, Berg's Lulu, Janáček and Stravinsky…"	'Contemporary composer: Thomas Adès' in *Graphophone* (20/03/17). Available at https://www.gramophone.co.uk/feature/contemporary-composer-thomas-ad%C3%A8s accessed 10/11/18
Smith, Adrain	"…a sensuously subversive score that incorporated everything from stretched Piazzolla-like tangos and deformed Cole Porter songs to echoes of Stravinsky's The Rake's Progress…"	'Opera for Our Time' in Journal of Music (14/03/18). Available at http://journalofmusic.com/criticism/opera-our-time accessed 18/10/18

Taruskin, Richard	(Quoting Bryan Gilliam on Strauss) "The immediate result was *Der Rosenkavalier*, an opera from which, as it happens, Mr. Adès quotes delectably in *Powder Her Face*"	'A Surrealist Composer Comes to The Rescue of Modernism' in *New York Times, Arts Section* (05/12/1999). Available at: https://www.nytimes.com/1999/12/05/arts/a-surrealist-composer-comes-to-the-rescue-of-modernism.html accessed 23/06/18
Thomas, Simon	"One could trace all sorts of musical influences in the score, from Britten to jazz, and to my ears it's a little too reliant on Strauss, sounding awfully like Ariadne auf Naxos much of the time with Bottone's maid a skittish Zerbinetta and Paton a chameleon of an Arlecchino (not to mention the sly presentation of a silver rose). "	'Powder Her Face' in *Music OMH* (26/04/10)
Valencia, Mark	"The music's colours have tints of Berg, Britten and Maxwell Davies, yet the voice is fresh and contemporary"	'Powder Her Face' in *What's on Stage* (27/04/10)
Valencia, Mark	"From foxtrots that recall Peter Maxwell Davies to dramatic, Shostakovich-like evocations, the music rarely holds back."	'The first opera by Thomas Adès energetically revived in a found space on Marylebone Road' in *What's on Stage* (3/04/14)
Walsh, John Henry	"You can find a dirty, backstreet tango emerging from the opening sonic blitz of his opera, Powder Her Face; elsewhere, he coaxes from the orchestra a motor horn, a swanee whistle and a danceband record with its needle stuck. He flirts with pop tunes, jazz riffs and atonal squeaks of Berg to get what he wants"	'A young man in a hurry' in *The Independent* (27/05/1999). Available at https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/arts-a-young-man-in-a-hurry-1096160.html accessed 18/10/18
Washington, Ruby	Mr. Adès's Duchess is an expressionist femme fatale in the tradition of Berg's *Lulu* and Janáček's *Emilia Marty* (in *The Makropulos Case*). But she is also, like the Marschallin in Strauss's *Rosenkavalier*, an aristocrat who faces aging with a bittersweet mixture of fear, humor and resignation. "The music of *Powder Her Face*, like that of *The Tempest*, manages to be eclectic in a way that never sounds like pastiche and always sounds	'Return of a Tabloid Dreamscape ' in *The New York Times* (8/02/13)

	like Adès. Set into the spiky texture of much of the score, its occasional lilting snippets of 1930s-style popular songs could, in other hands, be the stuff of simple-minded parody. But Mr. Adès always brings in an unexpected note, a destabilizing rhythm, a mood that won't stay put	
Wells, Dominic	"…*Powder her Face* contains echoes of Britten's cabaret song" "He has also alluded to British jazz from the 1930s, with *Powder Her Face* often aping the style typically associated with the music of Noël Coward, as well as including waltzes, foxtrots and tangos"	'Plural Styles, Personal Style: The Music of Thomas Adès' in *Tempo - A Quarterly Review of Modern Music, Vol. 66* (Cambridge, Apr. 2012)
Westminster, University of, News and Events	"His dazzling score is as memorable as the Duchess herself, paying homage to the popular idioms of cabaret and tango, as well as to Weill, Berg and Stravinsky"	'English National Opera: Powder Her Face' in *Westminster University News and Events*. Available at https://www.westminster.ac.uk/news-and-events/events/english-national-opera-powder-her-face accessed 19/11/18
Wheeler, Victor	"Adès's music for Powder Her Face is an eclectic mix, often embracing popular styles."	'New York City Opera – Thomas Adès's Powder Her Face' in *Classical Source* (17/02/13)
White, Michael	"Imagine a hyperactive hybrid of Richard Strauss, Noël Coward (with noises off by Britten and Stravinsky) and you'll have some idea of the idiom, wild with parody…"	'A Star is Born - and he's 24' in *The Independent on Sunday* (7/09/1995)
White, Michael	"… much of the score is a muscle-flexing pastiche…"	'Still Room at the Top for a New Britten' in *The Independent on Sunday* (20/06/1999)
Whittall, Arnold	"[*Powder Her Face*] takes a real person - the notorious Duchess of Argyll as the subject for a knowing contemporary morality whose context is provided by 'bad girl acquires an air of nobility' models from *Traviata* to *Lulu*, and whose range of reference, not excluding both Strauss and Stravinsky, is a bit too encyclopedic for its own good."	'Orpheus: And after' in *The Musical Times, Vol. 139, No. 1865*, pp. 55-58 (Winter 1998)

