

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Luciano Berio (1925—2003) is an important composer within the canon of Western art music, but that canon is not fixed, and ongoing performances and recordings of his works depend essentially on public interest. One of the ways to measure the level of public interest and critical prestige associated with a composer is via articles and reviews of her/his works.¹ Critical reception is inextricably linked with the commoditisation of music as András Szántó the Director of the National Arts Journalism Program at Columbia University explains:

Critics are essential to the life of classical music not only because they help fill concert halls. They steer readers to new experiences and help people interpret and understand music both familiar and obscure. They provide a roadmap to a bewildering array of musical offerings that are now available both in live performance and in recordings that vie for consumers' attention in an unprecedented volume and diversity and through an ever broadening mix of delivery channels.²

To establish the critical reception of Berio's works outside Europe, this analysis centres on major newspaper and magazine reviews that focus on the press reception of his works in North America, the United Kingdom and Australia. I discuss the critical reception of Berio's vocal music, solo, chamber and orchestral works, electronic music and his *azione musicale* (musical theatre).³ I draw upon reception theory to ascertain the influential factors that contribute to the communicative function within Berio's works that resonate with critics of the mid-late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.⁴

¹ Joseph N. Strauss, "The Myth of Serial 'Tyranny' in the 1950s and 1960s," *The Musical Quarterly* 83, 3 (Autumn 1999), 319.

² András Szántó, "The Classical Music Critic: A Survey of Music Critics at General-Interest and Specialized News Publications in America," (The Music Critics Association of North America, Baltimore, Maryland and National Arts Journalism Program, Columbia University, New York City, 2005), 8.

³ See timeline of works in Appendix.

⁴ Reception theorists include Hans Robert Jauss, Susan Bennett, social theorist Jürgen Habermas, cultural theorist Stuart Hall and psychologist Patrick Juslin.

The critical reception of Berio's works also needs to include a study of the performers and co-composers of those works. I therefore explore the role of performers in contributing to the success of Berio's works. As an example, I examine the important contribution of Cathy Berberian in enhancing the critical reception of the works that Berio composed during the course of their professional partnership (1950—1972).⁵ Focusing on the composer's fourteen *Sequenzas*, I consider the lure of these virtuosic pieces to current players and their reception of these works.

This thesis will add to what is, so far, a small body of scholarly research on the critical reception of Berio's works. To date, Tiffany M. Kuo's dissertation entitled 'Composing American Individualism: Luciano Berio in the United States 1960–1971' recounts the critical reception of the composer's years in North America during the 1960s and integrates politics with the momentum of his international career. Kuo addresses the Cold War politics of the 1960s and how this influenced the composition, production and reception of Berio's works including *Traces*, *Passaggio* and *Sinfonia*.⁶

My thesis addresses Berio's modernist aesthetic and how contemporary twentieth-century literature, theatre, dance and new technologies influenced the composition, production and reception of the composer's musical output. Another integral part of Berio's musical aesthetic is his engagement with composers of the previous centuries:

[On the one hand] a delicate balance must be maintained, at whatever cost, between recognition of conventions, stylistic references, expectations, and, on the other hand, the concrete experience of giving new life to an object of knowledge.⁷

Through his use of traditional folk/ popular idioms and transcriptions of works by Claudio Monteverdi (1567—1643), J. S. Bach, Giuseppe Verdi (1813—1901), Giacomo Puccini (1858—1924), Franz Schubert (1797—1828), Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756—1791), Henry Purcell

⁵ Berberian and Berio were married from 1950—64.

⁶ Tiffany M. Kuo, "Composing American Individualism: Luciano Berio in the United States 1960—1971," PhD Dissertation, New York University, 2011.

⁷ Luciano Berio, *Remembering the Future*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006, 4—5.

(1659—1695), Manuel de Falla (1876—1946), Luigi Boccherini (1743—1805) and Gustav Mahler (1860—1911), I investigate the manner in which Berio casts these previous works anew. Another area of study in this thesis concerns the endorsement of Berio’s works by classical music promoters of the mid-late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

The concept of reception theory stems from the late 1960s. Hans Robert Jauss developed this theory for literary studies, with the primary objective to explore the ‘communicative function of literature and art’.⁸ In literature, a reciprocal relationship exists between writer and audience: writers of the Enlightenment mostly sought to write for a middle-class audience whose values and taste were deemed exemplary; in turn, the audience had its values and tastes reinforced by the literary works of the day.⁹ As a result of this relationship, there arose an interconnection among works, audiences and new works. Works, then, can be placed in a series, involving a progression, which in large measure is determined by audience reception.¹⁰

Reception theory was most influential in the area of literary studies during the 1970s and early 1980s in Germany and North America. Today, reception theory spans a number of areas including the performing arts, theatre, film and television. The primary motivation to expand reception theory to these areas was the recognition that the continuation of these art forms in the twenty-first century is due to their overall positive public reactions. Hence, reception theory is a version of reader/viewer/listener response theory that highlights a person’s general reception and/or interpretation of a particular art form. Critical reception refers to the general reception and interpretations of Berio’s music by newspaper and magazine critics.

⁸ Hans Robert Jauss, “An Interview with Rein T. Segers,” translated by Timothy Bahti, *New Literary History* 11, 1 Anniversary Issue: II (Autumn 1979), 87.

⁹ David P. Schroeder, “Audience Reception and Haydn’s London Symphonies,” *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 16, 1 (June 1985), 57—58.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 58.

The aim of this thesis is to ascertain the significant factors that contribute to the understanding/ misunderstanding of Berio's music among newspaper and magazine critics of the mid-late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. I also include critics' observations of concert attendees' reactions at particular performances of Berio's works. These critiques do not give a complete picture of how each audience member interprets Berio's musical content but, rather, provide a general impression of the reception of a selected work at a particular moment in time. It is the analysis of this general reception and critical reception that makes my study relevant in the context of the New Musicology.¹¹

Reception theory in its application is not a predictive tool but more accurately an explanatory tool: it provides insights within the commercial classical music market as to why some works will have continuing performances, while other works are unlikely to survive past their premiere performance. This study investigates the inherent difficulties in listening to modernist music and the challenges of performing works such as those of Luciano Berio. In addition to the integrity of a work, high profile performers play a crucial role in attracting media attention. Under the direction of newspaper/ magazine editors, critics focus their reviews primarily on these types of performers.¹² Berio was well aware of this fact, and he pursued high-profile soloists, orchestras and smaller ensembles, to ensure optimum media coverage.

In Chapter 2, I contextualise Berio's works within my application of the Modernist musical movement of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. A major feature of modernist music in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was that artists rejected the prior aesthetic and philosophical tenets

¹¹ The New Musicology began in the 1980s as a reaction against positivist musicology and now refers to a body of musicological work that focusses on music in the context of cultural, postcolonial and gender studies and hermeneutics. See, for instance, Susan McClary, *Conventional Wisdom: The Content of Musical Form*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001.

¹² Lawrence McGill, Willa J. Conrad, Donald Rosenberg and András Szántó, "The Classical Music Critic: A Survey of Music Critics at General-Interest and Specialized News Publications in America," 11.

that had shaped musical Classicism and Romanticism.¹³ Modernists therefore define themselves by distinctively contrasting their practices with those of the previous generation.¹⁴ For instance, musicologist Martin Scherzinger characterises modernism as ‘seeking out radically new modes of expression and representation’ along all trajectories.¹⁵ These include the new modes of expression within the parameters of pitch, harmonic, dynamic and rhythmic organisation as well as expanded timbral ranges via more percussion instruments and/or inclusion of synthetic and electronic generated sounds.¹⁶

Through Berio’s writings as well as published interviews with the composer, I provide an overview of his approach to the serial technique as initiated by Arnold Schoenberg (1874—1951). This study compares and contrasts Berio’s attitude towards the idea of compositional autonomy to serialist composers such as Pierre Boulez (1925—2016), Karlheinz Stockhausen (1928—2007) and Milton Babbitt (1916—2011). Berio’s music differentiates itself from this group of composers by engaging openly with social, ideological, and political issues. Similarly, Berio distinguishes himself from the mid-twentieth century experimental composers such as John Cage (1912—1992) and Morton Feldman (1926—1878) who employ elements of chance and indeterminacy and create new sounds by way of preparing instruments. I compare and contrast Berio’s experimental techniques in his solo repertoire to that of Cage’s solo piano works. I also discuss Berio’s

¹³ Georgina Born, *Rationalizing Culture IRCAM, Boulez, and the Institutionalization of the Musical Avant-Garde*, Berkeley, California: University of California Press 1995, 40.

¹⁴ Michael H. Whitworth, *Modernism*, Berkeley, California: Blackwell publishing 2007, 39.

¹⁵ Martin Scherzinger, “In Memory of a Receding Dialectic: The Political Relevance of Autonomy and Formalism on Modernist Musical Aesthetics,” *The Pleasure of Modernist Music: Listening, Meaning, Intention*, ed. Arved Ashby, Rochester, New York: University of Rochester Press, 2004, 73.

¹⁶ Scholars that discuss musical modernism include Robert P. Morgan, “Secret languages: The Roots of Musical Modernism,” *Critical Inquiry* 10, 3 (March 1984): 422—61; Leonard B. Meyer, *Music, the Arts, and Ideas: Patterns and Predictions in Twentieth Century Culture*, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1994; Daniel Albright, *Modernism and Music: An Anthology of Sources*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004; James L. McHard, *The Future of Modern Music: A Philosophical Exploration of Modernist Music in the 20th Century and Beyond*, third edition, Livonia, Michigan: Iconic Press, 2008; Björn Heile, “Darmstadt as Other: British and American Responses to Musical Modernism,” *Twentieth Century Music* 1, 2 (2004), 161—178.

technique of quotation and commentary, his recourse to folk idioms, and the innovative ways in which he combines instruments within orchestral works to enhance the communicative and audio dimension for the audience. Another area of study in this chapter concerns Berio's embrace of modernity via his electronic works.

In discussing his compositional aims and processes, Berio plays a significant role in shaping the reception works of his works. Take, for example, Rossana Dalmonte's and Bálint András Varga's book *Luciano Berio: Two Interviews* (1985).¹⁷ Both interviewers provide an in-depth conversation with Berio about the difficulties that composers have in finding the language to describe adequately their musical insights, his contact with the Darmstadt School generation¹⁸ as well as his experiences while teaching and performing in North America. Another example of the same ilk is Berio's *Remembering the Future* (2006).¹⁹ This is a collection of the composer's Charles Eliot North lectures at Harvard University, in which Berio deliberates on the concept of an 'open work' and the importance and relevance of transcription, translation and poetics and musical theatre. Similarly, access to Berio's vast commentary on his works is freely available on the Berio website— 'Centro Studi Luciano Berio'.²⁰

The inclusion of folk and popular idioms for selected works demonstrates that Berio, indeed, pushed the boundaries of the modernist movement to create his unique soundscape. This aspect of Berio's works has been discussed by a number of scholars, most notably David Osmond-Smith, who is widely recognised as a leading authority on the composer's music. In addition to his numerous articles on the composer's works, *Berio* (1991) is a comprehensive survey of Berio's musical language and the importance of folk music in the

¹⁷ Rossana Dalmonte and Bálint András Varga, *Luciano Berio: Two Interviews*, translated and edited by David Osmond-Smith, New York and London: Marion Boyars, 1985, 162.

¹⁸ The Darmstadt School refers to a group of composers who attended the Darmstadt International Summer Courses for New Music from the early 1950s and the 1960s. In 1946, Wolfgang Steinecke initiated annual courses that include the teaching of composition and interpretation as well as premiering new works. Since 1970, these courses are held biannually.

¹⁹ Luciano Berio, *Remembering the Future*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006.

²⁰ Centro Studi Lucino Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio>

composer's works as well as his innovations within the electronic media and musical theatre.

Chapter 3 investigates and chronicles the commoditisation of music from the late nineteenth century to the present day. In addition to live concert performances and recordings, I also refer to the commoditisation of music via the diverse range of twenty-first century music delivery outlets. I examine modernist composer's attitudes to the notion of music as a commodity, and, in particular, I explore Berio's attitudes towards his listening audience to that of Schoenberg, Babbitt, Elliott Carter (1908—2012) and Krzysztof Penderecki (1933—). To distinguish Berio's music from this group of composers I define Schoenberg, Babbitt, Carter and Penderecki as 'high' modernists.

Music critics are fundamental to the commercial music market. To a composer, the critic plays an influential part in launching her/his career and in providing continuing public support. Further, critics are crucial in disseminating the composer's music after her/his death. The role of critics is to act as intermediaries between the composer and the public. This study demonstrates that critics are as much a part of the crisis of intelligibility as other listeners. To demonstrate critics' misrepresentation of the *Sequenza* series as virtuoso 'showpieces', I draw on Berio's writings and interviews for these works.

Another point of contention is the press' insistence on labelling new music within pre-existing traditional genres. Arguably, in choosing traditional categories and pre-existing genres to describe a new work, critics do not adequately bring to the fore the innovative aspects of that music. Even though critics draw on a wealth of perspectives for making their critiques, it appears that modernist works require a constantly evolving language to satisfactorily describe the composer's innovations. As a result, critics tend to focus on a descriptive commentary for their reviews rather than evaluate the work within conceptual parameters. For instance, in describing the musical material of Berio's *Laborintus II* (1965) critics generally overlook the composer's intention to debate aspects of Western capitalism.

In Chapter 4, I address Berio's aspirations for his chamber works. I argue that the composer aims for an inclusive audience, rather than mainstream alienation. Another area of study concerns the reception of modernist music amongst select academic, critics and the public. This study shows that during the 1980s and 1990s, a broad range of people discussed the validity of the modernist aesthetic and criticised the stance taken by high modernist composers in regard to their ambivalent attitudes of their listening and purchasing public. I explore aspects of musical modernism that listeners identify as 'difficult', 'complex' and 'elitist'.

As an example of the open resentment towards modernist music amongst newspaper critics of the mid-late twentieth century, I draw on the scathing commentary of Albert Goldberg (*Los Angeles Times*) and Donal Henahan (*New York Times*). I evaluate these critiques within the confines of Mark Everist's 'Reception Theories, Canonic Discourses and Musical Value'²¹ and Ian Pace's 'Verbal Discourse as Aesthetic Arbitrator in Contemporary Music'.²² Within the framework of James Ley's description of the necessary attributes of a literary critic, I apply the same criteria to music critics.²³ I argue that the biases and prejudices of Goldberg and Henahan intentionally undermined an objective review of Berio's music to the public. As an example, I analyse and chronicle the critical reception of Berio's *Laborintus II* and *Voci*. To demonstrate the change in attitudes towards Berio's works I draw on critics of the early twenty-first century who all present a more balanced and objective viewpoint to the reader.

Another area of discussion in this chapter concerns the measures undertaken by music promoters to shape and enhance the reception of

²¹ Mark Everist, "Reception Theories, Canonic Discourses and Musical Value," in *The Modernist Legacy: Essays on New Music*, ed. Björn Heile, Surrey, England and Burlington, United States of America: Ashgate Publishing, 2009.

²² Ian Pace, "Verbal Discourse as Aesthetic Arbitrator in Contemporary Music," in *The Modernist Legacy: Essays on New Music* ed. Björn Heile, Surrey, England and Burlington, United States of America: Ashgate Publishing, 2009.

²³ James Ley, *The Critic in the Modern World: Public Criticism from Samuel Johnson to James Wood*, New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2014.

Berio's music for concert attendees. Take, for example, Jude Kelly, the Artistic Director of London's South Bank Centre, who argues that in addition to concert performances, lectures that describe the social, aesthetic and political contexts in which modernist music was produced help the audience better interpret and understand composers' works.²⁴

In Chapter 5, I address the critical reception of Berio's orchestral works. Many of Berio's works that I discuss in this thesis present challenges to listeners accustomed to tonal repertoires of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Numerous studies have explored whether music can consistently convey emotions to listeners and the musical parameters that transmit this information.²⁵ Psychologist Patrick Juslin argues that the emotional expression within the music relies on the three primary levels of coding—iconic, intrinsic and associative.²⁶ The first level of iconic coding is linked to the innate and universal 'affect programs' for human vocal expression of emotions. Within this framework, expressions are involuntary and emotion-specific with the physiological changes associated with the innate aspects of voice production.²⁷

Iconically coded expressions, therefore, are intimately related to our fundamental levels of emotions such as happiness, sadness or anger. This 'core' iconically-coded layer may be extended, qualified, and even modified by the additional intrinsic code level, which involves an internal syntactic

²⁴ Jude Kelly, "The thrill of shining new light on classic al music," *London Evening Standard* (London: 16 December 2013), 15.

²⁵ Soo-Jin Kwoun, "An examination of cue redundancy theory in cross-cultural decoding of emotions in music," *Journal of Music Theory* (2009): 217—237; Marcel R. Zentner, "Emotional effects of music: production rules," *Music and Emotion: Theory and Research* (2001): 361—387; Colin Radford, "Emotions and music: A reply to the cognitivists," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 47(1989): 69-76; Jonna K. Vuoskoski and Tuomas Eerola, "Measuring music-induced emotion: A comparison of emotion models, personality biases, and intensity of experiences," *Musicae Scientiae* 15, 2 (13 July 2011): 159—173; Omar S. Ali and Zehra F. Peynircioğğlu, "Intensity of Emotions Conveyed and Elicited by Familiar and Unfamiliar music," *Music Perception: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 27, 3 (February 2010): 177—182; *Music and the Mind: Essays in Honour of John Sloboda*, eds Irène Deliège and Jane Davidson, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

²⁶ Patrick N. Juslin, "What does music express? Basic emotions and beyond," *Frontiers in Psychology*, 4 (September 2013), 203.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 205.

relationship with the music itself.²⁸ Further, the associative code level comes to the fore when a melody or instrumental timbre has been repeatedly and arbitrarily paired with other meaningful stimuli or events in the past.²⁹ I argue that this theoretical framework equally explicates the emotional expressiveness in Berio's *Epiphanies* (1959—61/1965/1991), *Sinfonia* (for eight voices and orchestra, 1968), *Bewegung* (1971), *Coro* (for forty voices and instruments, 1975), *Alternatim* (1977), *Formazioni* (1987), *Ekphrasis* (1996), and *Stanza* (for baritone, three small male choirs and orchestra, 2003). To evaluate the emotional impact of these works, I draw on their critical reception.

Another area of study relates to the ways classical music promoters of the late-twentieth and early twenty-first centuries chose to introduce Berio's works to their subscription audiences. A major outcome of this study shows that certain promoters identify the problem as one of audience misunderstanding rather than any issues within the music itself. Another factor is the general audience perception that modernist works require a 'professional' explanation or the composer's own authorial affirmations.³⁰ Along these lines, Berio, as well as other mid-to-late twentieth century musicians and conductors endeavoured to shape and enhance the reception of works by Karlheinz Stockhausen (1928—2007), Leonard Bernstein (1918—1990), Luigi Dallapiccola (1904—75), György Ligeti (1923—2006), Aaron Copland (1900—90), Luigi Nono (1924—90), Olivier Messiaen (1908—92), Bruno Maderna (1920—73), Cathy Berberian (1925—83), John Cage (1912—92) and Pierre Boulez (1925—2016).

In Chapter 6, I first address the factors that shaped Berio's early *azione musicali*. I argue that Berio's early works were inspired by experimental theatre and dance as well as by social and political conditions of the Western

²⁸ Ibid., 210—211.

²⁹ Ibid., 210.

³⁰ Arved Ashby, "Intention and Meaning in Modernist Music," *The Pleasure of Modernist Music: Listening, Meaning, Intention*, ed. Arved Ashby, Rochester, New York: University of Rochester Press, 2004, 32.

world in the 1960s. The works I discuss include *Allez Hop* (for mimes and orchestra, 1959); *Passaggio* (for soprano, chorus and orchestra, 1961—62); *Traces* (for soprano and mezzo-soprano solos, two actors, chorus and orchestra, 1963) and *Esposizione* (for mezzo-soprano, two treble voices, mimes, dancers, fourteen players and tape, 1963). The aim of this study is to determine the critical reception and audience reactions to Berio's new hybrid musical theatre.