Woolfe, Zachary	The music of "Powder Her Face," like that of "The Tempest," manages to be eclectic in a way that never sounds like pastiche and always sounds like Adès. Set into the spiky texture of much of the score, its occasional lilting snippets of 1930s-style popular songs could, in other hands, be the stuff of simple-minded parody"	'Return of a Tabloid Dreamscape' in *The New York Times* (08/02/18). Available at https://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/10/arts/music/thomas-adess-powder-her-face-from-city-opera-at-bam.html accessed 15/11/18

APPENDIX 2

In the light of the number of reworkings of material from *Powder Her Face* and the notational variants found within them, it is relevant to this project to include a detailed editorial. The solo version of the *Concert Paraphrase* has been revised by the composer, with additions as well as corrections to errata, and has had four print runs (September 2010, January 2013, and January 2019 – a further printing run took place in October 2019, but without further revisions). These have been catalogued here because they show a developing preoccupation with fine detail from the composer and, since they have occurred whilst this project has been ongoing and after my 2013 recording, their inclusion is warranted.

Differences between the two-piano and solo versions are highlighted when they are concerned with notation, expressive performance directions, articulation, tempi etc. However, variants in pedal markings are generally not highlighted since the use of the pedals is inherently different when music is distributed across two pianos instead of one. I have therefore only incorporated comments on pedal markings when they are especially different or absent in one source.

Variance in markings between orchestral sources and the piano versions are included according to the same principle: notation, expressive indications, and tempi. I have opted not to include dynamic differences since orchestral dynamics are largely contextual – for example, ***pp*** in full strings, but ***ff*** in the harp does not translate as ***pp*** in the piano with the transcribed harp part played ***ff***. However, whilst articulations are also often contextual, they have been detailed if they are absent in some sources. I have used the *Luxury Suite from Powder Her Face* as the primary source for the large-scale orchestral adaptations since it is the one which includes most of the musical material in the *Concert Paraphrase* and the orchestration of the three suites

is the same. The addition of cautionary accidentals from the first printing of the solo version of the *Concert Paraphrase* into the second has not been included unless they alter/correct pitches.

The locations of points commented upon is represented according to movement (in roman numerals):bar for all piano versions and the three orchestral suites; in the case of the opera full or vocal scores, locations are listed according to scene number (digits):bar.

Sources

A	*Concert Paraphrase on Powder Her Face* (solo) first printing
B	*Concert Paraphrase on Powder Her Face* (solo) latest printing (October 2019)
C	*Powder Her Face* full score
D	*Powder Her Face* vocal score
E	*Concert Paraphrase on Powder Her Face* (two-piano version)
F	*Luxury Suite from Powder Her Face*

Point in *Concert Paraphrase*	Corresponding point in alternative source	Comment
i:2		Second and third notes in RH (B, C♯) stemmed downward in A, corrected to point upwards in B
i:5		Slur from third beat not present in A, but added in B
i:5		Slur from third beat not present in A, but added in B. Two short diminuendo hairpins in A changed to single long hairpin in B
i:8	C 1:382	The tenuto markings in B are not present in any other source. Final note of the bar in RH (D) is tied to two minims in b. 9 in C, D and E.
i:9	C 1:383 E i:9	G♯ from vln. I missing in A, B, and E.

i:10-11	C 1:384	A, B and E have this material in two bars notated in 2/4 and 2/6 time, whereas in C and D it is written as a single bar (5/6). The tenuto markings in B are not present in any other source
i:12	E i:12-15	A does not have the pedal marking which appears in the B and E. Also in A, the minim E in the LH is printed within the body of the arpeggio, not beside it as in B. A has *dim.* printed twice within the bar whereas the B and E substitute the first for a hairpin (>). Also, E divides this bar into three bars – one in 2/4 and two in 3/8, thus metrically organising the beginning of the cadenza. E has no barline printed, but the bar count still increases at the end of b. 14. ***pp*** at end of bar not present in A
i:13-14	C 1:386-388 E 1:16-17	A has no crescendo hairpin (<) in LH at the end of b. 13, added into B. Also, *accel.* appears in B, not present in A or E. Rhythmic construction of both bars different from C
i:15		A has missing bass clef change in left hand, corrected in B. B also has cautionary ♮ accidental in first LH note of septuplet
i:16	E i:19-20 C 1:148-149 F ii:148-149	A has ♩=88, as does E, B has Tempo Giusto ♩=104, C has ♩=96, as does F (indicated *meno mosso*). A does not have staccato dots on descending chromatic line, same as D, whereas C and F do have staccato dots. A also does not have slur from first note into b. 17 or slur between last two notes in LH (F♮, E), added in B
i:17		Slur over last two notes in LH (D♮/C♯) note present in A, but added in B
i:18		A has ♯ missing from top note of LH chord on the downbeat, and does not have staccato wedge on final note of semi-quaver triplets in LH (E). ***mp*** also added in B
i:19		***pp*** moved from below the LH stave in A to in between the two staves in B