The labelling of Berio's *azione musicali* as 'opera' was an ongoing tension between the composer and the press. I argue that during the 1960s the promotion of Berio's *azione musicali* under the guise of 'opera' set certain expectations for the majority of opera subscribers; in particular, the expectation of the traditional opera genre that includes a plot whereby the stage action steers the story and is further enhanced by the music. These appear to be significant factors that account for the mostly negative or ambivalent audience and critical reception of *Allez Hop*, *Passaggio* and *Esposizione*. These works and, indeed, all of Berio's *azione musicali* echo the epic theatre form of Bertolt Brecht (1898—1956). In most cases, critics do not acknowledge or reference epic theatre form; this absence intimates that few music reviewers were familiar with new theatre practices of the day.

Another area of investigation in this chapter concerns the critical reception of Berio's later works including *La Vera Storia* (for soloist, actors, choir and orchestra, 1977—80); *Un Re In Ascolto* (A King Listening, for soloist, actors, choir and orchestra 1979—1983); *Outis* (for thirteen singers, one actor, five instrumentalists, a vocal group of eight singers, chorus, orchestra and live electronics, 1995—96) and *Cronaca del Luogo* (*Chronicle of the Place*, for soloists, actors, choir and orchestra, 1998—99). Berio's *azione musicali* include subjective and non-linear narratives: these are characteristics of both twentieth-century avant-garde opera as well as experimental theatre of the same era. The aim of this study is to verify the accessibility of Berio's works to mainstream opera audiences who predominantly favour the traditional format typified by nineteenth- and twentieth-century works such as Mozart's *The Magic Flute* and *Don Giovanni*, Bizet's *Carmen*, Tchaikovsky's *Eugene*

Onegin, Puccini's *Madam Butterfly* and Carlisle Floyd's *Of Mice and Men* (1969).

In Chapter 7, I discuss the critical reception and audience reactions to *Opera* (1969—70). While there may be infinite audience reactions, in this study I focus on the audience reaction to *Opera* as observed by critics at the premiere performances. This *azione musicale* was the first large scale stage work that Berio wrote for the New York Open Theater Ensemble. *Opera* had only two performances in North America, both of which were presented by the Santa Fe Opera on 12 and 14 August 1970. Berio described these performances as 'one of the biggest disasters in my life'.³¹ No doubt, Berio's despair was, in part, due to the harsh criticism the work received from the press. In determining the factors that contributed to the commercial failure of *Opera*, this chapter contextualises audience expectations of the opera genre from a historical and cultural perspective. Analysing this work within the framework of Stuart Hall's theory of reception will go some way to explaining the wide-ranging, but mostly negative, critical reception of *Opera*.

This study identifies that Santa Fe audiences of the day reacted negatively not only to Berio's complex narrative and music styles but also to the work's excessive duration of two and a half hours, as well as his overtly anti-capitalist and anti-establishment text and his attacks on the American military. This chapter contextualises Berio's controversial topics of *Opera* within the turbulent history of American society during the 1960s and 1970s including the Civil Rights Movement, and the Vietnam and Cold Wars. Berio claimed that he was unwilling to compromise his artistic intentions to please critics. Contrary to this stance, Berio conceded to revise *Opera* after mostly hostile reviews. This study compares and contrasts the original version of the work to the new version of 1977. I highlight the ways in which Berio revised, omitted and added in order for *Opera* to better appeal to critics and audiences.

³¹ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 162.

Chapter 8 concerns the seminal role of Cathy Berberian in enhancing the reception of the works that Berio composed during their professional partnership between 1950—72. It is widely acknowledged that the success of a composer's work is dependent to a large extent on the talent and the virtuosic attributes of the musician/vocalist in the performance realisation. The teaming of a high-profile composer with a renowned performer most definitely ensures optimum press coverage. By the 1960s, Berberian had a reputation (with the press) as a virtuoso of both traditional classical vocal repertoire and as a major new music exponent. As a partnership, Berio/Berberian aimed for a broad wide audience base, and the works range from electro-acoustic pieces, a work for voice and orchestra, chamber music and transcriptions of popular songs. I argue that Berio's partnership with Berberian at the onset of his career had a significant impact on his sustained success.

In realising the 'cult' status of Berberian, this chapter assesses the critical reception of Berberian performances to vocalists including Dawn Upshaw, Karen Cargill, Elissa Johnston, Luisa Castellani, Charlotte Hellekant and Rinat Shaham. The works discussed include *Epiphanies* (1959—61/1965/1991), *Recital I* (for Cathy, 1972), *Sequenza III* (1965) and *Folk Songs* (1964/1973). Arguably, Berio's compositional processes focus exclusively on Berberian's personality, wit and vocal capabilities and therefore, present multi-level challenges to subsequent singers.

Another area of discussion in this chapter relates to Berberian's seminal role in the composition of *Visage* and *Sequenza III*. Twentieth-century scholarly and critical attention appears to focus primarily on Berio as 'the composer' rather than on the important multidimensional input of Berberian. However, in the twenty-first century a number of scholars have studied Berberian's input for these works. Jennifer Paull, in her book *Cathy Berberian and Music's Muses*, discusses the vocalist's personal attributes and her contribution to

the realisation of Berio's works for Berberian.³² Janet K. Halfyard, editor and contributor to *Berio's Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis*, discusses the psyche of Berberian in *Sequenza III*.³³ Patti Yvonne Edwards' D.M.A dissertation titled "Luciano Berio's *Sequenza III*: The use of vocal gesture and the genre of the mad scene", focuses on singers' approaches to this work and gives some insights within the conceptual parameters of the performance realisation.³⁴

The primary focus of *Sequenza III* in Tina Huettenrauch's Master's dissertation, "Three Case Studies in Twentieth Century Performance Practice", is on how trends in performance practice emerge in the recording history of twentieth-century pieces.³⁵ She investigates whether a certain performance practice is traceable from one recording to the next; whether certain trends are more prevalent at one time than another; and whether, despite the detailed annotations and primary source material available, recordings show a variety of interpretations rather than the emergence of one standard performance practice.

An important recent publication is *Cathy Berberian: Pioneer of Contemporary Vocality*,³⁶ which discusses the importance of Berberian's contribution to twentieth-century vocal music, in particular, Berio's works for Berberian including *Chamber Music* (1953), *Thema (Omaggio a Joyce)*, *Circles* (1960), *Epifanie* (1959—61), *Visage* (1961), *Folk Songs* (1963), *Sequenza III* (1965), *Recital I (for Cathy)*, (1972). Similarly, as in Jennifer Paull's book, this volume sheds new light on the seminal role of Berberian for performance

³² Jennifer Paull, *Cathy Berberian and Music's Muses*, Switzerland: Amoris International Imprint, 2007.

³³ Janet K. Halfyard, ed., *Berio's Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis*, Hampshire, England, Burlington, USA: Ashgate Publishing, 2007.

³⁴ Patti Yvonne Edwards, "Luciano Berio's *Sequenza III*: The use of vocal gesture and the genre of the mad scene," D.M.A. Dissertation, University of North Texas, 2004.

³⁵ Tina Huettenrauch, "Three Case Studies in Twentieth Century Performance Practice," PhD Dissertation, Louisiana State University, 2012.

³⁶ Pamela Karantonis et al., eds., *Cathy Berberian: Pioneer of Contemporary Vocality*, Farnham, UK and Burlington, USA: Ashgate Press, 2014.

realisation of the above works as well as her creative input for the final versions of the works. This book has important and insightful primary source material including a transcript of excerpts from four radio broadcasts of 1979 for Dutch Radio, titled *Cathy's Solo Talk Show*. Berberian reveals her views on the voice, music, vocality, her operatic peers, inspirations, cultural history and her experiences as a singer/composer. Building on the scholarly work of the above authors, I further examine the extent of the symbiotic relationship between Berio and Berberian for the performance realisation of *Visage* and *Sequenza III* and the impact of this collaboration on the ongoing success of these works.

A critical component to the survival of Berio's works within the commercial music market is players' willingness to continue to perform and to discuss these works. Focusing on Berio's *Sequenza* series in Chapter 9, I explore the reception of these virtuosic solo works by professional musicians. This chapter examines the attraction of the *Sequenzas* to current musicians and the challenges that these players face in tackling the works. A significant factor that contributes to the ongoing acclaim of the *Sequenzas* lies within their expressive dimension. Musical gestures exemplify human expressivity and represent an implied level of communication.³⁷ The focus of my analysis is on the musical gestures and the theatrical elements of the series; in particular, the ways in which Berio tailors the musical material and the manner in which players interpret the musical substance to enhance the audience reception. The theoretical framework for this analysis is within the context and parameters of 'semiotic gesture' as defined by musicologist Ole K uhl.³⁸

³⁷ A number of scholars have studied gestures in music including Gayle Henrotte, "Music and Gesture: A Semiotic Inquiry," *The American Journal of Semiotics* 9, 4 (1992): 103—114; Richard Leppard, *The Sight of Sound: Music, Representation, and the History of the Body*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993; Pierre Feyereisen and Jacques Dominique de Lannoy, *Gestures and Speech: Psychological Investigations*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991; Egil Haga, "Correspondence Between the Music and Body Movement, PhD dissertation, University of Oslo, 2008.

³⁸ Ole K uhl, "The Semiotic Gesture," *New Perspectives on Music and Gesture*, eds., Anthony Gritten and Elaine King, Surry, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2011, 123—130.

In chapter 10, I show that the critical reception of Berio's music caters to a wide range of listeners with varying levels of musical knowledge and experience. However, a key number of pieces feature within the commercial music market: most notably, the works that contain extra-music subject matter, and that are characterised by relatively simple underlying musical structures regardless of the complex surface density and performer virtuosity required. Works that do not adhere to these criteria risk fewer if any future performances. Further, I suggest additional areas of study and research to enhance the audience reception of Berio's *azione musicali*.

CHAPTER 2

Luciano Berio's modernist approaches to composition

'We can refuse history, but we cannot forget it.'

—Luciano Berio (*Remembering the Future*)¹

This chapter examines Berio's modernist approaches to composition. While 'modernism' today is a highly contested term, those composers that I will label as 'high modernists' define themselves by distinctively contrasting their practices with those of the previous generation.² The first area of discussion concerns Berio's conceptualisation of Arnold Schoenberg's twelve tone method. Another area of study concerns Berio's approach to the formal development within the music and the manner in which he creates musical cohesion for the listener. I argue that Berio's choice of motivic material functions as more than just a pre-compositional strategy but, rather, as an important structuring element that is clearly audible throughout his works.

As I argue in this chapter, Berio consciously retains some aspects of established music practices but also uses new and innovative combinations and techniques in order to convey his personal modernist soundscape. In an interview of April 2003 with Gillian Moore and Shan MacLennan, Berio explains his creative processes:

Music is not a commodity, or a form of merchandise you can chop up and divide; music is a very deep, global experience, and what you do carries the weight of what has been done before you. The concept of memory in music, of what has come before us, is very important and cannot be discarded— if you try to shut it behind a door it will come back through the window! If I write something now, for example, it is a continuity of what I have written before. One work comments on the other; another work is a refusal of something else: there is a dialogue

¹ Berio, *Remembering the Future*, 4—5.

² Michael H. Whitworth, *Modernism*, Berkeley, California: Blackwell Publishing 2007, 39.

between everything you do, so the idea of a blank page or a germinal idea cannot make any sense when applied to creative behaviour.³

This recognition of the weight of history is an important aspect of Berio's musical aesthetic. Drawing on Berio's writings and interviews, this chapter focuses on the composer's engagement with 'the past as future' through quotation and transcriptions of other composers' works and folk/popular music, as well as self-referential commentary techniques. The aim of this study is to identify Berio's individualistic traits that characterise his solo pieces, works for smaller/ larger instrumental groups, orchestral works and the electronic media. Another important feature of Berio's music is his concern for continuous mobility of sound. As an example I discuss the composer's electro-acoustic works including *Outis* (1996), *Ofanim* (1988—1997) and *Altra voce* (1999).

2.1.1: The weight of musical history: Schoenberg's serialism

A major feature of modernist music in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was the rejection of the prior aesthetic and philosophical tenets that had shaped musical Classicism and Romanticism.⁴ Take, for example, the serial techniques of Arnold Schoenberg (1874—1951), which the composer claimed exemplified a complete break from the tonal and chromatic procedures of the Romantic era. This technique is also the basis for the serial works of Anton Webern (1883—1945) and Alban Berg (1885—1935).

Theodoro Adorno defines the music of these composers as 'expressionist' on the basis of their objective to seek 'truthfulness of subjective feeling without illusions, disguises or euphemisms' and further, argues that 'fear' lies at the core of expressionist music, and the predominating dissonance negates the 'harmonious, affirmative element of art'.⁵ Later generation composers such

³ Gillian Moore and Shan MacLennan, Interview with Luciano Berio in Rome, 8 April 2003 for the South Bank Centre festival *Omaggio: A Celebration of Luciano Berio*: <http://www.londonsinfonietta.org.uk/artists/aboutcomposers/interviewBerio.cfm> (accessed 9 May 2009)

⁴ Georgina Born, *Rationalizing Culture IRCAM, Boulez, and the Institutionalization of the Musical Avant-Garde*, Berkeley, California: University of California Press 1995, 40.

⁵ Theodore Adorno, *Night Music: Essays on Music 1928—1962*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Wieland Hoban, London, New York: Seagull Books, 2009, 275—76.

as Milton Babbitt and Pierre Boulez expanded on Schoenberg's serialism to include not only the twelve pitches but also dynamics, timbre, duration and register. In refuting these high modernist composers' ideas of compositional autonomy, Berio instead prefers to engage with social, ideological, and political issues. Berio's approach aligns more sympathetically with recent scholars of musical modernism who see the phenomenon less as a negation of the tenets of tonality and more as an expression of the problems of capitalism.⁶

The serial technique as initiated ca. 1923 by Schoenberg requires a prescriptive, rationalised and systematic basis for constructing aesthetic difference from atonality. Specifically in Schoenberg's formulation, this technique requires the construction of a row using all twelve chromatic notes of the scale in a fixed order, each of which must be used once before the series can start again. To generate material for the piece, four basic structural transformations of the series are produced: the original form, retrograde (backward), inversion (upside-down), and retrograde-inversion.⁷ Berio acknowledges that the poetics of Schoenberg's twelve-tone music is one of the most 'complex and dramatic' within Western art music.⁸ However, for Berio, serialism 'never represented the utopia of a language, and so it could never be reduced to a norm or to a restricted combination of materials'.⁹

Berio, instead, employs serial technique for its 'objective enlargement of musical means'.¹⁰ For instance, *Cinque variazioni* (for piano, 1952—53) is a serial work in which Berio chooses a three-note melodic cell —*fratello*— from

⁶ See, for instance, Timothy D. Taylor, *Music and Capitalism: A History of the Present*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015 and, more generally, Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, Durham: Duke University Press, 1991.

⁷ Born, *Rationalizing Culture IRCAM, Boulez, and the Institutionalization of the Musical Avant-Garde*, 48.

⁸ Berio, *Remembering the Future*, 24.

⁹ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 64.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 64.

the opera, *Il Prigioniero* (1944—48), by Luigi Dallapiccola.¹¹ The solo piano focuses upon specific modes of musical thought and perception: especially the fundamental compatibility of serial technique and variation processes.¹² Berio uses a flexible twelve-tone row and its permutations to allow for repeated note cells or pitches comprising only part of the row in *Chamber Music* (for soprano, clarinet, cello and harp, 1953). For the vocal line in this work, Berio draws on three poems by James Joyce (1882—1941): *String in Earth and Air*, *Monotone* and *Winds in May*.

Berio's orchestral work *Nones* (1954) is based on a poem, *The Ninth Hour*, by W.H. Auden, from his book of poems of 1951 with the same title. The poem itself is a secular meditation on Christ's Crucifixion. Berio chooses a thirteen-note tone row with an emphasis on the intervals of major and minor thirds. This row, the composer derives from Webern's opus 24 pitch series with the idea of row generation from a single trichord and the 'split' third (014).¹³ The major/minor third juxtaposes the tritone harmony to increase the dramatic intensity of Christ's agony.¹⁴ Berio's expressive techniques echo the dramatic intensity of J.S. Bach's *St Matthew Passion* (1727) for which the juxtaposition of major/minor tonality with diminished sevenths and chromaticism emphasise the suffering of Christ. Another example of the same ilk is Joseph Haydn's *The Seven Last Words of Christ* of 1787.

Berio does not use a strict series in *Alleluja I* (1955—6), but rather a substantive, freely composed section using transformational processes to generate much of the subsequent material.¹⁵ Composer and music theorist Christoph Neidhöfer in his analysis of Berio's draft for *Alleluja I* explains that this work is 'built from different readings of the first twenty-one bars and from

¹¹ Ibid., 53.

¹² David Osmond-Smith, "Luciano Berio: Piano Music," Liner notes to recording *Luciano Berio—Piano Music*, Andrea Lucchesini, (United Kingdom: Avie Records AV2104), np.

¹³ Michael Hicks, "Exorcism and Epiphany: Luciano Berio's *Nones*," *Perspectives of New Music*, 27, 2 (Summer, 1989), 254.

¹⁴ Reginald Smith Brindle, "Current Chronicle," *Musical Quarterly*, 44, 1 (January 1958), 101.

¹⁵ David Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1991, 20.

different combinations of such readings, such as the superimposition of one version and the retrograde of another'.¹⁶ These bars are the only materials from *Allelujah I* that are immediately recognisable in *Allelujah II*.¹⁷ For the wide-ranging transformations of *Allelujah II*, Berio chooses the flute (or piccolo) to signal the return of the opening statement. For the listener, the merits of this work lie in the clarity with which Berio presents the material and in its immediate comprehensibility.¹⁸

Two chromatic hexachords form the basis of his seven-minute-long string quartet entitled *Quartetto* (1956). Berio uses permutations of the pitch-series by reordering that include Hexachord A (A—B flat—B—C—C sharp—D) and its complement, Hexachord B.¹⁹ This work is pointillist in its colours and textures and fragmentary in gesture. In *Sincronie* (1964) Berio engages the quartet not as a polyphonic ensemble but rather as a single homophonic instrument.²⁰ Berio achieves this by each instrument continuously elaborating the same sequence of harmonic blocks, simultaneously saying the same thing in different ways.²¹ The listener hears the work as a series of contrasting episodes with slight variation. Berio's quartet music, however, did not define an evolutionary thread through his creative development as typified by the quartets of other modernist composers including Elliott Carter and Brian Ferneyhough.

The listener appears to be a constant consideration in Berio's compositional processes. For instance, the composer's strategy to use the repetition of identifiable figures and motives is an effective way to program the listener's

¹⁶ Christopher Neidhöfer, "Inside Luciano Berio's Serialism," *Music Analysis*, 28, 2—3 (July—October 2009), 315.

¹⁷ Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 20.

¹⁸ Mario Bortolotto and William C. Holms, "The New Music in Italy," *Musical Quarterly* 51, 1 Special Fiftieth Anniversary Issue: "Contemporary Music in Europe: A Comprehensive Survey," (January 1965), 63.

¹⁹ Neidhöfer, "Inside Luciano Berio's Serialism," 310.

²⁰ Luciano Berio, *Sincronie* (Author's notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 29 July 2011).

²¹ Luciana Galliano, "Luciano Berio: *Notturmo* (Quartetto III) for string quartet – Work Introduction," <http://www.universaledition.com/Luciano-Berio/composers-andwork/composers> (accessed 29 July 2011).

memory. These types of repetitions function as long-term memory triggers throughout a work.²² As Jay Dowling explains, we may not necessarily recognise or remember a melody exactly as we heard it instead we may remember a melodic contour that approximates the original melody.²³ Take, for example, *Autre fois (Berceuse canonique pour Igor Stravinsky*, for flute, clarinet in B flat and harp 1971) for this is one-minute work, Berio chooses the tritone as a basis for the canon. For the listener, the melodic material in the flute and clarinet is audibly derived from the linear variants on the [026] trichord. Further, the harp provides straightforward *ostinati* patterns as an accompaniment to the flute and clarinet.