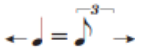
i:20-21	C 1:152-153 F ii:152-153	Arpeggio embellishment present in A, B, E and F, but not in C or D. LH slur not present in A, but added in B
i:23	D i:26 C 1:155 F ii:155	***mf*** marking not present in A or D, but present in B, C, E and F. Also, slur from last beat of b. 23 RH to first beat of b. 26 LH not present in A or D, but present in all other sources
i:24		LH crescendo hairpin and accent beneath stave not present in A, but added in B
i:26	C 1:158 F ii:158	Crescendo hairpin (<) not present in A. All sources vary in dynamic markings, however A and B have no such indications.
i:30	C 1:162 F ii:162	Chromatic grace notes of bass clarinet part of C in all sources except D. Tenuto markings in LH not present in A but added in B
i:35	E i:38 C 1:167 F ii:167	A and D have no accent on first note in right hand (A). Present in all other sources. Slur in A, B and E is from B♭ to D, whereas in C and D it is from F to B♭, in keeping with the melisma (why sung over F and B♭). F has slur over all three notes
i:38		***mf*** marking not present in A
i:40-44	C 1:172-176 F ii:172-176	Articulation of triplets in all sources differ from consistent staccato dots in A, B and E. C, D and F all have first note of group with a staccato dot, second note is slurred to third note which also has a staccato dot. Staccato dots on duplet quavers in both RH and LH missing in A, but added in B In b. 40, A and E have the top two notes (B/G) as a semibreve, whereas in B they are incorporated into the staccato triplets. Last two notes in LH in b. 41 corrected to B♮ in B (accidental missing in A)
i:46		A has this bar incorrectly printed in 4/4 time
i:47		Slur beginning on last note in RH absent in A, added in B
i:53-55		A has the RH from 53^2 printed in the bass clef. Changed to treble in B.

i:56	E i:59-60	A has no pedal change with bass G♯, which is also printed as a crotchet. Pedal mark added and rhythm corrected in B. E has no barline printed, but the bar count still increases
i:57		A has bass note (G) marked ***mf***, B has ***f***
i:57		Crescendo hairpin and ***fff*** marking not present in A. Added in B and fermata bracketed.
i:60		A has LH fourth quaver as G♯/A♯. Corrected to G♯/A♮ in B
i:61		*molto ped., legato sempre* absent in A, present in B. Penultimate note in LH (C♮) missing ♮ accidental in A, added in B
i:62		A has LH second note as B♯, corrected to B in B♮
i:63	C 1:348 F v:639	Notated rhythm of Duchess's line in C and F conveys appropriate syllabic stress.
i:65	C 1:350 D i:69 F v:639	Tenuto markings and accent missing in A, added in B. C, D and F have dotted tenuto markings for the entire bar except tenuto-dotted tenuto on final beat
i:66	C 1:351 D i:70 F v:640	E has all notes tenuto within quintuplet in RH, whereas C, D and F have tenuto on final note (C♯) only. No articulation in A or B. B also has pedal indication and bass C♯ from second beat is tied and not reiterated on fourth beat, unlike in A.
i:67	C 1:352 F v:643	LH C♯ tied from previous bar not present in A. In Duchess's line, C♯ reiterated on the second beat (*Fa*-shion), but not present in A, B, or E. Grace note D in LH not present in A or E.
i:68		*legato ped. sempre* not present in A
i:70		Slur from LH top note (G) to RH not present in A, but added in B
i:71	C 1:356 E i:75 F v:647	In the last half of the bar, the Duchess's last two notes (C♯, B) are notated as two triplet crotchets in C, A and F. In A, B and D they are grouped into syncopated triplet quavers. LH grace notes during second beat ♮ accidental missing before D.

		Dynamic markings ***(p)***, ***f*** and ***(p)*** are missing in A, but added in B
i:72		LH second beat G, both voices share notehead in B, corrected from two in A
i:73	C 1:356 E i:77 F v:647	Every source differs with dynamics. A has no dynamics, B has ***mp*** above the stave, ***mf*** in the middle for each of the Duchess's three notes, and ***p*** < ***mp*** > below the stave
i:77		Slur not present in A, added in B
i:78	C 1:363 D i:82 F v:655	A does not have crescendo hairpin above top stave. Present in all other sources
i:79	C 1:364 D i:83 F v:656	A does not have diminuendo hairpin below bottom stave. Present in all other sources
i:80	C 1:365 D i:84 F v:657	A does not have diminuendo hairpin above top stave or crescendo hairpin below bottom stave. Present in all other sources
i:82	C 1:367 F v:658	Duchess's second note (C♯, si-lenced) is a crotchet, not a minim in C, D and F. Also, A has a misprinted E instead of F for the 10th note of LH. Corrected in B and E
i:84	C 1:369 E i:88 F v:660	3rd beat, 2nd note in RH is a B♭ in A, B, D, and E (1st piano part). However, C and F have a G printed in harp parts
i:85	C 1:370 E i:89 F v:661	*a tempo* indication present in B and E, but not A. C and F have ♩=76
i:87-89	C 1:372-374 E i:91-93 F v:663-665	Variations in tempo indications. None in A. B has *muovendosi (molto accel.) – tornando – molto rit.* C has *rall.* in b. 374 D has *muovendosi – rall.*