Six Encores for piano is a collection of miniatures that Berio composed between 1965 and 1990. For *Brin* (Wisp, 1990), Berio uses a single chord for the soft arpeggios and repeated notes that include discreet pedalling. Berio similarly explores one chord for *Leaf* (1990), which is a seven-note cluster. The composer sustains this chord throughout the piece by way of *sostenuto* pedal. Arnold Whittall comments that Berio uses ‘subtle rhythmic variation to articulate those restricted areas of pitch space in which dramas of difference and similarity are played out’.²⁴ Malcolm Miller describes the style of both *Brin* and *Leaf* as ‘sketch-like in the manner of a Haiku: hushed, condensed expressionism’.²⁵ Likewise, *Erdenklavier* (Earth-Piano, subtitled *Pastorale* 1969), is an exploration of one chord. Berio sustains sounds by releasing the fingers in a polyphonic finger action.²⁶ For Miller, the sustained notes and pedals ‘create a pointillist pattern with emphatic tones’.²⁷

²² Barbara R. Barry, *Musical Time: The Sense of Order*, New York: Pendragon Press, 1990, 71.

²³ Jay W. Dowling, “Melodic Contour in Hearing and Remembering Melodies,” *Musical Perceptions*, ed. Rita Aiello with John A. Sloboda, New York: Oxford University Press, 1994, 175.

²⁴ Arnold Whittall, “Luciano Berio: In Memoriam: Unquiet Heart and Brain,” *Musical Times*, 144, 1884 (autumn 2003), 5.

²⁵ Malcolm Miller, “London, South Bank and RAM: *Omaggio*: A Celebration of Luciano Berio,” *Tempo* 59, 231 (January 2005), 43.

²⁶ Tom Welsh, *Encores*, Program Notes to *Omaggio*: A Celebration of Luciano Berio, 15—30 April 2004, South Bank Centre, London, 33.

²⁷ Miller, “London, South Bank and RAM: *Omaggio*: A Celebration of Luciano Berio,” 43.

Berio's *Wasserklavier* (Water-Piano, 1965) incorporates motives from Johannes Brahms' *Three Intermezzi* (1892), Opus 117, Number 2 and Franz Schubert's *Four Impromptus* (1827), Opus 142, Number 1.²⁸ Miller describes this tonal piece as encapsulating 'shades of late Brahms, yet vivid in its novelty'.²⁹ *Luftklavier* (Air-Piano, 1985) is composed of soft *ostinati* notes in the middle register against a more prominent melodic line that gradually moves to the upper register. Miller suggests that the manner in which the *ostinati* and the melodic line come into focus and then recede are reminiscent of the piano works by Debussy.³⁰ Similarly, Berio uses a background of *ostinati* notes for *Feuerklavier* (Fire-Piano, 1989). This work is in the style of a *tocatta* with the *ostinati* line often punctuated by violent explosions. For Miller, Berio evokes fire by the 'mini-cadenzas that flicker across the keyboard like flames and whose explosive potency is reinforced by *crescendos*'.³¹

The fourth interval features in Berio's organ work *Fa—Si* (1975). The composer explores all the possible harmonic functions and translations of this interval within extreme and fast changes of density and registration. *Les mots sont allés* (The words are gone, 1976—79) is a work that Berio composed for Swiss conductor and impresario Paul Sacher (1906—99). Berio matches the letters of Sacher's name to ordered pitches E flat— A— C— B —E natural. The entire material comes from the opening Sacher motto.³² Brodsky states that this work is an example of Berio's expressive technique, 'whereby the normal, even quotidian, is tested in its elasticity, pulled this way and that to the point of unrecognizability only to snap back into its natural nook just as it was beginning to seduce the listener with new images'.³³

²⁸ Welsh, *Encores*, Program Notes to *Omaggio: A Celebration of Luciano Berio*, 15-30 April 2004, South Bank Centre, London, 33.

²⁹ Miller, "London, South Bank and RAM: *Omaggio: A Celebration of Luciano Berio*," 44.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 44.

³¹ Malcolm Miller, "*Feuerklavier*, for Solo Piano; *Sequenza XI*, for Guitar," *Music and Letters* 73, 2(1992), 338.

³² Seth Brodsky, "*Les mots sont allés* for cello," All Music Guide to Classical Music,

<http://www.allmusic> (accessed 6 September 2011).

³³ *Ibid.*

Relatively motivic processes are the basis for Berio's compositions. The important structural elements within Berio's works include recurring two or three cell motives, single chords or *ostinati* patterns. These are identifiable characteristics of Berio's music as Osmond-Smith recounts:

For all its rich surface detail, Berio's music tends to root itself in processes that are relatively simple, and can thus offer access to the newcomer without starving the experienced listener of fresh discoveries.³⁴

Another important aspect to Berio's musical aesthetic is that an instrument itself bears the 'weight of history'. The following is a discussion on the innovative ways that Berio exploits an instrument within its traditional technical practices.

2.1.2: The history of a musical instrument

During the 1940s and 1950s, experimental composers such as John Cage and Morton Feldman (1926—1987) explored new sound effects from traditional instruments. For instance, Cage's *Sonata X* from his collection of twenty *Sonatas and Interludes* (1946—48) is for prepared piano and require the placement of screws between the strings to give the effects of detuned notes as well as metallic and rattling sounds. In contrast, Berio's concern is to savour the inherent history of an instrument. Berio argues that within a historical context an instrument is in 'itself a piece of musical language' and cannot be 'changed, destroyed or invented'.³⁵ Musicologist and violinist Thomas Gartmann suggests that Berio searches for the character and the soul of the instrument:

[S]ometimes in its specific expression, but also indirectly, by using it in a non-idiomatic way. This is often done with playful handling, not unlike a child tapping its toys to see what illegitimate uses they might have, pushing the instrument and its players to their limits but without actually altering the instrument as such or even preparing it, in the manner of a composer such as Cage.³⁶

³⁴ Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 1.

³⁵ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 91.

³⁶ Thomas Gartmann, "...and so a chord consoles us: Berio's *Sequenza XIII (Chanson)* for Accordion," in *Berio's Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis*, ed. Janet K. Halfyard, Hampshire, England and Burlington, USA: Ashgate Publishing, 2007, 276.

The manners in which Berio pushes the ‘instrument and its players to their limits’ are evidenced in the composer’s fourteen solo virtuosic *Sequenzas* that he composed between 1958 and 2003. Berio aims for a ‘musical commentary’ between the player and her/his instrument by disassociating ‘various types of [performing] behaviour and then putting them together again, transformed, as musical unities’.³⁷ The transformational process comes to the fore as the combination of two recognisable forms of behaviour form a third type of behaviour.³⁸ Berio uses the analogy of ‘walking in the rain’ and ‘typing’ then placing them ‘on stage in such a way that they transform one another and produce by morphogenesis a third form of behaviour’.³⁹ Take, for example, the trombone *Sequenza V* (1966) which requires the player to hum and imitate vocally the sound of the trombone as well as simultaneously play the instrument. Berio describes the effect of combining these two separate recognisable actions as ‘vocalization of the instrument and instrumentalization of the voice’.⁴⁰

At times, Berio investigates in greater depth the specific technical aspects of the instrument.⁴¹ For instance, take the bassoon *Sequenza XII* (1995) for which Berio transforms the instrument’s idiomatic range via the rapid alternations of *tremolando* gestures between the extreme registers. This generates a new timbre with the fusion of acoustic and harmonic characteristics.⁴² The transformational processes here create the multiphonic passages. Another similar virtuosic work is *Gesti* (for recorder, 1966); Berio extends the possibilities for the recorder by the combinations of both vocal and instrumental sounds as well as extensive use of flutter-tonguing technique. Musicologist Niall O’Loughlin explains that the novel effect of this work is ‘between lip tension and finger positions, producing strange or even

³⁷ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 93.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 93.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 102.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 93.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 92—93.

⁴² Luciano Berio, *Sequenza XII* for bassoon, Program Notes to *Omaggio: A Celebration of Luciano Berio*, 15—30 April 2004, South Bank Centre, London, 26.

absent sounds'.⁴³ In this way, Berio explores the dualities in the musical commentary via the player and her/his instrument.

In the piano *Sequenza IV* (1965), Berio exploits the *sostenuto* pedal so as to manipulate the listener's perception of the rhythm and harmony.⁴⁴ Here the *sostenuto* pedal functions as an acoustic envelope generator that lengthens the release time of chords and simultaneously creates phantom attacks.⁴⁵ *Sequenza IV* opens new dimensions of sonic possibilities for the piano, enabling the pianist and the composer to achieve the same effects with the piano as with an electric envelope generator.⁴⁶

Berio chooses to create new harmonic, rhythmic and timbral possibilities for the instrument within traditional formal and technical parameters for his guitar *Sequenza IX* (1987—88). Two instrumental and gestural styles are present in this work—the *flamenco* and the classical guitar traditions. The passage between these two 'histories' is Berio's more experimental vision of the instrument.⁴⁷ Berio uses idiomatic techniques, including *flamenco* strumming, *tambora* chords, contrapuntal lines, arpeggios, and harmonics, *ponticello*, rapid melodic figures, arpeggios, *tremolo*, *pizzicato* and slurs, as a basis to create a new sound a world away from its tonal heritage.

In the following example showing *Sequenza XI* (See Musical example 1: *Sequenza XI, ma liberamente, come preluendo*, page 1, staves 1—2),⁴⁸ the introductory section begins with a sequence of idiomatic chords played as *tamboras*, in which the right-hand thumb strikes the six strings near the bridge to produce deep drum-like thuds. A series of four plucked chords then

⁴³ Niall O'Loughlin, "The Recorder in Twentieth Century Music," *Early Music* 10/ 1, "The Recorder: Past and Present," (January 1982), 37.

⁴⁴ Zoe Browder Doll, "Phantom Rhythms, Hidden Harmonies: The Use of the *Sostenuto* Pedal in Berio's *Sequenza IV* for Piano, *Leaf and Sonata*," in *Berio's Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis*, ed. Janet K. Halfyard, Hampshire, England and Burlington, USA: Ashgate Publishing, 2007, 53.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 53

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 53.

⁴⁷ Luciano Berio, liner notes to recording of *Berio Sequenzas*, Ensemble InterContemporain, (Hamburg: Deutsche Grammophon, 457 038—2, 1998), 20.

⁴⁸ Luciano Berio, *Sequenza XI* (for Guitar, 1988), Universal Edition: 19273.

contrast to the *tambora* chords. The opening pentachord 5—35 (02479) introduces the key pitch material in the form of the guitar's open strings (E2—A2—D3—G3—B3—E4). In the following hexachord 6—33 (023579), Berio introduces two thematic intervals: the tritone (C3—F sharp 3) and the chromatic dyad (F sharp 3—G3). A series of four tetrachords (marked *dolcemente*) in the high tessitura of the guitar followed by a low register F2 and a tightly spaced trichord (F sharp 3—G3—A3) conclude the prelude.

Musical example 1: *Sequenza XI*, page 1, staves 1—2

Again, Berio chooses simple motivic material as a structural element for his *Sequenzas*. Andrew Schultz comments that Berio derives the ‘musical material in a work from a single source making commensurate use of continuous variation processes’.⁴⁹ Berio’s conceptualisation of a sequence is comparable to a tonal sequence; however, it is often an inexact replica of the original, which nevertheless retains the character of the original.⁵⁰ Flautist Cynthia Folio similarly argues that the prevalence of the tritone and the three-note chromatic motives in Berio’s flute *Sequenza I* (1958) ‘immediately set up implications that can be understood by the listener’.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Andrew N. Schultz, “*Sequenze I—VII* by Luciano Berio: Compositional Idea and Musical Action,” PhD Dissertation, University of Queensland, 1986, 3.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 5

⁵¹ Cynthia Folio, “Luciano Berio’s *Sequenza* for Flute: A Performance Analysis,” *Flutist Quarterly* (Fall 1990), 18.

Another structural strategy to aid the listener is Berio's choice of alternating textures within the music. In addition to the alternating textures, George Flynn suggests that the dramatic vitality of the *Sequenzas* is further, enhanced by the manner in which the textures are prolonged and related to one another.⁵² For instance, in the piano *Sequenza IV* Berio alternates dense chordal passages with linear gestures of *tremolo*, single notes and small clusters of notes that cover the entire register of the piano.⁵³ In an interview of 1997 with Theo Muller, Berio explains his objectives for multi-layered character for his works.

The combination of layers, which are present in different degrees without obliterating each other, can create a very interesting magma. If these layers have real functions – harmonically, time wise, in terms of density— their coexistence creates and implicit 'drama' that can be very meaningful.⁵⁴

Similarly in the guitar *Sequenza XI*, Berio juxtaposes the fuller *rasgado* and *tambour* chordal gestures with linear gestures of arpeggios, *tremolo*, and rapid-note motifs, left-hand trills, harmonics and a contrapuntal passage. The combination and development of these gestures underpins a large-scale harmonic process that generates both surface diversity and large-scale form.⁵⁵ Berio describes the alternating textures as a 'dialogue between the two harmonic dimensions on the one hand, and the two technical and gestural ones on the other that is pursued through a continuous process of exchange and 'transcription' of clearly recognizable figures'.⁵⁶ Schultz notes that 'the distinctive nature of juxtaposed musical actions together with features such as pitch recapitulation affords strong feelings of return and compositional unity'.⁵⁷ In turn, this type of compositional unity and clarity

⁵² George W. Flynn, "Listening to Berio's Music," *Musical Quarterly* 61, 3 (July 1975), 417.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 418.

⁵⁴ Theo Muller, "Music Is Not a Solitary Act: Conversation with Luciano Berio," *Tempo* 199 (January 1997), 18.

⁵⁵ Malcolm Miller, "*Feuerklavier*, for Solo Piano; *Sequenza XI*, for Guitar," *Music and Letters*, 73, 2 (1992), 338.

⁵⁶ Luciano Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Liner notes to recording *Berio Sequenzas*, Ensemble InterContemporain (Hamburg: Deutsche Grammophon 457 038—2, 1998), 20.

⁵⁷ Schultz, "*Sequenze I—VII* by Luciano Berio: Compositional Idea and Musical Action," 241.

within the *Sequenzas* is an aspect of these works that goes some of the way to describe the ongoing appeal of the series. For instance, Janet Halfyard praises the *Sequenzas* as ‘paradigms of the musical literature, changing the way in which other composers have thought about an instrument and what can be achieved with it’.⁵⁸ Similarly, musicologists Didier Guigue and Marcílio Fagner Onofre honour this series as a ‘landmark of twentieth-century literature’ for their respective instruments.⁵⁹

Berio not only draws on an instrument’s ‘historical language’ as a basis for his solo works but also quotation to comment on ‘musical history’. The following is a discussion on the ways Berio deals with music history by incorporating quotations of past composers as well as his own past compositions.

2.2.1: Musical quotation and self-referential techniques to connect with the past

Like many modernist composers, Berio relies at times on musical quotation and textural commentary both to connect with the musical past and to reject it. For instance, he uses literary quotations as a basis for *Laborintus II* (1965), which was commissioned by the Office de Radiodiffusion-Télévision Française (ORTF) to mark the seven hundredth anniversary of Dante’s birth. The text, by Edoardo Sanguineti, is a multi-layered collage that includes quotations from Dante’s *Vita Nuova*, *Convivio* and the *Divina Commedia* with Biblical texts, texts by T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound and Sanguineti.⁶⁰ Berio reduces the texts to a series of verbal fragments of the originals and chooses the title *Laborintus II* to echo Sanguineti’s own poem *Laborintus* of 1956.

⁵⁸ Halfyard, “Provoking Acts: The Theatre of Berio’s *Sequenzas*,” *Berio’s Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis*, 116.

⁵⁹ Didier Guigue and Marcílio Fagner Onofre, “Sonic Complexity and Harmonic Syntax in *Sequenza IV* for Piano,” *Berio’s Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis*, ed. Halfyard, 209.

⁶⁰ Luciano Berio, *Laborintus II* (Author’s notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 7 August 2011).

Berio's well known *Sinfonia* (for eight voices and orchestra, 1968), bears no relationship to the classical form. Berio, instead, drew the title from the Greek word 'sin-fon-i', which refers to the combining of sounds of different texts, music, instruments and harmonies.⁶¹ For Part I of this work, Berio chooses short fragments of text from *Le cru et le cuit* (*The Raw and the Cooked* 1964), by Claude Lévi-Strauss, in which the author analyses South American Indian myths. Berio, in particular, selects sections concerning the origin of water and fire.⁶² For Part III, the text fragments are from Samuel Beckett's novel *The Unnamable* (1953) and Berio appropriates the *Scherzo* section of Gustav Mahler's Second Symphony.⁶³ In addition, Berio quotes snippets of works by Schoenberg, Maurice Ravel (1875—1937), Hector Berlioz (1803—1869), Igor Stravinsky (1882—1971), Richard Strauss (1864—1949), J. S. Bach, Berg, Beethoven (1770—1827), Claude Debussy (1862—1918), Boulez and Stockhausen.

Less well known is Berio's self-referential technique in his *Chemins* series. As a basis for the *Chemins*, Berio drew from a selection of his *Sequenzas*. The additive process is an important compositional technique for Berio.⁶⁴ The composer's intention for the entire *Chemins* is that they be 'an exposition and an amplification of what is implicit, hidden, so to speak, in the solo part'.⁶⁵ The first of this series, *Chemins I* (1964) for harp and orchestra is a commentary on the harp *Sequenza II* (1963). The original material of the harp solo, Berio transforms by way of an instrumental commentary, which interplays primarily with the vertical homophonic blocks that shift between soloist and ensemble. The addition of two harps that mainly imitate the solo harp provides depth both musically and spatially.

⁶¹ Moore and MacLennan, Interview with Berio.

⁶² David Osmond-Smith, "From Myth to Music: Lévi-Strauss's *Mythologiques* and Berio's *Sinfonia*," *Musical Quarterly*, 67, 2 (April 1981), 240.

⁶³ Luciano Berio, *Sinfonia*, (Author's notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 20 June 2011).

⁶⁴ Moore and MacLennan, Interview with Berio.

⁶⁵ Berio, *Remembering the Future*, 42.

Repetition forms the basis of the viola *Sequenza VI* (1967) and, in particular, the relationship between modules that are repeated often and others that appear only once.⁶⁶ *Chemins II* (for viola and nine instruments, 1967) is a commentary on *Sequenza VI* in which the ensemble reiterates and intensifies the chromatic harmony of the solo work. Berio amplifies the *tremolandi* sections of *Sequenza VI* within the ensemble to create different sounds. In 1968, Berio further expanded the harmonic scope of *Chemins II* into *Chemins III* for viola and orchestra. Berio experiments with a smaller orchestra for *Chemins IIb* (1970). The woodwind section now includes an oboe, two saxophones, an electric guitar and a piano replaces the harps and celesta. Berio reduces the strings to six violas, four cellos and three double basses. The original solo of the viola we now hear in the violin. In *Chemins IIc* (for bass clarinet and orchestra, 1972), Berio superimposes a solo part for bass clarinet into the existing orchestration of *Chemins IIb*.

Chemins IV (for oboe and eleven strings, 1975), is a commentary on the oboe *Sequenza VII* (1969).⁶⁷ The oboe grows from a single, repeated B4 pitch with varied attacks into a virtuosic exploration of the oboe's range and timbre. At various stages, all the instruments participate in the articulation of this pitch in *Chemins IV*. The formal structure of the solo work comes to the fore in its related *Chemins* by way of instrumental transitions when the oboe is silent.⁶⁸

Chemins V (for guitar and orchestra, 1992), is a commentary on the guitar *Sequenza XI*. For *Chemins V*, the guitar part is significantly unaltered, therefore, the formal plan is rather repetitive.⁶⁹ To foreground the relatively limited sonic output of the guitar, the orchestra expands the pauses of the

⁶⁶ Berio, *Sequenza VI*, Liner notes to recording *Berio Sequenzas*, 15.