		F has *muovendosi – molto rall.*
i:90-94	C 1:375-379 E i:94-98 F v:666-670	Rhythmic notation of *la melodia* is unclear in A and B since it is beamed with the grace notes. All other sources have notated rhythm. B. 92, 1st semiquaver E in LH has a tenuto in C and D (1:377), and an accent in F (v:668)
i:96		***p*** marking and slur from RH top voice (C♯ to B) not present in A, added in B.
i:100	C 8:316	Melody notated as four equal dotted quavers in C and D, not as in A, B or E.
i:101		Slur not present in A, added in B. In 2012, Adès requested a tenuto marking to be placed on 13th note of bar in LH (C), but this has not made it to print in B, or E.
i:102		Marcato wedge missing in A beneath bottom F♯ in LH
ii:1	C 5:1 E ii:1	A, B, and E have ♩=160-168, whereas C has ♩=152-160. A has ***p*** < whereas B and E have ***p*** < ***mp***
ii:2	C 5:2 D 5:2 E ii:2	LH lower note (F) is a crotchet with a tenuto in A B and E. C has minim with tenuto and staccato dot; D has minim with no articulation marking
ii:7		***mp*** missing in A, added in B
ii:12		Crescendo hairpin and ***mp*** missing in A, added in B
ii:14		RH ♯ accidental on second beat missing in A, added in B
ii:19	E ii:19	A does not have diminuendo hairpin and ***mp*** markings found in B. E has ***mp*** but no hairpin. C and D have ***p***
ii:20	D 5:20	D has an F as highest note in RH of piano part, probably meant to be an A, as present in all other sources
ii:21-23	C 5:21-22 E ii:21-23	C has these bars as two bars in 3/4 time. A, B and E have it notated as three bars in 3/8, 2/4 and 2/4+1/8 time. A has no crescendo hairpin at end of b. 23. B has ***mf*** and a crescendo hairpin from the second beat. E has ***mp*** *cresc.* starting at the end of b. 23. C has diminuendo hairpin starting in b. 23 and ***mf*** on the second beat. D has no markings.

ii:24-25		Only marking in A is ***ff*** *laugh*. ***mf***, crescendo hairpin and accents added to all notes in laughter motif in B. Slur and crescendo hairpin in B also absent in A
ii:27	E ii:27	E has staccato dot on last D♭ in left hand. Not present in any other source. ***mf*** not present in A, added in B
ii:31		A has no slur from b. 31 final note in right hand (G♯) to b. 38 first note in left hand (F♯). Present in B
ii:36	C 5:35 E ii:36	A has no pedal indication. E has *senza ped. ad lib., or very light pedal, to [b.] 42* in first piano part. Notes in third beat of the bar differ from C and C in A, B and E
ii:37	C 5:36 E ii:37	First two beats in A and B have reduced number of notes. D and E represent C, except last note of D in LH of piano part is a B, probably meant to be an A, as present in all other sources
ii:38-41		A has no pedal indications
ii:45	E ii:45	Slurs beginning from b. 45 ending in b. 56 not present in A. Further slurs added in E. All differ from sung slurs in C.
ii:46	E ii:46	A and E have, in the last quaver of the bar a C printed beneath chord in RH (first piano in E), making a full A minor triad. Removed in B and not present in any other sources
ii:48-50	E ii:48-50	E has a crescendo hairpin in b. 48 and swell hairpins in bb. 49 and 50. Not present in any other sources.
ii:53		First RH note in A (C♯) missing accidental, added in B
ii:54	C 5:53 E ii:54	Top part of RH in A and B appears as equal quintuplet crotchets in C and E
ii:55		The beam between the two hands which forms the Mistress's part is not present in A, making the voice-leading unclear. Present in B
ii:56	E ii:56	Slur in first piano part not present in any other source
ii:57		Pedal markings from here to the end of the movement not present in A
ii:58		***(mf)*** and ***(p)*** markings not present in A