⁶⁷ Claude Delange further arranged this work for soprano saxophone, titled *Sequenza VIIb* (1993). In 2000, Berio orchestrated *Chemins IV* for soprano saxophone and eleven strings.

⁶⁸ Paul Roberts, "The *Chemins* Series," in *Berio's Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis*, ed. Halfyard, 127.

⁶⁹ Luciano Berio, *Chemins V* (Author's notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 29 July 2011).

solo and further accompanies the guitarist in ever-changing chamber combinations.

The dyad A—B is the basis for Berio's *Corale* (for violin, two horns and strings, 1981). This work is a commentary on the violin *Sequenza VIII* (1976—77). The reiteration of pitches A and B act in a way similar to a ground bass in Baroque music and becomes major focus for the listener as the music unfolds. Berio describes this work as a '*quasi una passacaglia*'.⁷⁰

Chemins VI, titled *Kol Od* (for trumpet, thirty one soloists, celesta and accordion, 1996), is a transcription of *Sequenza X* (for trumpet and piano resonance, 1984). In *Sequenza X* the trumpet player stands next to the open piano that provides a sustained resonance almost throughout the entire work. The pianist creates the resonance by using the sustaining pedal, the middle pedal as well as silently pressed notes. *Kol Od* follows the basic structure of *Sequenza X*. The resonances Berio further develops by using multiphonics in the woodwind instruments as well as gradations in the dynamics and timbral ranges of the other instruments.

For his clarinet *Sequenza IXa* (1980), Berio chooses a long melody that 'develops a constant exchange and a constant transformation between two different pitch fields: one of seven notes that are almost always fixed in the same register, and the other five notes that are instead characterized by great mobility'.⁷¹ Berio arranged this *Sequenza* for alto saxophone titled *Sequenza IXb* (1980). *Chemins VII*, titled *Recit*, ('story' or 'narration,' for alto saxophone and orchestra, 1996) is a reworking of *Sequenza IXb*. The orchestra does not adhere to the original harmonic scheme of the solo alto saxophone, instead, sustains larger blocks of harmonic material that are related to complete phrases of the solo part.

⁷⁰ Luciano Berio, *Corale* (Author's notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 29 July 2011).

⁷¹ Berio, *Sequenza IXa*, Liner notes to recording *Berio Sequenzas*, 18.

Paul Roberts comments that: ‘A real strength of the *Chemins* series may readily be observed in how each individual work is characterized with its own identity, and this also highlights the differences that exist between each of the original *Sequenzas*’.⁷² The *Sequenza* series coexists with the *Chemins* series as independent works. Given the success of the *Sequenzas* with critics and audiences alike, the subsequent *Chemins* series is an interesting addition both conceptually and musically to Berio’s repertoire as Osmond-Smith comments:

One of the more striking results of this is to place in question the finality and internal inevitability so readily attributed to the individual work by a public reared on a set of established classics, each assured of its immutable niche in the cultural pantheon. It chooses rather to emphasize the degree to which a ‘finished’ piece may be so only by the virtue of a partly arbitrary set of decisions on the composer’s part, for whose reversal the *Chemins* series allows ample opportunity.⁷³

In contrast to established works as a basis for commentary, Berio’s *Points on the curve to find* (for piano and twenty-two instruments, 1974) deals with the same idea as a compositional process. The mainly monophonic and periodic elements of the piano part provide the foundation for the instrumental commentary that interprets and develops the piano’s harmonic characters.⁷⁴ The piano part provides a frenetic, explosive single line, with the orchestra acting like an echo chamber. Osmond-Smith suggests that the piano line ‘activates around it a sort of harmonic kaleidoscope that constantly inflects the same circumscribed harmonic resources in new ways’.⁷⁵ This work is impressionistic with a high degree of rhythmic continuity as well as varied contrapuntal and homophonic textures.⁷⁶

⁷² Roberts, “The *Chemins* Series,” in *Berio’s Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis*, 136.

⁷³ David Osmond-Smith, “Berio and the Art of Commentary,” *Musical Times*, 116, 1592 (October 1975), 872.

⁷⁴ Luciano Berio “*Points on a curve to find*,” (Author’s notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 21 July 2011).

⁷⁵ Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 58.

⁷⁶ Arnold Whittall, “Review: Orchestra,” *Music and Letters*, 57, 1 (January 1976), 85—86.

A commentary to an *adagio* is the foundation of *Ekphrasis* (subtitled *Continuo II*, 1996). This work is composed of an ever-changing sound landscape, shaped upon a grid of recurrent modules.⁷⁷ Berio's oscillating sound patterns give the effect of light shimmering on water. In choosing the title of *Alternatim* (for clarinet, viola and orchestra, 1997), Berio draws on a term that evokes a medieval technique in which plainchant and polyphony, voices and instruments alternate. However, Berio uses the term metaphorically. For this double concerto, the musical discourse is made mostly of interweaving lines whose contours constantly transform. The soloists interact with the orchestra through recognisable thematic figures that alternatively emerge and subside in the orchestral texture and silence.

Osmond-Smith comments that it is 'characteristic of Berio's orchestral textures that each line within the counterpart of voices exploring a fixed field makes its own musical sense'.⁷⁸ The orchestra player is asked 'to contribute a few grains of material to a whole that only takes on coherence when heard globally'.⁷⁹ Take, for example, *Bewegung* (1971/1984), a quasi *passacaglia* in which the process of transformation goes so far as to modify into melody the *ostinati* of the opening. In a short time span and with relatively simple elements of periodic, repetitive and circular nature, the work evokes the image of movement in motionless, suspended time.⁸⁰

For the listener, Berio's juxtaposition of the pre-existing material in *Sinfonia* and *Laborintus II* with his new musical language, in turn, projects the 'old' anew. Along the same lines, the *Chemin* series and its respective *Sequenza* presents a 'new' instrumental dialogue.

⁷⁷ Luciano Berio, *Ekphrasis* (Author's notes) Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio.org> (accessed 31 January 2011).

⁷⁸ Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 26.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁸⁰ Luciano Berio, *Bewegung*, (Author's notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio.org> (accessed 24 March 2011).

2.2.2: A dialogue with the past through traditional folk music

The serialist tradition, in general, rejected popular music references. However, composers such as Bartók, Kodály, Stravinsky and Vaughan Williams drew on the folk music to develop distinct nationalist variants of modernism. These composers were attracted to the modes, melodies, rhythmic or structural forms of folk music.⁸¹ Postmodernist composers have continued to employ folk, ethnic and non-Western music for quotation, transformation or as an influence in their works.⁸² Throughout his career Berio had a deep affinity with folk music and he collected these songs from old records, printed anthologies, and by oral tradition from folk musicians and friends.⁸³

The first two songs of Berio's eleven *Folk Songs* (for mezzo-soprano and seven instruments, 1964 / for mezzo-soprano and orchestra, 1973), titled *Black is the Color of my True Love's Hair* and *I Wonder as I Wander*, are by Kentucky folk singer and composer John Jacob Niles. The Armenian folk song, *Loosin Yelav*, describes the rise of the moon, and in the French folk song titled *Rosignolet du Bois* that follows, a nightingale advises an inquiring lover to sing his serenades. *La Femminisca* is of Sicilian origin and is traditionally sung by the wives of fishermen while waiting on the docks for the return of their husbands. *La Donna Ideale (The Ideal Woman)* narrates the attributes of the ideal type of woman to marry, while *Ballo (The Ball)* recounts how even the wisest of men lose their heads over love. These two songs Berio composed in 1947, using anonymous Genoese and Sicilian texts.⁸⁴ The Sardinian folk song, *Motettu de Tristura*, portrays the sorrow of losing a lover. *Malurous qu'o uno Fenno*, from the Auvergne, speaks of a man who has no spouse but seeks one, and one who has a spouse but

⁸¹ Born, *Rationalizing Culture IRCAM, Boulez, and the Institutionalization of the Musical Avant-Garde*, 49.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 61.

⁸³ Luciano Berio, *Folk Songs*, (Author's notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 11 July 2011).

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

wishes he had none. *Lo Fiolaire*, also from Auvergne, and the final folk song in Berio's collection, *Azerbaijan love song*, both depict notions of love.

In unifying folk song with art music, Berio does not preserve the authenticity of a song. Instead, the composer transcribes and analyses the original material to include within the context of his own musical language.⁸⁵ Judy Lochhead suggests that the *Folk Songs* 'imaginatively project a folk quality while respecting but not simply recreating the musical style of each song'.⁸⁶ According to composer Roger Marsh, the songs of this collection 'range across continents and genres in a way which ultimately blurs rather than clarifies the notion of folk music'.⁸⁷ Likewise, in *Coro* (for forty voices and instruments, 1975), Berio draws his text from a wide range of folk poetry based on work and love, as well as fragments of text from the poem, *Residencia en la tierra* (1925—32) by Chilean poet, Pablo Neruda. For this work, Berio chooses not to use direct melodies of folk songs, but to evoke a folk-like quality with the use of modes and dance-like rhythms.⁸⁸

Berio claims that the traditional folk music of Sicily is one of 'the richest, most complex and incandescent of our Mediterranean culture'.⁸⁹ Berio's particular interest in Sicilian folklore is evident from his earlier short song, *E vó* (for soprano and instruments, 1972), which is based on a Sicilian lullaby. The more substantial work of thirty-minutes duration is *Voci* (subtitled *Folk Songs II*, for viola and two instrumental groups, 1984). Violist Aldo Bennici provided Berio with the original musical material that included songs of work, love, lullabies and cries of street vendors from different parts of Sicily.⁹⁰ For this

⁸⁵ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 148.

⁸⁶ Judy Lochhead, "Luciano Berio," *Notes* 57, 1 (September 2000), 217.

⁸⁷ Roger Marsh, "Luciano Berio: *Folk Songs* for mezzo-soprano and chamber ensemble," Program Notes to *Omaggio: A Celebration of Luciano Berio*, 15—30 April 2004, South Bank Centre, London, 27.

⁸⁸ Paul Griffiths, Liner notes to recording of Luciano Berio's *Coro*, Cologne Radio Chorus, Cologne Radio Symphony Orchestra, Conductor, Luciano Berio, (Hamburg: Deutsche Grammophon, 471 587—2, 1980), 10.

⁸⁹ Luciano Berio, *Voci*, Program Notes to *Omaggio: A Celebration of Luciano Berio*, 15—30 April 2004, South Bank Centre, London, 7.

⁹⁰ Luciano Berio, *Voci* (Author's notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 15 July 2011).

work, Berio chooses a violist in lieu of a singer. Berio's strategy for these transcriptions encompasses direct use of the original material, the original as a springboard for experimentation as well as defacement of the original.⁹¹ Jürg Stenzel comments that, through the simultaneous use of these three different modes, 'transcription becomes a personal, creative, and constructive activity concerned with immediately accessible musical expression'.⁹²

In *Naturale* (for viola, percussion and recorded voice, 1985), Berio chooses the same themes from Sicilian folk songs that he used in *Voci*.⁹³ Berio incorporates, by way of pre-recorded tape, authentic field recordings of a Sicilian folk singer, who functions in the manner of a storyteller.⁹⁴ Ethnomusicologist Walter Brunetto suggests that in *Voci* and *Naturale*, Berio creates a 'bridge between aural styles buried in time and Luciano Berio's desire to make them his own and re-introduce them in a different light'.⁹⁵

Berio's use of folk song could, however, be more targeted. The main impetus behind Berio's *Ritorno degli snovidenia* (for violoncello and thirty instruments, 1976—7), was Stalin's betrayal of the Russian people.⁹⁶ Berio chooses fragments from three Russian revolutionary songs; however, these melodies never become perceptible at the work's surface.⁹⁷ Whittall comments that Berio conveys a sense of reference and implication and this work has 'the

⁹¹ Jürg Stenzl, "Luciano Berio's Native Language," Liner notes to recording of Luciano Berio's *Voci* Kim Kashkashian, viola, Robyn Schulkowsky, percussion, Radio Symphonieorchester Wien, Dennis Russell Davies, Conductor. (Vienna: ECM New Series 1735, 461 808—2), np.

⁹² *Ibid.*, np.

⁹³ Luciano Berio, *Naturale* (Author's notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 16 July 2011).

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ Walter Brunetto, "On Sicilian folk music," Liner notes to recording of Luciano Berio's *Voci* Kim Kashkashian, viola, Robyn Schulkowsky, percussion, Radio Symphonieorchester Wien, Dennis Russell Davies, Conductor. (Vienna: ECM New Series 1735, 461 808-2), np.

⁹⁶ Luciano Berio, *Ritorno degli snovidenia* (Author's notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 25 July 2011).

⁹⁷ David Osmond-Smith, *Ritorno degli snovidenia*, Program Notes to *Omaggio: A Celebration of Luciano Berio*, 15—30 April 2004, South Bank Centre, London, 6.

enigmatic expressiveness of something characteristically modern: abstract, yet almost tangibly immediate'.⁹⁸

Folk music and folklore also influenced Berio's *azione musicale, La Vera Storia* (*The True Story*, 1980). Berio drew the title for this work from Sicilian *cantastorie*, who are traditional story-singers capable of drawing an audience at fiestas with the words, 'come close, come close, and I'll tell you the story of'⁹⁹ The central theme is one that echoes history: that of tension and a violent struggle of the masses against constituted authority. Berio set this theme within a contemporary context for which the *cantastoria* provides the audience with a commentary on her version of the events that take place.

In Berio's use of folk music, one could cast this as a wish to rebalance the weight of history so that the preserved tradition of classical ('high art') music could be rebalanced by the 'rediscovered' history of music of the people ('low art').

2.2.3: A dialogue with the past through transcription

The recognition of the weight of history as a dialogue between previous composers is evidenced by Berio's transcriptions, which Osmond-Smith describes as another 'integral part of the composer's armory'.¹⁰⁰ Berio argues that the art of transcription is critical for the professional development of a composer and that its use is 'to comment upon and to assimilate elements from past and foreign experiences'.¹⁰¹ From a historical perspective, transcription implies not only interpretation but also evolutionary and

⁹⁸ Arnold Whittall, "Review: *Ritorno degli snovidenia*, for cello and small orchestra," *Music and Letters*, 65, 1 (January 1984), 126.

⁹⁹ Luciano Berio, *La Vera Storia* (Author's notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 26 July 2012).

¹⁰⁰ David Osmond-Smith, "Contrapunctus XIX for small orchestra from Bach's *Art of the Fugue*," Program Notes to *Omaggio: A Celebration of Luciano Berio*, 15—30 April 2004, South Bank Centre, London, 36.

¹⁰¹ Berio, *Remembering the Future*, 39.

transformational processes,¹⁰² and for Berio this was another way by which he could deal explicitly with the weight of history.

Berio chooses an atonal idiom for *Variazione sull' aria di Papageno* (1956), taken from Mozart's opera *The Magic Flute*. Berio scored his version for two basset horns and strings and assimilates the transcription into the creative process.¹⁰³ He avoids any actual reference to the theme of the aria, but still communicates to the listener Papageno's wit and Mozart's orchestral colourations.¹⁰⁴ However, for *Nach Zaide*, Mozart's motives are more discernible within Berio's multilayered atonal language.¹⁰⁵

Berio's approach to transcribing a set of songs with piano accompaniment by Giuseppe Verdi, titled *Otto Romanza* (for tenor and orchestra, 1991), included reconstructing Verdi's orchestral gestures.¹⁰⁶ At times, Berio comments on the original text with discreet thematic proliferation or with harmonic transformations which, though bound to the Verdian text, tend to produce an 'out-of-joint effect'.¹⁰⁷ Berio's transcriptions of two songs by Mahler that include *Fünf frühe Lieder* (1986) and *Sechs frühe Lieder* (1987) for baritone and orchestra bring to the surface the 'undercurrents of the original piano part: Wagner, Brahms, the adult Mahler, and the modes of orchestration that came after him'.¹⁰⁸ The original piano part for *Siete Canciones populares españolas*, by Manuel De Falla, also underpins Berio's transcription of 1978, for mezzo-soprano and orchestra.

¹⁰² Ibid., 35.

¹⁰³ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 112.

¹⁰⁴ Dominy Clements, Review to Compact Disc *Luciano Berio—A Portrait* (Decca 4763479), MusicWeb International. http://www.musicweb-international.com/classrev/2011/Jan11/Berio_Portrait_4763479 (accessed 28 December 2011).

¹⁰⁵ Anthony Tommasini, "In Unfinished Mozart Opera, Berio Provides the Last Word," *New York Times* (New York: 1 April 2011), C. 1.

¹⁰⁶ Luciano Berio, "Luciano Berio: 8 *Romanze* / transcribed for tenor and orchestra —Work Introduction," [http://www.universal.com/Luciano-Berio/composers-and-works/composer/54/wor ...](http://www.universal.com/Luciano-Berio/composers-and-works/composer/54/wor...) (accessed 19 January 2012).

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Berio, *Remembering the Future*, 41.

Berio's transcription of Monteverdi's madrigal depicting love and murder, *Il combattimento di tancredi e Clorinda* (for soprano, tenor, baritone, harpsichord and strings, 1966) is not a complete rearrangement. In fact, it is relatively close to the original, even to including the ornaments in Monteverdi's vocal part books.¹⁰⁹ Berio's *Ritirata Notturna di Madrid* (1975), taken from a chamber work of the same title by Luigi Boccherini, superimposes the four versions of the original to create an exuberant street processional.

Berio's ending for the two final movements of Franz Schubert's unfinished Tenth Symphony in D major is titled *Rendering* (1990). Berio's approach to the original sketch material was to create a 'musical plaster' so the listener recognises the Schubert fragments in contrast to his own atonal harmonies.¹¹⁰ With respect to Berio's *Contrapunctus XIX* (2001), the unfinished ending of the *Art of Fugue* (by J.S. Bach), has a similar approach in that we recognise where Bach stops and Berio's sound world takes over. Likewise, the juxtaposition of musical styles for Berio's ending of Puccini's unfinished opera *Turandot* is explicit. Of the twenty-three surviving sketch sheets of the final act, Berio did employ Puccini's motives but he elaborated them with linear chromaticism.¹¹¹

Berio describes his approach to transcription as not 'looking back in a nostalgic way, but bringing things together, so that they can talk to each other and sound together'.¹¹² His transcriptions and completions of other composers' works show a creative modernist engagement with the tonal works of previous centuries that Berio acknowledged, claimed, rewrote and re-authored.

¹⁰⁹ Denis Arnold, "Review: Berio *Combattimento*," *Musical Times* 109, 1507 (September 1968), 839.

¹¹⁰ Paul Driver, "Sounds of Silence," *Times* (London, United Kingdom: 17 April 1994) Features section, np.

¹¹¹ Roger Parker, *Remaking the Song: Operatic Visions and Revisions from Handel to Berio*, Berkley, Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 2006, 93.

¹¹² William Littler, "Italian composer Berio a seer of music's future," *Toronto Star* (Toronto, Ontario: 29 November 1994), F. 4.

2.3.1: Embracing new technologies

Berio has made a significant contribution to the development of electronic music.¹¹³ By the 1950s tape recording technology and electronic wave generation became available to composers with access to radio stations or well-endowed university laboratories.¹¹⁴ In 1954, Berio co-founded with Bruno Maderna the Studio di Fonologia di Milano della Radiotelevisione Italiana. The studio initially created electronic soundtracks and backgrounds for fiction, specifically in radio and television. Then both composers used the studio to explore the emerging resources of *musique concrète* and 'electronic music'. Berio's first radiophonic narration was *Ritratto di citta* (1954), which he produced in collaboration with Maderna. The text, written by Roberto Leydi and narrated by Cathy Berberian, describes the city of Milan awakening from the night.¹¹⁵

In *Mutazioni* (for electronic sounds on tape, 1955), Berio experimented with a group of sine waves belonging to the same scale. The original modes of attack and durations Berio varies slightly to create a mutation of the original material.¹¹⁶ For *Perspectives* (1957), Berio recorded sine waves of differing pitch to create a montage of shimmering sounds by cutting the tape into small pieces.¹¹⁷ In *Differences* (for flute, clarinet in B flat, viola, cello, harp and tape, 1958—59), Berio creates novel effects by the interaction between the players and the distorted tape treatments of their prior recordings.¹¹⁸ *Momenti* (for electronic sounds on tape, 1960) consists of ninety-three sine waves whose harmonic relationships of a fifth and seventh generate various types of chords and timbres.

¹¹³ Francesco Giomi, Damiano Meacci and Kilian Schwoon, "Live Electronics in Luciano Berio's Music," *Computer Music Journal*, 27, 2 (summer, 2003), 30.

¹¹⁴ Born, *Rationalizing Culture IRCAM, Boulez, and the Institutionalization of the Musical Avant-Garde*, 52.

¹¹⁵ Raymond Fearn, "Bruno Maderna: From the Café Pedrocchi to Darmstadt," *Tempo*, New Series, 155 (December 1985), 9.

¹¹⁶ Luciano Berio, *Mutazioni* (Author's notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 7 August 2011).

¹¹⁷ Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 14.

¹¹⁸ John Warnaby, "Obituary: Luciano Berio," *Musical Opinion* 126, 1435 (July 2003), 4.

Berio's attraction to electronic music, however, was not to discover new sounds but 'the possibility it gives the composer of integrating a larger area of sound phenomena into musical thought, thus overcoming a dualistic conception of musical thought'.¹¹⁹ To further explore this concept, Berio collaborated with philosopher Umberto Eco for their work together on a radio program entitled "Onomatopoeia nel linguaggio poetico". Eco's plan was to present different uses of onomatopoeia in modern literature.¹²⁰ The first of these ongoing collaborations was *Thema (Omaggio a Joyce)* of 1958, composed for Cathy Berberian. Berio states that for *Thema* 'I was interested in obtaining a new kind of unity between speech and music, developing possibilities of a continuous metamorphosis one into another'.¹²¹ In the text, adapted from James Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake*, Berio includes three different readings of Joyce's *overture*—in English, French and Italian. Berio then mixed and electronically transformed Berberian's vocalisations, resulting in a 'stream of half-comprehended utterances, where words and fragments of speech are engulfed by meaningless, synthetic sound'.¹²² An earlier work, that similarly adopts the human voice is Stockhausen's *Gesang der Jünglinge* (*Song of the Youths*, 1955). Stockhausen matches the voice resonances of a twelve year old boy with pitch to create the sounds of phonemes.¹²³

For his collaborative work with Berberian entitled *Visage* (1961—62), Berio eliminates texts and instead utilises a repertoire of emotions and psychological states. In this piece Berberian stutters, gasps, murmurs, shouts, laughs, cries, wails and sings: the listener faces evocative and possibly disturbing vocal gestures pouring out of the loudspeakers. Another work of the same ilk is Babbitt's *Philomel* (1964) that similarly incorporates

¹¹⁹ Luciano Berio, *Thema (Omaggio a Joyce)* (Author's notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 13 January 2011)

¹²⁰ Osmomd-Smith, *Berio*, 61.

¹²¹ Berio, *Thema (Omaggio a Joyce)* (Author's notes).

¹²² Florian Mussgnug. "Writing Like Music: Luciano Berio, Umberto Eco and the New Avant-Garde," *Comparative Critical Studies* 5, 1 (2008), 85.

¹²³ David Metzger, "The Paths from and to Abstraction in Stockhausen's *Gesang der Jünglinge*," *Modernism/Modernity* 11, 4 (November 2004), 695.

tape and a soprano to capture the psychological dissolution of a woman in the aftermath of a 'brutal rape, mutilation, and confinement'.¹²⁴

Paul Driver, critic for London's *Sunday Times*, describes Berio's approach to his early tape works, including *Differences* (for five instruments and tape, 1958) as lyrical and 'his most cerebral compositions'.¹²⁵ The early radio pieces including *Questo vuol dire che* (1968), *Per la dolce memoria di quell giorno* (1974), *Diario immaginario* (1975) and various other works that Berio produced at the Studio di Fonologia di Milano are now regarded as important works. In 1996, Maddalena Novarti undertook the preservation and conservation of these tapes. This included re-mastering of all the tapes in digital format before irrevocable damage took place as well as the cataloguing and publishing of all the works at the Archives of Studio di Fonologia di Milano Della Radiotelevisione Italiana, Milan.¹²⁶

In 1960, Berio relinquished his position as director of the Studio di Fonologia, and from 1974 to 1980 he directed the electro-acoustic section of the Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique/ Musique (IRCAM) in Paris. *A-Ronne* (for five singers and radiophonic effects, 1974), with text by Edoardo Sanguineti, Berio bases on a fragmented, multilingual poem that he describes as a documentary on a poem 'just as we speak of a documentary on a painting or on a foreign country'.¹²⁷ Pianist and scholar Nina Horvath, in her analysis of the poetic material, suggests that, as part of Berio's techniques to set the text of *A-Ronne*, the composer 'draws freely from the old and the new to create a third, entirely unique product'.¹²⁸ The disparate vocal and textural elements are dramatised and used to generate

¹²⁴ Emily J. Adamowicz, "Subjectivity and Structure in Milton Babbitt's *Philomel*," *Society for Music Theory* 17, 2 (July 2011), 1.

¹²⁵ Paul Driver, "Sounds of Silence; Luciano Berio," *Sunday Times* (London: 17 April 1994), Features Section, np.

¹²⁶ Maddalena Novarti, "The Archive of the Studio di Fonologia di Milano," *Journal of New Music Research*, 30, 4 (2001), 402.

¹²⁷ Luciano Berio, *A-Ronne* (Author's notes), <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 13 January 2011).

¹²⁸ Nina Horvath, "The 'Theatre of the Ear': Analyzing Berio's Musical Documentary *A-Ronne*," *Musical Exploration*, 10 (2009), 74.

recognisable situations that combine into a unified whole, just as the many sides of a theatrical piece whereby staging, actors, lighting and scenery, are synthesised to generate a total sensory experience.¹²⁹ Critic for the *Guardian* Andrew Clements states that Berio ‘crosses boundaries— between speech and song, theatre and opera, ‘high art’ and the vernacular’.¹³⁰

In 1987, Berio founded Italian Centro Tempo Reale in Florence to investigate the possibilities of real-time interaction between live performances and programmed digital systems.¹³¹ For the following works, live electronics are included in the live performance realisation.¹³² The title *Ofanim* (for two children’s choirs, two instrumental groups, female voice and live electronics, 1988—1997) means both ‘wheels’ and ‘modes’ in Hebrew. Berio places eight loudspeakers to form a circle around the audience, so as the sound reinforces the listener’s concept of a wheel.¹³³ This work is in twelve sections, for which Berio alternates text fragments from the Old Testament: the *Book of Ezekiel* (chapters 1 and 19) and the *Song of Songs* (chapters 4 and 5). Sections II, V, IX and XI employ two choruses that evoke repetitious wind sounds together with heavy electronic washes serving as a background.¹³⁴ Berio oscillates between two Biblical modes: ‘apocalyptic fear and carnal joy’.¹³⁵

For Berio’s *Song of Songs* movements in Sections III, VII, IX the electronic effects disappear and the choruses take on separate identities.¹³⁶ The electronic element functions as an echo device that returns the music of the

¹²⁹ Ibid., 74—75.

¹³⁰ Andrew Clements, “Film & Music: Classical: CD releases: Berio: *Canticum Novissimi Testamenti; A-Ronne: 4/5* (Wergo),” *Guardian* (London, United Kingdom: 28 October 2005), 12.

¹³¹ Giomi, Meacci and Schwoon, “Live Electronics in Luciano Berio’s Music,” 30.

¹³² Live electronics with live performer designates a composition where the instrumental sounds and/or electronics are both processed in real time (the term real time delineates the computational speed by which computers receive and process data; a real-time operating system responds to input immediately, with minimal latency, or delay in processing).

¹³³ Giomi, Meacci and Schwoon, “Live Electronics in Luciano Berio’s Music,” 38.

¹³⁴ Benjamin Folkman, “Luciano Berio, *Ofanim*,” Work Introduction, Universal Edition <http://www.universaledition.com/Luciano/Berio/composers-and-works/composer/54/> (accessed 6 August 2013).

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

voices and instruments in complex overlapping sonic waves. For Section III, Berio chooses for the choruses both a lyrical low-register two-part texture; Section X includes a four-part texture. For Section VII, the two groups simultaneously deliver the same music, but one chorus employs breathy *parlando* while the other sings normally. An interlude following this episode features a trombone solo. The furious climax of Section XI concludes with a whisper. In Section XII, a female soloist rises from a flowing robe that might suggest a twisted tree trunk, and emerges beneath a spotlight to intone Ezekiel's final description of a tree grown barren in the wilderness. The female character represents the universal mother taken away from her land. Berio recomposed this work three times due to the updated software that determines its acoustic profile. Berio comments that these revisions are critical as 'musical thought today must be able to interact with the new technologies and adapt itself creatively to every kind of space, exploring and reshaping it acoustically'.¹³⁷

Berio's *Outis* ('nobody,' for thirteen singers, one actor, five instrumentalists, a vocal group of eight singers, chorus, orchestra and live electronics, 1995—96), is based on episodes of the Ulysses myth. In five separate narratives, the protagonist is killed and reborn to undergo allegorical adventures in an ocean liner, a bank and a supermarket. The text by Dario Del Corno includes Italian, German and English words. Francesco Giomi comments that the complexity of this work lies not only in the fragmentation of the texts but also in the many ways of singing them, the concealed and intense use of live electronics as well as the adaptability of technologies to the work and to the scenic space.¹³⁸

Altra voce (for contralto flute, mezzo-soprano and live electronics, 1999) is an example of Berio's use of electronic techniques within a chamber music context. Berio derived this work from *Cronaca del luogo*'s second episode, entitled *Il Campo* (The Field). Giomi, Damiano Meacci and Kilian Schwoon in

¹³⁷ Luciano Berio, *Ofanim* (Author's notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 10 August 2012).

¹³⁸ Giomi, Meacci and Schwoon, "Live Electronics in Luciano Berio's Music," 43.

their collaborative article on Berio's electronic music describe the complex polyphony in this work as 'a surprising interaction among the three dimensions of sound: vocal, instrumental, and electronic music, which, while retaining their individual autonomy, seem almost to abandon themselves to each other, creating hybrid situations of striking intensity'.¹³⁹

2.3.2: Enhancing the audio dimension for the listener

Berio, like others of the post-World II Darmstadt generation that includes Boulez, Nono and Stockhausen, avoided the ensemble types favoured by the previous generation and by the more conservative composers of the mid-to-late twentieth century. By disbanding the customary layout for the orchestra, Berio articulates to the listener a more complex spatial conception.¹⁴⁰ An early example of Berio's strategy to enhance the audio dimension so that the audience is more involved with the musical development is *Allelujah II* (for five instrumental groups, 1957—8). This work is a revised version of Berio's earlier withdrawn work, *Allelujah I* (for six orchestral groups, 1955—6). In *Allelujah I*, Berio sought to develop and to elaborate the work's initial statement by way of six orchestral groups on a conventional concert stage.¹⁴¹ Berio, however, concedes that in the performance realisation, the distribution of this many instrumentalists was 'not acoustically suitable'.¹⁴² To overcome this issue, Berio chooses only five instrumental groups for *Allelujah II* that he, instead, places in different positions throughout the concert hall to surround the audience.

In *Circles* (for female voice, harp, marimba, lujon, xylophone and vibraphone, 1960), Berio uses three poems by e.e. cummings (1894—1962) that include *Stinging gold swarms*, *Riverly is a flower* and *n(o)w the how dis(appeared cleverly)*, from *Collected Poems* (1960). Berio unifies the three poems in a

¹³⁹ Ibid., 30.

¹⁴⁰ Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 88.

¹⁴¹ Luciano Berio, *Allelujah II* (Author's notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 18 July 2011).

¹⁴² Ibid.

circular way so that 'the different levels of meaning, the vocal action and the instrumental action would strictly condition each other, even on the plane of phonetic qualities'.¹⁴³ To create the effect of circular motion Berio employs an A—B—C—B—A form. Berio further explains that 'the theatrical aspects of the performance are inherent in the structure of the work itself which is, above all, a structure of actions: to be listened to as theatre and to be viewed as music'.¹⁴⁴ This 'structure of actions' in the performance realisation requires the vocalist to move to three different positions on stage.¹⁴⁵ At the opening of *Circles*, the vocalist stands in the centre of the stage, in front of the instruments. At the end of the third poem, the vocalist moves to stand in front of the first percussion group, and at the end of the fourth section the vocalist moves to stand between the harp and the second percussion group.¹⁴⁶ Berio presents the voice in varying acoustic settings in combination with the instruments. In the first instance, the voice projects over instrumental accompaniment, and in the subsequent movements of the vocalist, the voice merges with the instrumental material.¹⁴⁷

Berio creates chamber ensembles within the orchestra for Concerto for two pianos and orchestra (1972—73): the soloists develop mobile, diverse and unstable relationships between themselves and the soloists of the orchestra; for instance, piano I with piano II, flute with piano I, violin with piano II, clarinet and piano I and piano II with strings. At times, the orchestra interacts with the piano soloists, amplifying their parts in a kind of simultaneous transcription. The two soloists are diversified in terms of their use of different piano techniques as well as their identification with the orchestra, but the unifying element lies within the harmonic process. Berio states that the

¹⁴³ Luciano Berio, *Circles*, (Author's notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 20 June 2011).

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Misha Donat, "Berio and His *Circles*," *Musical Times*, 105, 1452 (February 1964), 105.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 105.

¹⁴⁷ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 145.

harmonic process is 'revealed at the beginning of the concerto by the two pianos alone, almost like a map consulted before starting a journey'.¹⁴⁸

In *Coro* (for ten each of soprano, contralto, tenor and bass and orchestra, 1975), Berio fuses the human voice with the orchestral sounds by placing each singer next to a wind or string instrument of corresponding pitch range.¹⁴⁹ For instance, a soprano is placed with a flute, violin or oboe; the first trumpet next to a tenor; the second trumpet with an alto; the bass vocalist with a horn player. In this way, Berio the gathers forty voice-instrumental duos to 'reinforce acoustically and visually the wide range of interactions between voices and instruments'.¹⁵⁰ Two alternative forms of behaviour come to the fore that are diametrically opposed to each other and do not often blend harmoniously or polyphonically.¹⁵¹ For instance, the single voices and instrumental lines appear from unpredictable places, such as in the first section, where a Peruvian dance song explodes around the stage as individual voices take up the melody. This work, exemplifies Berio's disbandment of customary layout for orchestra and voices.

Likewise, a new vista of instrumental interplay is the focus of *Formazioni* (1985—87). A group of five clarinets and contrabassoons Berio places at the centre of the stage, surrounded by strings with the bass instruments to the front of the stage. Around this central core, the brass occupy the stage at the extreme right and left perimeters of the stage, while the flutes are set amidst the violins. These spatial arrangements create an interesting interaction between massive sound blocks and the chamber-like passages. The instrumental redistributions also emphasise the structural elements of the

¹⁴⁸ Luciano Berio, *Concerto*, (Author's notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 24 March 2011).

¹⁴⁹ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 150.

¹⁵⁰ Berio, *Coro* (Author's notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 15 July 2011).

¹⁵¹ Griffiths, Liner notes to recording of Luciano Berio's *Coro*, 8.

work.¹⁵² The notion of formations is one of sonic layers, which for the listener stimulates a more analytic kind of listening or at least one sensitive to echo-effects and fine gradations of foreground and background.¹⁵³ The formations disperse, and as the textures become dense, Berio ‘distinguishes the concurrent layers of musical activity by their different trajectory around the ensemble’.¹⁵⁴

Again, Berio creates a new sonic soundscape for *Continuo* (1989—91). The saxophones sit with a group of clarinets; the brass sections sit on the opposite sides of the stage to engage in dialogues across the orchestra. The strings provide cohesion for the four smaller subsections and one larger section in the music. The new material that Berio places atop the basic static texture offers change and new context. Similarly, for *Concerto II (Echoing Curves)* for piano and two instrumental groups, 1988—89), Berio explores acoustic space. The pianist is surrounded by an inner ensemble, in turn surrounded by the rest of the orchestra. Aurally, for instance, the rapid repeated notes and *tremolo* sections of the piano are encircled by the orchestral texture.

Berio’s *Cronaca del Luogo (Chronicle of the Place)*, for soloists, actors, choir, orchestra and live electronics, 1998—99), premiered at the Felsenreitschule (Rock Riding School), Salzburg on 24 July 1999. This work includes a prologue and five scenes for which Berio chose Biblical themes from the Old Testament. The texts were compiled by Talia Pecker Berio and include excerpts from the rabbinic literature and the poetry of Paul Celan as well as Marina Tsvetayeva. Berio designed this work specifically for the unique stage at the Felsenreitschule.¹⁵⁵ The audience faces a wide wall cut into the rock

¹⁵² Tony Haywood, “Review of Berio’s Orchestral Works,” Music Web International http://www.musucweb-international.com/classrev/2009/May09/Berio_wwelcd20281.htm (accessed 18 August 2012).

¹⁵³ Meirion Bowen, “Articles & Publications: Luciano Berio,” <http://www.meirion-bowen.com/mbartberio.htm> (Accessed 27 April 2010).

¹⁵⁴ Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 88.

¹⁵⁵ Felsenreitschule (Rock Riding School): <http://www.salzburgerfestespiele> (accessed 7 August 2013). This stage was initially a quarry and in 1963, Prince Archbishop Johann Ernst Thun converted into the

face that includes ninety-six arcades that are spread over three floors. Berio places the instrumentalists and singers strategically in different arcades that he then brings together by electronic means. Berio creates a 'wall' of sound that emanates to the audience. Graham Lack suggests that Berio's innovative 'use of reverberation, delay, harmonizing techniques, sound location, sampling, amplitude modulation and filters help create a plastic mass of sound moving in virtual musical space'.¹⁵⁶

Conclusion

In developing his own distinctive modernist language without using the strict procedures of serial technique, in choosing non-traditional instrumental combinations for his smaller and larger ensembles and orchestral layout, as well as his use of live electronics to enhance the audio dimension for his audience, Berio creates a new and unique soundscape for his listeners.

The composer expands the boundaries of modernist music to include folk and popular idioms. Boulez recounts that Berio embraced the diversity of cultures by 'refusing to see divisions between different musical cultures or, indeed, between different levels of culture'.¹⁵⁷ And, like a number of high modernist composers ranging from Charles Ives to Boulez, Berio's musical output encompasses a number of works that are interlinked. His referential and transcription choices reflect his deep knowledge of the traditional musical repertory, and the high regard in which he held composers including Monteverdi, J. S. Bach, Verdi, Puccini, Schubert, Mozart, Purcell, de Falla, Boccherini and Gustav Mahler.

Court Stables. In 1926, Max Reinhardt, one of the main co-founders of the Salzburg Festival chose the site for a stage.

¹⁵⁶ Graham Lack, "First Performances, Salzburg Festival: Berio's *Cronaca del Luogo*," *Tempo*, New Series, 210 (October 1999), 35.

¹⁵⁷ Pierre Boulez, "Luciano Berio – in memoriam," Program Notes to *Omaggio: A Celebration of Luciano Berio*, 15–30 April 2004, South Bank Centre, London, 3.