ii:59	C 5:58	Both slurs not present in A. Both appear in E, but only first slur present in C
ii:60	C 5:59 E ii:60	No slurs present in A or C, but appear in B and E
ii:67	E ii:67	*Senza ped.* marking not present in A and E
i:68		LH chord on final beat in A has an accent mark, removed in B
i:70		*innocentamente* not present in A
i:75		Crescendo hairpin not present in A, added in B
ii:77	C 5:76 E ii:77	***sf*** marking not present in A, added in B. C has ***mf***
ii:78	C 5:77 2-pno ii:78	A has ***sff*** on downbeat, ***ppp*** from B♭ minim. C has ***ff*** in upper strings on downbeat, ***ppp*** in lower strings and diminuendo hairpins for gliss. on final beat. D has ***f*** and no gliss. B and E are the same (***sffpp*** on downbeat, ***mp*** and tenuto marking on B♭, swell hairpins to middle of chromatic gliss. with accent and marcato markings on final low B).
iii:1	C 3:1 D S3:1 F iv:386	A and E have incorrect tempo direction of ♩=♩, suggesting ♩=160-168. B corrected to  (i.e. ♩=ca. 54). C has ♩=56. F bears the title *Waltz* and is notated in 3/4 with each of the triplet quavers from all other sources appearing as full crotchets. As such, there are twice as many bars. D is the only source with *dolce* indicated.
iii:11		*(spiccato!)* marking not present in A, added in B
iii:13		Diminuendo hairpin not present in A, added in B
iii:17	D 3:17	D has an E♭ in RH third note of second beat, probably a mistake. All other sources have a D.
iii:23	C 3:23-24 E iii:23-24 F iv:430-433	A, B, and E all omit second F♯ of Waitress's line (on-ly) in b. 23, and the second F(♮) in b. 24 (lob-ster). A, B and E have tenuto markings on last two quavers of bar. C, D, and F have staccato dots/pizzicato

iii:31		RH staccato dots on second and third beats not present in A, added in B
iii:32		*stacc. in ped. come sopra* indication not present in A, added in B
iii:37		*stacc. sempre* not present in A, added in B
iii:40-41	E iii:40-41	A and B have two crescendo hairpins below LH stave, whereas E has a short crescendo hairpin to ***f*** at the start of b. 40 then a long diminuendo hairpin to ***pp*** halfway through b. 41. A and B reflect all other sources, except D which has no indications
iii:48		RH fourth semi-quaver of first beat accidentals missing in A, added in B
iii:49		***f*** and diminuendo hairpin marking not present in A, added in B. RH last semi-quaver of second quaver beat missing ♯ accidental in A, corrected in B
iii:50		***f*** and diminuendo hairpin marking not present in A, added in B
iii:51		***f*** and *più dim.* markings not present in A
iii:53	C 3:53 E iii:53 F iv:497	Second and fourth notes in LH (G/C and D/G) are printed as quavers in all sources (crotchets in F, accounting for the change in metre).
iii:55		A, C and E have ***pp*** at start of bar. Not present in B or D. F has ***pp*** in outer voices (strings, flutes), but ***mf*** for the inner parts (oboes)
iii:57	D 3:57	D has *stacc. sempre*. Not present in any other source
iii:61	C 3:61	A, B, E and F have four grace notes at the start of the bar (A, B, C, and D), whereas there are three in C (bongo drum) and D (A, B, C)
iii:68	E iii:68	A and E have erroneous A♭ (LH first two upper note in A, 1st piano RH lower notes). Corrected to A♮ in B.
iii:70		In A, last quaver of bar has missing ♮ before second and fifth notes (D, D). Corrected in B

iii:71-72		Pedal markings not present in A
iii:74	E iii:74	*Legato ped. sempre* not present in A. E has *(quasi) ped. sempre*.
iii:78		LH second beat first note missing lower F♯ in A, added in B
iii:82	C 3:82 E iii:82 F iv:561-562	*marc.* not present in A, C or F. Appears in B and E. A, B, and E have comma (,) indications for a pause, whereas C has a bracketed fermata and F has an unbracketed fermata and *G.P.* (general pause) indicated. A has no pedal marking, added in B
iii:84	E iii:84	Slur in right hand upper voice from C♯ to first G♯ in E not present in any other sources
iii:87		Crescendo hairpin not present in A, added in B
iii:92	C iii:92 E iii:92 F iv:581	Natural accidental missing before lower voice of final triplet quaver in LH (E) in A, B and E. Present in C, D and F (presence in F is on account of accidental being present in preceding bar).
iii:94		A has two marcato wedges in LH second beat first note (D/F). Corrected to marcato and staccato wedges in B.
iii:103		A has a G♭ as last note in RH first beat, corrected To G♮ in B. A also has extraneous A♭ on top of last note of the bar in RH, deleted in B
iii:104		Slur over grace note to top E octave not present in C, added in B
iii:105	E iii:105 F iv:609	E features a chromatic gliss. towards C♯ in second piano part. Gliss in lower strings of F. Not present in A, B, C or D.
iii:108	C 5:108 E iii:108 F iv:616	***ppp*** on final chord not present in A. C has ***ppp*** (***pp*** in harp), D has ***ppp*** *sub.*, E has ***pp*** *sub.*, F has ***ppp*** (***mp*** in harp)
iii:109	F iv:618	F has *acutissimo* in oboe and horn parts (A and D etc.)
iii:110	E iii:110	E has ***(pp)*** for the grace notes