CHAPTER 3

Berio and the Press

‘It’s a dreadful job being a critic.’
—Luciano Berio (*Two Interviews*, 1985)¹

In this chapter I discuss Berio’s engagement with the press and whether he felt misrepresented or misunderstood by critics. I argue that Berio’s engagement with the past, in particular, was a factor that led to critics mislabelling and mis-categorising his works within established traditional genres and, hence, misunderstanding them.

The function of the newspaper/magazine music critic within the community and Berio’s perception of the press forms the framework for discussion in this chapter. Firstly, I chronicle the commoditisation of music from the late nineteenth century to the present day. Another area of study concerns the wide-ranging music distribution networks available today and the impact of these technologies on the access to Berio’s music. This study contextualises Berio’s attitude to the notion of music as a commodity to that of his high modernist counterparts including Arnold Schoenberg, Milton Babbitt and Elliott Carter.

The second area of examination concerns the role of the newspaper/magazine critic within the community. Commercially, critics play a part in determining the success of a new work within the public arena. The critic therefore, serves a crucial role as the public’s first line of reception in the dissemination of a new work as well as providing critique on current performances of established works. I discuss and evaluate critics’ review styles and, in particular, editors’ demands on format and content. One of the editorial demands is for critics to report mainly on the physical attributes of

¹ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 133.

players when performing virtuosic works. In doing so, Berio contests that the press misrepresent his *Sequenza* series as nineteenth-century ‘virtuoso showpieces’. Drawing on Berio’s writings, interviews and reviews of his works, I compare the composer’s conceptualisation of virtuosity to that of the press.

Another contentious issue is critics’ persistence in labelling music within traditional and recognisable genres. Critics argue that this is a necessary tool in order to explicate a work to the reader. In identifying Berio’s new pieces within former genres, critics place an emphasis on the composer conforming to past practices rather than drawing attention to innovative aspects of the work at hand. In turn, this shapes the public reception of a new work and Berio willingly engaged with critics and the public to help promote his music. To establish the critical reception of Berio’s works outside Europe, this analysis centres on a wide-ranging number of primary source reviews that focus on the press reception of his works in North America, the United Kingdom and Australia.

3.1.1: Music as a commodity

The concept of music as a commodity implies that there is a notion of popular appeal. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, exponential economic growth gave rise to the middle classes that, in turn, had a significant impact on musical culture in Europe, England, Australia and North America. During this period, there was a substantial increase in musical activity by way of more public concerts, an expansion of the music publishing industry, music journalism, music teaching as well as the manufacturing and sales of instruments. The proliferation of public concert halls further confirmed that music had become a consumer commodity.²

² There is substantial literature concerning the commodification of music during the nineteenth century. See for instance, Catherine Mayers, “Eastern European National Music as Concept and Commodity at the Turn of the Nineteenth Century,” *Music and Letters* 95/1 (2014), 70—91; Susan Bernstein’s *Virtuosity of the Nineteenth Century*, California: Stanford University Press 1988, concerns the commodification of the virtuoso; Nicholas Cook, *Music: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

The emergence of the concert as a financially viable form of public entertainment relied on the marketing of music to attract large audiences.³ The case today is as for the nineteenth century: concert promoters sought to appeal to a wide audience so as to pay for musicians and recuperate costs for venue hire, concert ushers and press advertisements.⁴ Art music concerts, generally, featured symphonies, overtures and chamber music of composers including Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Mendelssohn.⁵ In the early nineteenth century as well as today, the marketing approach to attract consumers was to include music journalism in specialist publications. For instance, the *Euterpeid* (Boston) magazine, the *Times* (London) newspaper and *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review* featured critiques of performances and new compositions in addition to historical articles and foreign reports.⁶

In the twentieth century, the commoditisation of music developed even further through new recording technology, broadcasting and television. This made both popular and classical music readily accessible to the public within their homes. Reporters, columnists, editors, directors, producers and publishers in the relevant sectors of the media system exert power because they select and process content and therefore intercede in the formation of public opinions and the distribution of influential interests.⁷ Berio understands the influence and importance of mass communications for the dissemination of his works. The composer also is aware that the music industry distinguishes people according to their 'real or virtual buying power'.⁸ The dominant types of music that prevail in Western culture are the commercial forms that include rock, pop, disco, country, electronic dance music and to

³ Lawrence Kramer, *Musical Meaning: Towards a Critical History*, Berkley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2002, 82.

⁴ John Rink, "The profession of music," *Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music*, ed. Jim Samson, Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2002, 60.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 60.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 80.

⁷ Jürgen Habermas, "Political Communication in Media Society: Does Democracy Still Enjoy an Epistemic Dimension? The Impact of Normative Theory on Empirical Research," *Communication Theory* 16, 4 (November 2006), 419.

⁸ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 25.

some extent, jazz.⁹ As Elliott Carter acknowledges, the commercial music industry favours and further promotes popular genres because of their appeal and success to a large public.¹⁰

Berio's early introduction to North America audiences was via Lawrence Morton, the then director of the Los Angeles 'Monday Evening Concerts' (MEC), a series dedicated to performing new music.¹¹ Morton's interest in Berio's music was inspired after he attended a concert of 1959 in Paris where Boulez conducted Berio's *Differences*, *Serenata* and *Sequenza I*. Morton then wrote about this concert to his colleagues Peter Yates and Leonard Stein.¹² In early 1959, Stein also came across Berio's orchestral work *Nones* and electronic piece *Mutations*, via recordings made available by Riccardo Malipiero at the Contemporary Italian Music exhibition in North America.¹³

During the 1980s, the emergence of specialist recording studios played a significant role in expanding the availability of modernist music recordings. For instance, in 1981, guitarist David Starobin founded Bridge Records to promote recordings by new or little known composers.¹⁴ Later in 1987, Klaus Heymann founded Naxos Records, which prefers to record live performances, often by lesser known musicians and conductors to minimise costs for the company and the consumer. Berio's works are recorded by a number of reputable companies including Naxos, Sony, Deutsche Grammophon, Mode and Columbia, which also have links to them on their websites.

⁹ Ibid., 55.

¹⁰ Bruce Duffie, "Composer: Elliott Carter, A Conversation with Bruce Duffie," (10 June 1986) <http://www.bruceduffie.com/carter3.html> (accessed 27 May 2013).

¹¹ "Monday Evening Concerts" formerly known as "Evening on the Roof" was founded in 1939 by Peter Yates and featured chamber music and experimental works.

¹² Dorothy Lamb Crawford, *Evenings On and Off the Roof: Pioneering Concerts in Los Angeles*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995, 182.

¹³ Kuo, "Composing American Individualism: Luciano Berio in the United States, 1960—1971," 5—6.

¹⁴ Allan Clive Jones, "David Starobin and American Music," *Classical Guitar* 4, 3 (November 1985), 17.

The wider dissemination of modernist music was enabled by classical music FM radio stations in North America, the United Kingdom and Australia. These classical music networks are a major cultural resource for listeners across country and urban regions. Classical FM stations, therefore, play a vital role in contributing to the commercial success of a composer's work. For instance, during the 1980s Carter credits the positive responses from British audiences to the frequent broadcasts of his music via the British Broadcasting Corporation.¹⁵ In 1992, Henryk Górecki's *Third Symphony* topped the classical charts after being heavily plugged by FM radio music stations in Britain and North America. Irvine Arditti also attributes the success of his quartet to frequent broadcasts via the BBC as many composers then began to approach the group to perform and record their works.¹⁶ In addition to recording and broadcasting Berio's four string quartets, the group has in excess of 200 recordings that include the quartets of Carter, Cage, Feldman, Ferneyhough, Franco Donatoni, Henri Dutilleux, Witold Lutoslawski, and Iannis Xenakis.

Since the mid-1990s, the internet has revolutionised the way we can access music, including the purchase of all genres of music via the iTunes store and downloading podcasts. The launch of YouTube (2005) further gave the public free and easy access to professional performances within a wide range of musical genres. Wireless technology also enables instant access to the internet via smartphones, tablets and computers. A diverse range of Berio's works such as the *Sequenza* series, *Nones* (1954), *Coro* (1975), *Folk Songs* (1973), *Sinfonia* (1968), *La Vera Storia Storia (The True Story 1977–80)* and *Passaggio* (1961-62), *Visage* (1961) and *Thema (Omaggio a Joyce)* of 1958 are available on YouTube.

YouTube, therefore, offers music to the large percentage of the public that choose to listen in their homes, in preference to or as a substitute for

¹⁵ Duffie, A Conversation with Carter.

¹⁶ Ivan Hewett, "Irvine Arditti: Extreme Violinist," *Dailey Telegraph* (London, United Kingdom: 16 November 2012), <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/music/classicalmusic/9684162/Irvine-Arditti-extre...> (accessed 16 July 2013).

attending concerts. Naxos offers over a million recorded tracks to iTunes, AmazonMP3, Spotify, Rhapsody, Rdio and high definition download specialty shops. Many of Berio's works may be purchased in this way, such as Kim Kashkashian's recording of *Voci* on Spotify. Also, Gramophone (United Kingdom) launched digitally its magazine that dates back to 1923 and issues are available through an app for an iPad, desktop or tablet. For the consumer, disc sleeves now click straight through to iTunes to sample the work as well as purchase the recording. For instance, in 2012, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) Classics label recorded a live performance of Thomas Adès *Polaris-Voyage* with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. This recording was released and available to consumers on the following day via iTunes, Rdio, Spotify and Deezer.¹⁷

The internet is also a means by which musicians and composers can promote themselves. For instance, The Australian Chamber Orchestra's website promotes all their concert and educational activities. The ACO presents to the public via YouTube the group's live studio rehearsals and final preparations of works. To reach a worldwide audience, the ACO's live concert performances are disseminated via Spotify. Furthermore, the public have access to ACO's E-news and Blog page that includes player profiles, interviews with guest artists and rehearsal footage. Members of the public may post concert reviews or feedback on their ACO concert experience through the various social media outlets including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or email. In turn, the ACO management can monitor the audience reception to particular concerts to determine future programming schedules.

Berio's official website The Centro Studi Luciano Berio promotes the musical and personal legacy of the composer.¹⁸ This site offers access to Berio's works list, writings, interviews, photographic gallery, news of upcoming concert performances, new recordings and publications, meetings, workshops, study days and symposiums. The centre, also, focuses on a wide

¹⁷ Australian Broadcasting Association <http://about.abc.net.au/press-releases/digital-release-of-australian-premiere-recording> (accessed 28 February 2015).

¹⁸ Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio>

range of study and research approaches to Berio's musical output and ensures communication between scholars, musicians, institutions and the public at large. Musical foundations and societies also help disseminate the value of a composer's works. For instance, the Paul Sacher Foundation in Basel holds an extensive collection of Berio's sketch studies and fair copies. Music production today is widely recognised as an established and valuable economic and social commodity.

The following discussion differentiates the notion of music as a commodity held by high modernist composers, including Schoenberg, Carter, Penderecki and Babbitt, to that of Berio's conceptualisation.

3.1.2: Modernist verses high modernist attitudes towards the commercial classical music market

Traditional music in a society functions as a ritual, as accompaniment to dance or labour, as entertainment for pleasure or as a manifestation of ideal beauty and order.¹⁹ Conceptually, music as a commodity reflects concert promoters' needs to please critics and audiences. As an example, Berio suggests that Liszt's piano transcriptions and paraphrases 'combine cosmopolitan high fashion with a concern for popularization'.²⁰ These types of works became part of the music industry 'currency'.²¹ Composers with a commercial preoccupation to gain audiences and to succeed financially find it difficult to undertake risks in their creative processes; or, conversely, to put the creative impulse first and completely sacrifice the commercial. In an interview of 1974, theatre director Joseph Chaikin argues that the lure of commercial success does affect some composers' artistic choices in their works

If one is in the service to that kind of [commercial] set up then there is no question that, part of the artist's imagination is trying to get the critic's

¹⁹ Susan McClary, "Terminal Prestige: The case of Avant-Garde Music Composition," *Cultural Critique*, 12 (Spring 1989), 60.

²⁰ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 112.

²¹ Berio, *Remembering the Future*, 38—39.

interest in order to get the audience. It takes a few years, but after a while, people can predict somewhat what each critic will say and it starts to seep in and you start to make choices a little bit in relation to these critics.²²

In contrast, high modernist composers defy the traditional functions of music and reject the notion of music as a commodity. These composers distinguish themselves through individual radicalism, experimentation, innovation and technical development. The factors that shaped modernism in Western society of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries was the development of industry, the rapid growth of cities, the rise of capitalism, as well as the physical, economic, cultural and social devastation of both World War I (1914—18) and World War II (1939—45). High modernism is a more abstract and anti-humanist vision of musical modernism that stems from the post World War I period in the Western world. High modernists' musical works often lack specific meaning and context; hence, abstraction becomes deliberately part of the 'elite'. As Björn Heile explains, musical modernism is 'obsessed with technical innovation, structural coherence, and a scientific rationalization of composition, thus shutting itself off hermetically from any kind of outside influence, be it historical, cultural, or social.'²³ This is exemplified in the works of Schoenberg, Babbitt and Carter.

Susan McClary argues that high modernist composers deemed a piece 'worthless' if it was not 'difficult' and 'incomprehensible' and mainstream audience acceptance indicated 'failure'.²⁴ Indeed, high modernist composers purported to believe that the lack of popular acclaim guaranteed the integrity of their works, and so they directed their music to a limited audience of committed listeners, rather than to mainstream audiences. For instance, in 1918, Schoenberg inaugurated a 'members only' Society for Private Musical Performances to showcase modern works by composers of the day including

²² Bill Eddy, "Four Directors on Criticism," *Tulane Drama Review* 18, 3 (September 1974), 29.

²³ Björn Heile, "Darmstadt as Other: British and American Responses to Musical Modernism," *Twentieth-Century Music* 1, 2 (2004), 162.

²⁴ McClary, "Terminal Prestige: The case of Avant-Garde Music Composition," 59.

Stravinsky, Bartók, Webern, Reger, Debussy and Berg. To familiarise the audience with each new work, repeat performances were the norm and members adhered to rules such as no applause after performances.²⁵ Critics and the press were not allowed access.²⁶ Likewise, Carter rejects the notion of music as a commodity. Following his early neo-classical works including *Symphony No.1* (1942) and *Holiday Overture* (1944) Carter relinquished the idea of commercial success when composing his First String Quartet (1951):

I decided for once to write a work very interesting to myself, and so say to hell with the public and with performers too. I wanted to write a work that carried out completely the various ideas I had at the time about the form of music, about texture and harmony—about everything.²⁷

Krzysztof Penderecki claims that for his early works, he also chose to 'write against the audience'.²⁸ Take, for example, the composer's *Emanations* of 1958 for two string orchestras. Penderecki defies traditional tonal theory by tuning the two orchestras a minor second apart. In addition to the acute dissonance, the arrhythmic *tremolos* gestures and the non-conventional instrumental effects that include the players' bowing over the fingerboard or the bridge and using the wood of the bow further disrupts the musical continuity.

In his article of 1958, Babbitt categorically advocates Schoenberg's, Carter's and Penderecki's anti-commercial stance:

I dare suggest that the composer would do himself and his music an immediate and eventual service by total, resolute, and voluntary withdrawal from his public world to one of private performance and electronic media, with its very real possibility of complete elimination of the public and social aspects of musical composition. By doing so, the separation between the domains would be defined beyond any possibility of confusion of categories, and the composer would be free to pursue a private life of professional achievement, as opposed to a public life of unprofessional compromise and exhibitionism.²⁹

²⁵ William W. Austin, *Music in the Twentieth Century: From Debussy Through Stravinsky*, Austin, New York, 1966, 222.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 222.

²⁷ Allen Edwards, *Flawed Words and Stubborn Sounds: A Conversation with Elliott Carter*, Norton, New York, 1971, 35.

²⁸ Bruce Duffie, "Composer: Krzysztof Penderecki, A Conversation with Bruce Duffie," (Chicago: 9 March 2000) <http://www.bruceduffie.com/penderecki.html> (accessed 17 February 2013).

²⁹ Milton Babbitt, "Who Cares if You Listen?" *High Fidelity Magazine* 8, 2 (February 1958), 126.

These high modernist composers aimed for professional achievement rather than commercial success. For instance, Schoenberg transcended the exigencies of style, and, instead, chose to compose for the 'high' canon of serious music.³⁰ Philosophically, high modernist composers viewed the popular market as a 'creation and province of a philistine bourgeoisie and expressed an often uncompromising, anti-popular idealism of their own'.³¹ In turn, high modernist composers perpetuated their own form of elitism within the music community. This type of high modernism became associated with decadence, elitism, the subversion of liberal democracy and global capitalism. Musical modernism, generally, became allied with the practices of objectification and abstraction.³² Joseph Strauss suggests that during the 1950s and 1960s serialism was 'effectively a marginal phenomenon' in North America.³³ In refusing to cater for the commercial music market but to guarantee an income, some high modernist composers of the post-war years migrated to universities and state-funded institutions: take, for example, Babbitt, who held a tenured position (1938—84) at Princeton University and had no need, nor aspirations to pursue commercial musical ventures.

During Berio's career in North America (1960—71), academic institutions also played a seminal role in the dissemination of his music. First, these were by way of concerts at Pomona College, San Fernando Valley State College, University of Southern California, University of California, Berkeley, University of Iowa, Iowa City, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor and Oberlin. Berio also secured brief positions at the Electronic Music Centre of Columbia–Princeton Universities as well as a six week visit as the composer-in-residence at the Tanglewood Music Festival. Then he was Professor of

³⁰ Martin Scherzinger, "In Memory of a Receding Dialectic: The Political Relevance of Autonom and Formalism on Modernist Musical Aesthetics," *The Pleasure of Modernist Music: Listening, Meaning, Intention*, ed. Arved Ashby, Rochester, New York: University of Rochester Press, 2004, 69.

³¹ Peter Franklin, "Audiences, Critics and the Depurification of Music: Reflections on a 1920s Controversy," *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 114, 1 (1989), 80.

³² Björn Heile, "Darmstadt as Other: British and American Responses to Musical Modernism," *Twentieth Century Music* 1, 2, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, September 2004, 162.

³³ Strauss, "The Myth of Serial 'Tyranny' in the 1950s and 1960s," 302.

Composition at Mills College, Oakland, California (1962—64) and at the Juilliard School, New York (1965—71).

In turn, these esteemed positions within academia generated an aura of supremacy and prestige.³⁴ For instance, Bernard Holland of the *New York Times* concedes that these types of composers command an ‘invitation-only style, which beckons the serious minority of listeners’.³⁵ However, Berio differentiates himself from high modernist composers. The composer prefers an all-encompassing audience ‘with many faces all bringing different motivations to their encounter with the music’.³⁶ In fact, Berio’s approach to composition was to put himself in the place of the audience member: ‘I tend to see the audience in the way I see myself’.³⁷ Berio seeks a reciprocal relationship with his audience as David Osmond-Smith recounts:

Berio refused to be bound by the polarized roles of contemporary musical life. His father trained him to be a musician at large, and he [Berio] demands of his audiences that they should cultivate similarly generous aspirations.³⁸

The following discussion defines the function of a newspaper/magazine critic within the community and review format. Further discussion concerns Berio’s perception of the music critic.

3.2.1: The newspaper/ magazine music critic

Many members of the public rely on information available from external sources to assist in the selection of a musical event. Critics play a role in influencing and shaping public perception. Critics consider the profession of music criticism as ‘important’ and that, they are writing for an audience with a

³⁴ Andrew Timms, “Modernism’s Moment of Plenitude,” *The Modernist Legacy: Essays on New Music*, ed. Björn Heile, Surrey, England and Burlington, United States of America: Ashgate Publishing, 2009, 14.

³⁵ Bernard Holland, “Engaging the Listener In A Bold Conversation,” *New York Times* (New York: 24 October 1997), E. 7.

³⁶ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 25.

³⁷ Bruce Duffie, “Composer Luciano Berio: A Conversation with Bruce Duffie,” (Chicago: 4 January 1993), <http://www.bruceduffie.com/berio.html> (accessed 21 January 2012).

³⁸ Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 89.

'deep interest' in classical music.³⁹ Post-concert reviews provide a commentary so that concert attendees may gauge their own perception of the performance and the music. For the newcomer, these reviews may act as encouragement to attend future concert performances or to consider the purchase of recordings. Composers and musicians also may gauge the reception of their works/performances via critics' commentary. In turn, music promoters and venue administrators access reviews to monitor the success of their scheduled concert programs.

Newspaper/magazine critics are required by their editors to provide an accurate account of the purpose, location and the general impression of a particular performance; the aural experience which includes a commentary on the timbre or tonal character of a piece, as well as a technical description of the work.⁴⁰ Critics also tend to place less emphasis on providing either a historical or theoretical context for the work at hand. The lack of interest in providing this type of information is due, in part, to the restrictive column space which is approximately 350—750 words.⁴¹ Also, at the bequest of editors, critics focus mostly on high profile performers, composers and musical institutions.⁴² Critics concentrate on identifying the qualities of a soloist, an ensemble or an orchestra as well as the style of a work.⁴³ These include the virtuosic attributes of a soloist, the quality of an orchestra, the reputation of a particular conductor as well as categorising the work as, for instance, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, neo-Classical, Romantic, neo-Romantic, Minimalist, Modernist or Post-modernist.

³⁹ Lawrence McGill, Willa J. Conrad, Donald Rosenberg and András Szántó, "The Classical Music Critic: A Survey of Music Critics at General-Interest and Specialized News Publications in America," The Music Critics Association of North America, Baltimore, Maryland and National Arts Journalism Program, Columbia University, New York City, 2005, 26.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 16 and 18.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 23.

⁴³ José A. Bowen, "Finding the Music in Musicology: Performance History and Musical Works," *Rethinking Music*, eds. Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1999, 430.

These types of editorial constraints, further, emphasise the critic's integral role in the commodification of music. Pianist and musicologist Ian Pace explains that because music is viewed as a form of 'entertainment' designed to 'enthral, excite or titillate', English-speaking discourses continue to highlight these aspects of the performance rather than provoke and challenge the reader.⁴⁴ Heile suggests that critics need to evaluate the pieces concerned on their own terms, or establish a suitable frame of reference or inter-subjectivity for meaningful criteria for judgment.⁴⁵

Along the same lines, Berio, also, is dismissive of most newspaper critics, as he explains in a published interview of 1985 with Rossana Dalmonte:

It's a dreadful job being a critic because it's uncertain and incomplete: I don't see the musical, cultural or even social usefulness of someone who has to write articles every week for the dailies or weeklies, and does nothing else. In their place, I'd go mad after a fortnight. When I go to a concert and hear a Schubert sonata for the nth time, marvellously interpreted by Pollini or Brendel, I sometimes wonder in dismay what on earth I would write if I were a critic and wanted to avoid the usual panegyrics, the usual fountain of useless words. Who knows, I'd probably end up doing the same thing as everyone else to avoid going hungry.⁴⁶

To counteract this issue, Berio claims that a critic needs to adopt the same line of inquiry in the musical analysis as a scientist who develops and theorises a line of argument that is speculative and partially independent of reality, and who then looks for confirmation of her/his arguments in musical reality.⁴⁷ Berio attributes these types of qualities to musicologist and critic for *La Stampa*, Massimo Mila. Berio recounts that Mila 'resists musical fashions, loves music deeply, with the backing of vast cultural resources that save him from visceral reactions to the music and the musicians of his time'.⁴⁸

In turn, musicologist Mark Everist advocates that the study of journalistic criticism, even of a sophisticated form, produces publications that do little

⁴⁴ Pace, "Verbal Discourse as Aesthetic Arbitrator in Contemporary Music," 92-93.

⁴⁵ Björn Heile, "Recent Approaches to Experimental Music Theatre and Contemporary Opera," *Music and Letters*, 87, 1 (January 2006), 72.

⁴⁶ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 133.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 134.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 34.

except document and reprint newspaper criticism that result in a limited perspective of a work.⁴⁹ Arguably, the critical reception provides a valuable insight to the general reception of a composer's music within the mainstream classical music market. Likewise, critics' observation of concert audience's reaction at performances provides a general reception of the composer's piece from the perspective of the public, rather than give a complete picture of how each person interprets the work.

New music of all generations pushes the limits of existing musical genres and challenges critics to find new ways of describing and listening to that music. During the 1970s, to help critics and audiences better understand new works, composer and singer Joan La Barbara began writing preview articles for the *SoHo Weekly News*, a free paper distributed on the streets of New York.⁵⁰ While working with many contemporary composers, including John Cage, Morton Feldman, Alvin Lucier, Morton Subotnick, Steve Reich and Philip Glass, La Barbara realised that these composers were misunderstood by critics and the general public. Therefore, the aim of her critiques was to provide an insight to the compositional processes and the new techniques of these composers.⁵¹ John Rockwell even began quoting some of La Barbara's comments in his *New York Times* reviews.⁵² Similarly, La Barbara's reviews of contemporary works in the *Music America* magazine (1977—87) are descriptive articles designed to give the readers a sense of what they would have experienced at the concert performance.⁵³

Traditionally, critics play a substantial role in launching a composer's career within the commercial music market. For instance, composer Bruno Maderna (1920—1973) claims that Virgil Thomson, as critic, was seminal to the early success of his career. Thomson wrote an article in the *New York Herald*

⁴⁹ Everist, "Reception Theories, Canonic Discourses and Musical Value," 381.

⁵⁰ Joan La Barbara, "Voice is the original instrument," *Contemporary Music Review*, 21, 1 (November 2009), 39.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 39.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 39.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 39.

Tribune (Paris edition), in which he reviewed Maderna's scores and announced the 'birth of a great composer'.⁵⁴ Maderna further explains that 'this article was very useful to me; in fact, straight afterwards, I was asked to present a small composition of mine in the first post-war Venice Biennale [1948]. And this was how I began'.⁵⁵

The critical acclaim of Berio's *Sinfonia* (1968) was pivotal in establishing the composer's career internationally. Lucy Kraus of the *NY Times* states that from the onset of this work's North American premiere of 1968 it was an 'instant hit'.⁵⁶ By the end of the 1970s, the integrity of Berio's works within the commercial classical music market was evidenced by the fact he was one of the most highly paid composers of art music.⁵⁷ In turn, Berio undertook many lucrative commissions from North America organisations, including the Fromm Foundation, Mills College, the University of Washington and Ball State University. He accepted ensemble commissions from the Lenox Quartet and the Aeolian Players as well as from high profile orchestras including the New York Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony, and the San Francisco Symphony Association, the Los Angeles Philharmonic Association, the Dallas Symphony Association, the Santa Fe Opera, Symphony Australia, The South Bank Centre, London and the Scottish National Orchestra.

In the twenty-first century, the mass media and online social media, spreads critics' reviews widely and quickly to many and varied audiences, with the potential for far-reaching and powerful impacts of their verdicts.⁵⁸ In 2013, Simon Tait, the then president of the Critics' Circle, stated that 'the arts have

⁵⁴ Raymond Fern, "An Extract from Bruno Maderna by Raymond Fearn," A Conversation with Bruno Maderna by George Stone and Alan Stout: WEFM, Chicago, 28 January 1970, *Contemporary Music Review*, 18, 2 (1999), 152.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 152.

⁵⁶ Lucy Kraus, "Tuning in on the latest Swingle Singers," *New York Times* (New York: 22 August 1982), A. 19.

⁵⁷ David Revill, "Luciano Berio: Towering figure of musical modernism," *The Independent* (London, United Kingdom 29 May 2003), 20.

⁵⁸ Srinivas K. Reddy, Vanitha Swaminathan, and Carol M. Motley, "Exploring the Determinants of Broadway Show Success," *Journal of Marketing Research*, 35, 3 (August 1998), 373—4.

never been more popular with audiences, and audiences have never wanted informed and objective review of performances more than they do today'.⁵⁹ In addition to the paid media critic, today, there is the growing number of arts blog websites that individuals maintain to post their opinions on a broad range of performing arts. Jay Rayner comments that now 'consumers no longer feel the need to obtain their opinions from on high: the authority of the critic, derived from their paid position on a newspaper, is diminished'.⁶⁰

A number of web critics discuss and review Berio's works. They include Dominy Clements and Anne Ozorio of the *Music Web International*, Raymond Tuttle and Steve Schwartz of the *Classical Net*, Robert Kirzinger of the *Classical Archives*, Seth Brodsky of the *All Guide to Classical Music* and Otto Klez of *Bachradio BlogSpot*. Further, a blog may have links to other blogs, web pages and related social media. Members of the public also may leave comments via an interactive format on these websites. This gives the public another perspective and insight to concerts and recording reviews that is instant, global and free.

The following section discusses Berio's angst with the press, most notably for their misrepresentation of his *Sequenza* series and their persistence in labelling his instrumental works into traditional and established recognisable genres.

3.2.2: Critics' misrepresentation of Berio's *Sequenzas*

An ongoing tension between Berio and the press was critics' persistence in conforming to editorial review expectations. In particular, reporting mainly on the technical and physically virtuosic aspects of Berio's fourteen solo *Sequenzas*. This series commands from the players not only high levels of

⁵⁹ Nicola Merrifield, "Arts critics to be axed at *Independent* on Sunday, *The Stage* (United Kingdom: 30 July 2013), <http://www.thestage.co.uk/news/2013/arts-critics-to-be-axed-at-independent-on-sunday> (accessed 15 June 2014).

⁶⁰ Jay Rayner (Critic for the *Guardian*), "Is it curtains for critics?" <http://arts.guardian.co.uk/print/0,,335654520-123424.00.html> 13 July 2008 (accessed 20 February 2012).

technical skills, stamina and theatrical flair, but, also a high level of interpretative skills. Berio suggests that a more balanced and informed review would include a discussion on the ideas of a work implicit in one interpretation rather than another.⁶¹ Film director Irving Pichel comments that the former type of reporting is inevitable as audiences take 'delight in feats of dexterity and agility quite apart from [musical] meaning'.⁶²

In choosing to focus on the technical and physical characteristics of the *Sequenzas*, critics tend to overlook Berio's further two dimensions of virtuosity. A player's technical and physical skill lies within the first dimension.⁶³ The second dimension of virtuosity, Berio describes as 'a conflict, a tension between the musical idea and the instrument, between concept and musical substance'.⁶⁴ The third dimension of virtuosity encompasses the first two dimensions for which the player needs to function at extremely high levels of both technical and intellectual virtuosity.⁶⁵

The *Sequenza* series pays homage to the virtuosic solo works of past composers including Paganini and J. S. Bach.⁶⁶ In his review of 1989, Will Crutchfield (*Guitar Review*) appears to draw on this fact to describe the *Sequenza* series as 'virtuoso showpieces'.⁶⁷ Berio was candid about the critic's misrepresentation of the series, claiming that this term alludes to the player as a nineteenth-century 'idiot playing a narrow repertory'.⁶⁸ However, this is not exclusively a twentieth-century phenomenon—the symbiotic relationship between the critic and the virtuoso performer has origins in the past. Nineteenth-century musical virtuosos, including Paganini and Liszt, emerged as a counterpart to the journalist, whereby the virtuosos provided the

⁶¹ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 56.

⁶² Irving Pichel, "In Defence of Virtuosity," *Quarterly of Film, Radio and Television*, 6/3 (1952), 229.

⁶³ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 90.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 90.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 91.

⁶⁶ Roberts, "The *Chemins* Series," in *Berio's Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis*, 128.

⁶⁷ Will Crutchfield, "Luciano Berio Speaks of Virtuosos and Strings," *Guitar Review* 76 (Winter 1989), 11.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 11.

reporter with subject matter, while the promotion of the virtuosi's success was a function of journalistic advertising and good press coverage.⁶⁹

In addition to overt physical virtuosity, the superficiality of the nineteenth-century virtuoso's style was also determined through their clothing, charisma, fame and money,⁷⁰ much like the phenomenon of the celebrity today. And still today, the press sensationalises the virtuosic attributes of performers in their reviews of live performances as well as recordings, at times at the expense of other aspects of the music. Similarly, Berio's *Sequenzas* receive this kind of critical reception. Berio relies on and admires a player's technical prowess on her/his instrument, but argues that he did not perceive the *Sequenzas* within the context of 'showpieces' to exhibit only a performer's speed, stamina and manual dexterity.

According to Berio, the display of showmanship and physical virtuosity in Paganini's violin works is one where the technique and stereotyped instrumental gestures dictate the compositional ideas.⁷¹ This aspect of virtuosity contributes to the development of violin technique rather than the development or extension of musical styles.⁷² Halfyard also argues that these types of compositions thrill the audience with brilliant but superficial displays of technique.⁷³ For instance, Paganini's twenty-four caprices embrace only Berio's first dimension of virtuosity that require speed and stamina for the extreme tempi of the works. However, the musical material is in a tonal idiom and consists of passages in thirds, sixths, tenths and octaves as well as *cadenza* scale runs. Along the same lines, musicologist Richard Toop comments that the difficulty of execution is also an inbuilt aesthetic component of nineteenth-century piano music:

⁶⁹ Susan Bernstein, *Virtuosity of the Nineteenth Century* (California: Stanford University Press 1988), 11.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁷¹ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 90.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 90

⁷³ Halfyard, "Provoking Acts: The Theatre of Berio's *Sequenzas*," *Berio's Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis*, 115.

A good performance of Liszt's *Mazeppa* Étude may astonish through its virtuosity, and remind you at every moment of the hair-raising difficulties that are being successfully overcome. But it will never, I believe, convince you that the work is "complex": just damned hard to play.⁷⁴

Liszt's *Mazeppa* Étude includes virtuosic displays of intervallic and scale progressions that include double octaves, thirds and chromatic scales as well as leaps that span more than an octave on the keyboard. Halfyard describes the musical substance of these types of works as a 'coat hanger on which performers hang their skills for others to marvel at'.⁷⁵

In the liner notes to the Deutsche Grammophon recording of Berio's *Sequenzas*, Berio explains that a modern virtuoso is capable of changing technique according to the music and recognises the different musical languages and the implication of the music. Berio understands that showmanship is necessary but he gives the highest accolades to players capable of intellectualising musical works both from the past as well as from the present.

The best solo performers of our time —modern in intelligence, sensibility and technique —are those who are capable of acting within a wide historical perspective and of resolving the tensions between the creative demands of the past and present, employing their instruments as means of research and expression. Their virtuosity is not confined to manual dexterity nor to philological specialization. Although they may operate at differing levels of understanding, they are able to commit themselves to the only type of virtuosity that is acceptable today, that of sensibility and intelligence.⁷⁶

The critics' comments cited in this section span from the late 1990s to 2015 and illustrate that reviews centre on Berio's first dimension of virtuosity— the player's technical ability to 'pull it off' in performance. Take, for example, *Sequenza XI* (for guitar, 1987—88). This work places enormous physical demands on the guitarist for the work's fourteen-minute duration, most notably for the extreme tempi requirement in which textural transformations

⁷⁴ Richard Toop, "On Complexity," *Perspectives of New Music* 31 (Winter 1993), 46.

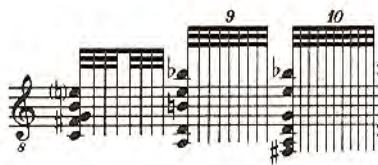
⁷⁵ Halfyard, "Provoking Acts: The Theatre of Berio's *Sequenzas*," *Berio's Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis*, 116.

⁷⁶ Berio, liner notes to recording of *Berio Sequenzas*, 9.

unfold within the music. Berio juxtaposes the fuller textures of *rasgueado*, *tambour* chords and conventional up and down strummed chords, with linear textures of arpeggios, *tremolo* and one brief contrapuntal passage. The composer further intersperses these textures with left-hand trills, rapid-note motifs, harmonics, Bartók *pizzicati*, slurs and *glissandi*.

Berio exploits the first parameter of physical virtuosity from the player in the extended passages of thematic tritone-based chords (marked *fortissimo* and repeat as fast as possible). The rapid discharge of demisemiquavers at the tempo requirement of MM crotchet equals 60 commands fluency and control for the changing rhythmic profiles per crotchet beat. In the following excerpt showing page 1, staff 5 (see Musical example 2: *Sequenza XI*, page 1, staff 5) the strums begin with eight strums per crotchet beat, followed by nine then ten.

Musical example 2: *Sequenza XI*, page 1, staff 5



The following examples from page 2, staves 3—4, embody Berio's third dimension of virtuosity which challenges the player, both the physically and intellectually (see Musical example 3: *Sequenza XI*, page 2, staves 3—4). The motivic material transforms into a number of contrasting textures with a wide range of performance techniques. This section pushes the physically boundaries of the player not only due to the rapid tempo requirement but also due to the excessive right-and-left-hand movements created by the contrasting performance techniques. Conceptually, these disjunctive gestures, also command from the player maximum concentration to evoke a 'capricious' character.

Musical example 3: *Sequenza XI*, page 2, staves 3—4

The image displays two staves of musical notation for guitar. The top staff (staff 3) begins with a series of chords marked with an accent (^) and a trill (tr). It then transitions into a tritone-based arpeggio, followed by a trill on the third fret. The bottom staff (staff 4) starts with a tremolo marked 'x7' and 'RH', followed by a series of chords and arpeggios. Dynamic markings include *ff*, *pp f*, *p*, and *f*. Techniques like *vibr.* (vibrato) are also indicated. Fingerings are shown with circled numbers (1-4).

At staff 3, a series of *tamboras*, which require percussive thuds on the bridge of the guitar, immediately changes to a strummed chord (marked accent) followed by a tritone-based arpeggio. The following trill requires a percussive stroke with the right-hand index finger on the third fret on the fingerboard. The player then resumes the normal position over the sound hole for the arpeggio (marked *piano*), followed by a short burst of *tremolo* inclusive of the thematic augmented fourth. Then yet another tritone-based arpeggio (marked *crescendo*), and a thematic chromatic trill cluster (marked *fortissimo* and *decrescendo*). Jim Tosone's critique of 1996 in *Guitar Review* focuses on the technical mastery of Eliot Fisk's recording of *Sequenza XI* in the *Sequenza! Music Masters* (1995). In particular, Tosone praises the manner in which Fisk 'creates seamless transitions between disparate phrases and the precise control he exercises over the very rapid *crescendos* and *diminuendos*'.⁷⁷

In a more balanced review of this recording of the *Sequenzas*, critic for the *American Record Guide* William Ellis comments that Berio explores 'areas such as power, volume, dynamics, and, not least, stamina'.⁷⁸ Ellis appropriately explains that the viola *Sequenza VI* (1967), also requires 'stamina' for the extensive and extremely fast tempi for the *tremolo* gestures (marked *fff*). These *tremolo* gestures further add strain to the player for which

⁷⁷ Jim Tosone, "Luciano Berio's 70th Birthday Celebration," *Guitar Review* 104 (Winter 1996), 32.

⁷⁸ William Ellis, "Music by Berio, Scarlatti, Paganini, Mendelssohn," *American Record Guide* 59, 1 (January-February 1996), 213.

she/he needs to place the bow on the strings near the frog with a stiff wrist as well as constant trembling of the elbow of the bowing hand.