iii:113		♩=160-168 Tempo of Movement II not present in A or E. A has no indication, E has  instead. LH slur not present in A, added in B
iii:116		B♯ accidental missing in RH in A, added in B
iii:117	E iii:117	E has altered rhythm, not present in any other sources
iii:124		Crescendo hairpin and ***fff*** not present in A, added in B
iii:126-127	C 5:497-498 F vii:691-692	C, D and F have marcato wedges on all notes and no slurs (B and E identical). Marcato wedge above final quaver in RH not present in A added in B.
iii:128	D 5:497	D has altered rhythm in LH, not present in any other sources. E has additional notes in 1st piano LH imitating C and D. E also has erroneous A at bottom of LH first chord, not present in any other source
iii:130		LH has ♮ accidental missing before inner note of chord in second half of bar (D), added in B
iii:137		Pedal markings not present in A, added in B
iii:139		*senza ped.* marking not present in A, added in B
iii:140		***ff*** and ***mf*** markings not present in A, added in B
iii:148		Accents on first two LH notes not present in A, added in B
iii:151-153	C 5:520-522	Altered rhythm across these bars. A is condensed and four quavers shorter than C. In b. 151 ***ff*** marking missing in A, added in B
iii:155	E iii:155 F vii:719-720	E adds material in second piano part, not found in other sources (presumably to emulate sustaining of sound in orchestra and bass drum trem. in F)
iii:156-158	E iii:156-158 F vi:721-723	B. 156 ***ff*** marking missing in A, added in B. E has marcato wedges on every note of the laughter motif, as does F which has additional staccato wedges for the last six notes.
iii:159	F vi:724	*animal* marking only present in B and F.
iii:161-162	E iii:161-162	E has *molto rit.* starting from halfway through b. 161. B has *rit.* from b. 162. A has no tempo indication.

iii:163	C 8:23-24 E iii:163	A has ♩.=♩, B has ♪=♪ (♪=ca. 144) *poco a poco calando* [to b. 166]. C has *rit. molto!* and *movendo* ♪=96-100. E has just ♪=♪
iii:164	C 8:25 E F vii:744	A written in 3/4 time, changed to 6/8 time in B, as in all other sources. *con molto ped.* not present in A, added in B
iii:166	E iii:166	B has ♪=120 and *legato ped.* marking. E has *misterioso*, not present in any other sources
iii:170	E iii:170 F vii:750	Second half of bar in LH two notes (D, D) are both dotted quavers in A and B, whereas in E they are a crotchet and a quaver. C, D, and F have three quavers, No pedal markings in A. B has *sempre con molto ped.*, E has *con molto ped*. C, D and F have ***mf*** *calmo de freddo, alla barcarola* in piano part, not present in A, B, or E
iii:174	C S8:35 E iii:174 F vii:754	Crescendo hairpin and end of bar in all sources except A and B. E has no tenuto marking on high F in first piano part.
iii:176	E iii:176	E has no tenuto on low E in first piano part RH, and features an accent on high F in following beat, which is absent in other sources.
iii:177	E iii:177	E has an accent on high G in first piano part RH, which is absent in all other sources
iii:179	C 8:39 E iii:179 F vii:759	A, B and E have *rit.* whereas C has *ad lib. - poco stentato*, but no *rit.* F has neither
iii:180	C 8:40 E iii:180 F vii:760	Pedal markings and *legato fingering* not present in A. E has *shimmering*. C and F have *molto espr.*
iii:181	E iii:181	Pedal markings not present in A
iii:182	E iii:182	Pedal marking not present in A. E has *calando*
iii:183	E iii:183	Pedal marking and *legato ped.* not present in A. E has *sempre con molto ped.*
iii:188	E iii:188	E has *legatiss. sempre*, not present in any other sources

iii:193	C 8:53 E iii:193 F vii:773	*Quasi ped sempre (legato ped.)* not present in A. C has *molto espr. piangendo*, E has *molto espr.* and *sempre con molto ped.*, F has *lontano* and *fearful* markings
iii:195	C S8:55 E iii:195 F vii:775	Twelfth note in RH in A is an F♭, corrected to F♮ in B to correspond with all other sources. Pedal marking not present in first A. C has *espr. poss.*, F has *espr. poss.* and *piangendo*. All sources have swell hairpins and varying articulations, whereas A and B have none
iii:197	C 8:57 E iii:197 F vii:777	Pedal markings and *legatissimo* not present in A, added in B. C has *espr. possible*, E has *legatiss. sempre*, F has *espr.*
iii:198	E iii:198	E has (erroneously?) bass C placed on second beat, not beforehand as in all other sources
iii:199	E iii:199	♭ accidental missing before grace note after first chord in A, corrected in B. *Ped. ord.* not present in A, added in B. E has *ben artic.*
iii:201	C 8:61 E iii:201	C has *molto espr.*, E has *legato*
iii:207		Slur not present in A, added in B
iii:208	C 8:68	C has ♪=c.63. LH rhythm notated differently in C, D and F. RH in A has semi-quaver rest before C♮, corrected to quaver rest in B
iii:209		*dim.* marking only present in B and no other source
iii:210	E iii:210	***pp*** not present in A, added in B. Tenuto markings in LH only present in B and E
iii:212	F viii:1	Finale and tempo ♩=152 starts one bar before A, B and E
iv:18	C 8:359	A had rit. over last chord of the bar, deleted in B. C has *dolciss. possible*
iv:19		Staccato dot above chord after added in B
iv:20		No slur in A, composer requested slur to start from first played chord of RH in the bar, but in B it begins from second

		(erroneous?). Last chord in RH has an extraneous note (F) in A, deleted in B
iv:21		RH slur from final quaver end on final grace note in A, extended in B.
iv:22		All tenuto markings, crescendo hairpin, and final slur not present in A, added in B
iv:23		***mf*** not present in A, added in B
iv:26		***pp*** and slur not present in A, added in B
iv:27		Slur not present in A, added in B
iv:30		*cresc.* and pedal marking not present in A, added in B
iv:32		All marcato wedges from 'loco' not present in A, added in B. ***p*** marking in A, removed in B
iv:33		Slur on final quaver of bar in RH not present in A, added in B
iv:34		First two marcato wedges in RH not present in A, added in B
iv:35		♮ accidental before first note of final triplet group of bar (A) missing in A, added in B. Still missing in E
iv:37		Final slur of bar in A begins on final quaver (A/B♭). Extended to begin a quaver earlier in B
iv:38		Staccato dot on first RH note of bar (G) missing in A, added in B. Still missing in E. A and E also have extraneous staccato dots on B on third beat of bar
iv:40		♮ accidental before A in RH final beat missing in A, added in B. E as erroneous ♯. Marcato wedge on final RH note (F) missing in A, added in B, still missing in E
iv:40		Slur beneath first three notes of final beat in RH missing in A, added in B
iv:43		***p*** *staccatiss.* not present in A, added in B. All RH articulation missing in A, added in B
iv:44-46		All RH articulation missing in A, added in B
iv:47	C 8:388	Arpeggiated F♯/G♯ in LH 1st beat not present in A. A has two triplet semiquaver G♮s an octave above. F♯/G♯ in B possibly

		an octave too low in error, since they occur in C and D an octave higher. All RH articulation missing in A, added in B
iv:48-49		Most RH articulation missing in A, added in B. A has accents on top B, B♭ and G, changed to marcato wedges in B
iv:49		Accent on penultimate note in RH not present in A
iv:51	E iv:51	Slur not present in A. E has pedal markings throughout chromatic gliss.
iv:52	E iv:52	E has ***ppp*** and a crescendo hairpin
iv:53		***pp*** and slur not present in A. E has pedal markings throughout chromatic gliss.
iv:54		Crescendo hairpin not present in A, added in B
iv:55	E iv:55	***Sfz***, ***mf***, ***mp*** and crescendo hairpin not present in first printing of cp. Chromatic gliss. finishes on E♭ in A, on D♭ in B, on D in E. E also provides fingering suggestion for scale (5-1,5-1,5-1)
iv:56	C 8:397 E iv:56 F 8:849	***mf***, diminuendo hairpin and ***mp*** markings not present in A. C and F have ***mp*** and crescendo hairpin from top B♭, E has ***mp*** but no hairpin. A has staccato dot beneath LH chord, changed to staccato wedge
iv:57	C 8:398 E iv:57 F 8:850	Tenuto on RH E, slur, and ***pp*** below bottom stave not present in A. C has no tenuto and ***ppp***, E has no tenuto and ***pp***, F has tenuto and ***pp***.
iv:58		***p***, diminuendo hairpin, and ***pp*** not present in A
iv:59		***p*** *dim.* not present in A
iv:63-35	D 8:404-406	***pp*** not present in A in b. 63. In D, all grace notes are double-stemmed, but are single-stemmed in all other sources. All sources except A and B have swell hairpins in bars corresponding to iv:64
iv:66	C 8:407 E iv:66 F viii:859	A and E have ***pppp***, not ***ppp*** and *marcatissimo*. C has ***pppp*** with varied articulation (tenuto/marcato and staccato dots), F has marcato, tenuto and accent markings in all parts except piano part which has an accent and staccato dot

APPENDIX 3

Mazurka No. 1	**Commentary**
b. 1	Entry of LH canon should be pronounced and characterised
bb. 1-2 etc.	Hairpin markings suggest the music getting closer (<) or further away (>)
b. 5	Alterations of register should have a different colour or spatial perspective
b. 9	LH to the fore RH written-out mordent strictly on the beat
b. 13	RH E (after arpeggiated grace notes) should be accented and played strictly on the beat
b. 15	Do not rush/enjoy the expansion of registers
bb. 16-17	Do not accelerate into giusto, poco moderato tempo change. Should sound like turning a corner
bb. 17-32	Reference to *Chopin's Mazurka in B-flat major, Op. 7 No. 1* Imitate muted trumpets LH grace notes crushed Dotted rhythms precise
bb. 20 and 28	*sf subito* should sound like dances shouting "Hey!"
b. 24	Observe *poch. calando*
bb. 25-32	Take time for accumulation of texture
bb. 33-46	Not too militant in rhythmic execution Displaced descending chromatic line should sound like glissandi
bb. 34 and 40	Do not let crescendo hairpins overpower long melodic notes underneath
bb. 37, 39, 43 and 47	Dynamic markings indicate echo effects, rather than stages of a continuous diminuendo
bb. 49-50	To sound distant
bb. 51-52	'Expand the acoustic'
bb. 53-57	To sound like a memory of the opening
b. 53	Written-out mordent (b. 53) to sound like a glissando
b. 56	More LH

b. 58	No perceptible start *Cantabile* Demi-semiquavers not crushed
b. 60	RH top A (semiquaver) should be given weight: observe the rest preceding it and the slur to the final note

Mazurka No. 2	**Commentary**
Tempo Pitch stream Rhytmic units	Sound like butterflies which appear to fly quickly, but do not Reference to Chopin's *Mazurka in C major, Op. 24 No. 2* First of each duplet to be accented/given an impulse
bb. 19, 25, 29 etc.	LH long notes to ring through, remaining material to bloom out of it
bb. 30-46	Music sounds from further and further away (*diminuendo* marking) Observe pedal markings precisely. Take time to aid *dim.*, rather than change/flutter pedal
b. 47	'*Boisterously*' – playful, not angry
bb. 49, 52, 54, 55 and 57	Notes indicated *ff* with marcato symbols (∧) should be extremely strong
bb. 65-66	Diminuendo to blend colour into b. 67
b. 67 etc.	Reinstate impulses on first of each duplet
bb. 86-99	Observe the pedal markings
b. 99	Strong accent on final F

Mazurka No. 3	**Commentary**
bb. 1-19	Count six even quavers to a bar Each upbeat belongs to the following downbeat Each gesture in a different register should sound as though from a different place
bb. 20-47	Reference to Chopin's *Mazurka in A-flat major, Op. 7 No. 4* Should sound like the memory of bells Generous pedalling Re-statements of the falling gestures should have a bright impulse
bb. 48-75	No further comments

APPENDIX 4

List of public performances of *Concert Paraphrase on Powder Her Face* given by the author

28/02/11	Royal Overseas League Competition semi-finals, London, UK
12/01/12	Guildhall School of Music & Drama Piano Concert
24/01/12	Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall, New York, USA
24/06/12	Birmingham International Piano Competition semi-finals, UK
19/03/13	Guildhall School of Music & Drama New Music Concert
22/03/13	South Hill Park Arts Centre, UK
29/03/13	Krefeld “Kawai Campus”, Germany
04/04/13	Worshipful Company of Musicians, Prince's Prize final, London, UK
07/04/13	St. Mary's Perivale, London, UK
08/04/13	St. Lawrence Jewry, London, UK
10/04/13	Purcell Room, Southbank Centre, London, UK
18/06/13	Top of the World International Piano Competition semi-final, Norway
22/08/13	Edinburgh Festival Fringe
02/11/13	Sidney Sussex College Chapel, Cambridge
04/11/13	Masterclass with Thomas Adès
05/11/13	Milton Court Concert Hall, London, UK
20/11/13	Audimax Hall, Regensburg, Germany
11/03/14	Birmingham Town Hall, UK
20/05/15	Bath Pump Room, UK
31/07/15	Regent's Hall, London, UK
30/08/15	18th Leeds International Piano Competition quarter-finals, UK
25/11/15	9th Hamamatsu International Piano Competition quarter-finals, Japan
03/03/16	St. John's Smith Square, UK
10/12/16	Famington Farm, UK
04/04/17	Richmond Concert Society, London, UK
20/06/17	St. Magnus International Festival, Kirkwall, Orkney
17/08/17	Edinburgh Festival Fringe
01/12/17	Barber Institute of Fine Arts, Birmingham, UK

26/05/18	Lecture recital at the Fachhochschule, Regensburg, Germany
16/09/18	The Osprey Music Society, Scotland, UK
18/09/18	Princess Alexandra Hall, Royal Over-Seas League, London, UK
31/10/19	The Osprey Music Society, Scotland, UK
17/05/21	Milton Court Concert Hall, London, UK

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