Likewise, *Sequenza XII* (for bassoon, 1995), also requires from the player 'stamina' for the rapid alternations of *tremolando* between the extreme registers. The physical stamina required for this work concerns the circular breathing technique to sustain the long notes. In 2008, Steve Smith of the *New York Times* attributes Martin Kuuskmann with 'superhuman breath control' in his execution of this work.⁷⁹ Circular breathing requires the bassoonist to play the instrument through the mouth continuously while breathing in through the nose to simultaneously refill their lungs. The lip and facial muscles that support the playing embouchure need to stay in contact with the reed for extended periods of time to maintain the supportive seal. This technique results in high levels of muscle fatigue that usually are dissipated by rests at short but regular intervals throughout a work.⁸⁰

Another example of a critic's focus on Berio's first dimension of virtuosity at the expense of detail about the music is Allan Kozinn's *NY Times* review of the Da Capo Chamber Players (Merkin Concert Hall, 2008). He describes Curtis Macomber's execution of the violin *Sequenza VIII* (1976) as displays of 'thrilling virtuosity' and Patricia Spencer's performance of the flute *Sequenza I* (1958) as 'warm-blooded'.⁸¹ Kozinn even describes the score of *Sequenza I* as 'athletic'.⁸² For instance, the following excerpt (see Musical example 4: *Sequenza I*, staves 1—7),⁸³ requires maximum speed of articulations that include *staccato*, sudden accents (marked *sffz*), rapid flurry of notes and maximum duration of sounds and wide leaps. The player needs to maintain the tension of the tritone interval and contend with many dynamic

⁷⁹ Steve Smith, "In Single File, Berio's Menagerie on Parade," *New York Times* (New York: 5 February 2008), E. 5.

⁸⁰ Mark Andrew Gaydon, "Berio's *Sequenza XII* in performance and context: a contribution to the Australian bassoon repertory synthesizing extended techniques into newly commissioned works," PhD Dissertation, Elder Conservatorium of Music, University of Adelaide, 2012, 28.

⁸¹ Allan Kozinn, "Retrieving Older Friends and Hearing Them Out," *New York Times* (New York: 7 June 2008), B. 13.

⁸² Allan Kozinn, "Happy Birthday, Luciano Berio, an ensemble gave the party," *New York Times* (New York: 28 October 1995), A. 19.

⁸³ Luciano Berio, *Sequenza I* (for flute, 1958), First edition, Suvini Zeboni, Milan: 5531.

contrasts (marked p — ppp — f — ff) as well as *crescendos* and *decrescendos* within relatively short time frames within the music.

Musical example 4: *Sequenza I*, staves 1—7

The musical score consists of seven staves of music. The first staff begins with the tempo marking '70 M.M.'. The dynamics range from sfz and ff to mf and p . The notation includes complex rhythmic patterns, slurs, and accents, illustrating the extreme contrasts and techniques mentioned in the text.

The extreme tempi of *Sequenza I* push the physical boundaries of the player as do the techniques required to produce multiphonics, flutter-tonguing and key clicks. More accurately, this *Sequenza* encompasses Berio's third level of virtuosity for which the player needs to function at extremely high levels of

both technical and intellectual virtuosity to evoke a ‘darting’ and ‘wistful’ character.

Similarly, the proportional notation in combination with the physical demands of the rapid instrumental articulations in the oboe *Sequenza VII* (1969) places this work within Berio’s third dimension of virtuosity. This work develops from a single, repeated tone with varied attacks and explores the oboe’s full timbral range and includes multiphonics, double-tonguing, trills on multiple notes, microtonal trills, over blowing and flutter-tonguing. Critic for the *Sydney Morning Herald* Peter McCallum describes the technical mastery of Diane Doherty’s performance of this *Sequenza* (City Recital Hall, Sydney, 2003) as ‘outstanding’.⁸⁴ Even in 2015, critics continue to describe the superficial—but necessary—virtuosic attributes of the performer, in contrast to the musical commentary preferred by Berio. Take, for example, Vivien Schweitzer’s *New York Times* review of James Austin Smith’s performance of *Sequenza VII* (Baryshnikov Arts Center, April 2015) focuses on the oboist’s exhibition of ‘virtuosic flair’.⁸⁵

Arguably, *Sequenza III* (for voice, 1965) is within Berio’s second dimension of virtuosity; a conflict and a tension between concept and musical substance.⁸⁶ Berio’s concept is to assimilate the sung words with for example, laughter, muttering, whispering or coughing and then to transform this combination of sounds into musical units. The vocalist needs to differentiate and express in rapid succession approximately forty emotions that include anxiety, tension, bewilderment, apprehension, serenity, coyness, desperation, urgency, dreaminess and joyfulness.⁸⁷ This multiplicity of vocal elements as well as the tension of the speed with which these elements move from one to

⁸⁴ Peter McCallum, “Solo man’s thirst-quencher,” *Sydney Morning Herald* (Australia: 12 May 2003), 14.

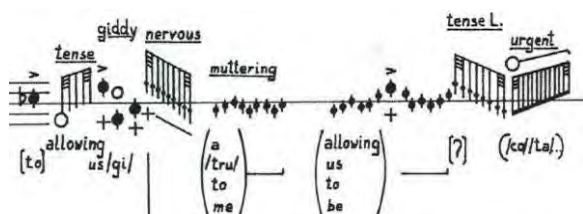
⁸⁵ Vivien Schweitzer, “Berio to Cage to Mozart at Baryshnikov Arts Center,” *New York Times* (New York: 7 April 2015), C. 3.

⁸⁶ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 90.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 96.

another in *Sequenza III* is what constitutes its virtuoso character.⁸⁸ The musical substance, however, consists of a limited number of tones and intervals that require almost no virtuosic leaps.⁸⁹ For instance, in the following excerpt (see Musical example 5: *Sequenza III*, page 1, line 3),⁹⁰ beckons a 'tense' character by the whispered, unvoiced sounds (marked \circ as short as possible), then a 'giddy' sensation that requires the vocalist to intone with closed mouth (marked \bullet and +), followed immediately by a 'nervous' downward gesture (marked + and as fast as possible). The vocalist then mutters (marked as quickly as possible), in random order and in a slightly discontinuous manner the words 'a /tru/ to me' and 'allowing/ us/ to/ be'. After a 'tense' form of laughter (marked as fast as possible), a sense of 'urgency' entails the sounds 'ka/ta' (marked as fused and continuous as possible with a breathy, almost whispered tone).

Musical example 5: *Sequenza III*, page 1, line 3



Smith comments that Micaela Haslam's performance of *Sequenza III*, 'had as much to do with her vivid facial expressions and lively gestures as with the sounds she produced'.⁹¹ This critic encapsulates Berio's conceptualisation for this vocal work, which is the simultaneous and parallel development of the text segments, the vocal gesture and the expressive dimension to form a three-part invention, that 'interfere, intermodulate and combine into a unity'.⁹²

⁸⁸ Steven Conner, "The Decomposing Voice of Postmodern Music," *New Literary History* 32, 3 (Summer 2001), 471.

⁸⁹ George W. Flynn, "Listening to Berio's Music," *Musical Quarterly* 61, 3 (July 1975), 420.

⁹⁰ Luciano Berio, *Sequenza III*, (for voice, 1965), Universal Edition: 13723.

⁹¹ Smith, "In Single File, Berio's Menagerie on Parade," E. 5.

⁹² Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 96.

Sequenza III, however, appears to show decline in appeal. Forty years after its premiere, Anne Midgette disparagingly claims that this work sounds ‘especially dated’.⁹³ Likewise, Smith dismisses the work’s ‘catalogue of clicks, pops and intoned phonemes’ as ‘dated’.⁹⁴

Critics also use the *Sequenza* series as a comparison for Berio’s other solo works, such as *Lied* (for clarinet, 1983). In 1984, critic for the *New York Times* Will Crutchfield explains that in contrast to the *Sequenzas*, exhibits ‘no virtuosity’.⁹⁵ This work, which is only four minutes in duration, requires no special effects and consists of simple melodic gestures, punctuated by arpeggios and a repeated one-note motif. Likewise, Berio’s piano Sonata (2001). This work falls within the parameter of the composer’s third dimension of virtuosity, which requires optimum technical and intellectual skills. In his review of 2002, Anthony Tommasini describes this work, like the *Sequenzas*, as ‘technically daunting’.⁹⁶ This Sonata requires both physical stamina and intellectual virtuosity for the rapid discharge of chord sequences that Berio juxtaposes with repeated single notes and lyrical sections to convey many variations of moods and characters within the music.

The *Sequenzas* more accurately represent Berio’s own reinvention of nineteenth-century virtuosi. The following section discusses another contentious issue for Berio—the labelling of new works into recognisable and established musical genres.

3.2.3: Getting away from labels in music

Berio clashed with the press for their predisposition to label his works for convenient marketing, rather than to allow a new work to define itself.

⁹³ Anne Midgette, “Adventures Outside the Classical Canon: Pathfinding Composers,” *New York Times* (New York: 25 June 2006), E.1: 26.

⁹⁴ Smith, “In Single File, Berio’s Menagerie on Parade,” E. 5.

⁹⁵ Will Crutchfield, “Music: Debuts in Review,” *New York Times* (New York: 18 November 1984), A. 68.

⁹⁶ Anthony Tommasini, “Well Balanced On a Pianist Cutting Edge,” *New York Times* (New York: 26 November 2002), E. 3.

Berio acknowledges that audience tastes play a vital role in determining which works promoters select for performances and recordings: 'music in our world has to be sold, to be merchandised. In order to sell it you must offer it in a certain format'.⁹⁷ However, Berio is dismissive of newspaper critics who label and package all new music within a traditional and recognisable genre or style such as neo-Romantic or neo-Classical. The composer explains that this preoccupation, in particular, is with North American critics: 'this is press-agentry: in America, everything needs a label, everything needs to be packaged. It's all too silly'.⁹⁸ Rockwell argues that this is primarily due to the vast anonymity of American culture therefore many composers, visual artists and musicians seek to establish a personal style to 'distinguish oneself both in the marketplace and in public awareness'.⁹⁹ As an example, Steve Reich and John Adams are both well known in the classical music market as minimalist composers.

Edward Rothstein of the *New York Times* defends the employment of labels, arguing that to understand and communicate our experience of the music, critics 'must use categories'.¹⁰⁰ Part of the modernist movement was the tendency to avoid established genres in favour of labelling works as 'wholly individual'.¹⁰¹ Literary commentator Michael Whitworth argues for a flexible approach to defining modernism:

Defining modernism need not mean laying finite limits to it either in terms of a canon or a period. A more subtle definition defines not the material, but the process that produced it: processes involving reactions to modernity that were sometimes aggressive, sometimes defensive, sometimes ambivalent. Such a definition is productive rather than

⁹⁷ Theo Muller, "Music is not a solitary act: Conversation with Luciano Berio," *Tempo* 199 (January 1997), 20.

⁹⁸ Tim Page "An Avant-Gardist Takes on a Staid Italian Festival," *New York Times* (New York: 10 June 1984), 21.

⁹⁹ John Rockwell, "The Re-emergence of Luciano Berio," *New York Times* (New York: 19 October 1980), A. 23.

¹⁰⁰ Edward Rothstein, "The Oracle Has Spoken. Come Again?" *New York Times* (New York: 7 November 1993), Section: Arts and Entertainment, np.

¹⁰¹ Carl Dahlhaus, *Schoenberg and the New Music*, Translated by Derrick Puffett and Alfred Clayton, New York: Cambridge University Press 1987, 33.

restrictive, flexible rather than rigid, and capable of developing as it encounters new material.¹⁰²

As discussed in Chapter 2, Berio's engagement with the 'past' does create the tendency for critics to define Berio's works within traditional genres. Take, for example, William Littler of the *Toronto Star* in his review of 1994: he places Berio's *Sinfonia* (1968) within a neo-Romantic genre, basing his argument on the work's extensive use of musical quotations and sound materials of the past.¹⁰³ Berio, however, categorically rejects this term, stating that the work does not look back in a nostalgic manner but is rather, 'a trip, a journey through harmony, through different ways of creating polyphony of different techniques, with reference to the past'.¹⁰⁴ Berio argues that the musical quotations including the third movement of Mahler's *Resurrection* Symphony and snippets from *La Mer*, *Le Sacre du Printemps*, and the *Pastoral* Symphony emerge and develop as a memory that pays homage to musical textures of the past.¹⁰⁵ In challenging critics, Berio inadvertently plays a part in shaping the future reception of this work.

In his review of 1993, Rothstein appropriately explicates that the subject matter of Berio's *Sinfonia* is the counterculture politics of the 1960s and the quotations are not 'nostalgic' but an example of 'aggression against it'.¹⁰⁶ Further, we hear the Mahler, Berg and Strauss quotations as 'relics of lost order; the present (of 25 year ago) is heard in the fractured syllables of Martin Luther's King's name'.¹⁰⁷ In 2003, critic for the *New York Times* Paul Griffiths acknowledges that Berio pays homage to the past: 'the piece would emerge and develop as if it were a memory, evoking textures and situations

¹⁰² Whitworth, *Modernism*, 5.

¹⁰³ William Littler, "Italian composer Berio a seer of music's future," *Toronto Star* (Toronto, Ontario: 29 November 1994), F. 4.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, F. 4.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, F. 4.

¹⁰⁶ Edward Rothstein, "The Past As Enemy And Totem," *New York Times* (New York: 1 February 1993), C. 15.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, C. 15.

from the past'.¹⁰⁸ Tommasini's review of 2006 implies the traditional form for *Sinfonia* in describing it as a 'symphony'.¹⁰⁹ As noted in Chapter 2, however, the title is, instead, drawn from the Greek word 'sin-fon-i', and refers to the combining of sounds of different texts, music, instruments and harmonies.¹¹⁰ In 2012, Clements retrospective review of *Sinfonia* for the *Guardian*, argues that due to Berio's extensive use of 'collage' technique, this work is in the 'post-modernist' milieu.¹¹¹

The contradictory title *Solo* for Berio's trombone and orchestral work of 1999—2000 immediately implies a lack of conventional concerto-like dialogue between the soloist and the orchestra. At times, the trombone and orchestra share the same tonic, but mostly the trombones of the orchestra echo the soloist's trills, flutter tonguing and other virtuosic techniques. However, John von Rhein's review of this work in 2002, appropriately describes the non-traditional form of this work, stating that the trombones of the orchestra function as 'shadow soloists'.¹¹²

Writing in 2003, Ivan Hewett admits that a contributing factor to the difficulty of defining Berio's experimental works is the 'blurring of boundaries between different artistic forms'.¹¹³ Take, for example, *Laborintus II* (1965), Berio morphs traditional genres of narration, choral settings with instrumental commentary to create a new form of musical theatre. The text, by Edoardo Sanguineti, is a multi-layered collage that includes quotations from Dante's *Vita Nuova*, *Convivio* and the *Divina Commedia*. Berio chooses the title *Laborintus II* to echo Sanguineti's own poem *Laborintus* of 1956. In

¹⁰⁸ Paul Griffiths, "Luciano Berio Is Dead at 77; Composer of Mind and Heart," *New York Times* (New York: 28 May 2003), A. 21.

¹⁰⁹ Anthony Tommasini, "From Berio, the Dark Fraying Ends of the 1960s," *New York Times* (New York: 1 February 2006), E. 3.

¹¹⁰ Moore and MacLennan, Interview with Berio.

¹¹¹ Andrew Clements, "Berio: *Rendering*; Sonata Op 120 No 1; Six Early Songs—Review," *Guardian* (London: 3 February 2012), <http://www.theguardian.com/music/2012/feb/02/berio-rendering-six-early-songs-review-> (access 12 September 2014).

¹¹² John von Rhein, "Chicago- Chicago Symphony: Berio *Solo* for Trombone and Orchestra (US premiere), *American Record Guide* 65, 3 (May/June 2002), 48.

¹¹³ Ivan Hewett, "Luciano Berio: Composer whose highly personal modernism embraced theatre, language and new sonorities," *Guardian* (London, United Kingdom: 28 May 2003), 23.

juxtaposing Dante's denunciation of usury with modernist writer Ezra Pound's famous denunciation of capitalism in *Canto XLV*, Berio also denounces the negative aspects of modernity—Western capitalism.

Berio's and Sanguineti's intentions also are to spread their social and political concerns to the broader public. Performances are not to be restricted exclusively to the concert hall and could also include schools, theatres, television, in the open air, or in any place permitting the gathering of an audience.¹¹⁴ Berio blurs the boundary between a theatre piece, an ensemble work or even an art music event. In his review of 2003, Griffiths categorises *Laborintus II* as a voice and chamber orchestra work.¹¹⁵ Jules Langert describes the work as a 'collective extravaganza'.¹¹⁶ Yet Berio even rejects a musical category for *Laborintus II*, preferring instead the description as a theatrical event, a story, an allegory or even a documentary.¹¹⁷ Berio's left-wing politics appears not to be a discussion point amongst critics.

Conclusion

Critics' persistence in reporting on *Sequenza* performers' physical and technical prowess is an ongoing tactic that newspaper and magazine editors demand of their critics. The primary objective of these types of sensationalised press releases is to attract mainstream review readers, increase concert attendances and record purchases. In turn, Berio was aware of audience tastes as well as critics' predilections for a captive review. The sheer physical virtuosity of the *Sequenzas* in combination with high-profile virtuosi ensures continual press coverage and numerous reviews. The promotion of works by critics, however, is not the entire story: the works themselves need integrity. Steve Reich explains that if 'you're not wholly committed to your own compositions, you will undoubtedly find that performers and audiences aren't either'.¹¹⁸ This is most definitely the case

¹¹⁴ Berio, *Laborintus II* (Author's notes).

¹¹⁵ Griffiths, "Luciano Berio Is Dead at 77; Composer of Mind and Heart," A. 21.

¹¹⁶ Langert, "Celebrating Luciano Berio."

¹¹⁷ Berio, *Laborintus II* (Author's notes).

¹¹⁸ Steve Reich, "Texture-Space-Survival," *Perspectives of New Music* 26, 2 (Summer 1988), 279.

with Berio's *Sequenza* series. This series spans forty-four years and indeed, demonstrate that Berio was committed and understood the essential features required of a solo work to also attract ongoing players. The lure of Berio's *Sequenzas* to subsequent players, I will further explore in Chapter 9.

The press's ongoing mis-labelling of *Sinfonia* appears not to detract from the ongoing commercial success of this work. Dismissive about the types of commentary that certain critics choose to describe his works, Berio also acknowledges that he could not do without the critic. This was an uneasy tension that remained unresolved at his death. The factors and characteristics of *Sinfonia* that contribute to its ongoing success I will further discuss in Chapter 5.

The following chapter examines Berio's aspirations for his chamber music works and the general reception of modernist music amongst critics, musicologists and audiences.

CHAPTER 4

Accessibility of Berio's chamber music to mainstream audiences and its reception

I have a Utopian dream, though I know it cannot be realized: I would like to create a unity between folk music and our music—a real, perceptible, understandable continuity between ancient, popular music-making which is so close to everyday work and our music.

—Luciano Berio (*Two Interviews*, 1985)¹

This chapter focuses on the accessibility of Berio's chamber music works to mainstream audiences. I explore the reception of late nineteenth and twentieth century high modernist music amongst critics, musicologists and the concert going public. This chapter examines the factors that delineate all strands of modernist music as 'elitist,' 'difficult' and 'complex'. I compare Berio's attitudes towards his listening and purchasing audiences with that of composers including Boulez, Carter, Brian Ferneyhough, Charles Wuorinen, Babbitt and Penderecki. The primary source material includes interviews that were conducted by Bruce Duffie, James Boros and William Littler between 1987 and 2000.

Another area of examination in this chapter relates to musical postmodernism as a reaction against high modernism. Further to Chapter 3, I argue that Berio caters for a wide-ranging audience and his works embrace either 'simple' or 'complex' listening strategies. This study focuses on aspects of postmodernist compositional ideas that are evident in Berio's chamber music works. As a means to measure the success of Berio's works within the commercial music market, I explore the ensembles that regularly perform the composer's music. A further, interrelated area of study concerns the ways music promoters help audiences to better interpret Berio's works.

¹ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 148.

4.1.1: Rejection of ‘absolute’ music and ‘elitism’

During the 1980 and 1990s, the concept of absolute music ² and its associated elitist ideology, in particular, was scrutinised by scholars. For instance, Susan McClary argued that social values were a critical source for the application of musical meaning and claimed that high modernist composers such as Babbitt would rather ‘go down with the ship than admit to meaning’.³ Pierre Boulez admitted that a theoretically based analysis of his music does little to help the listener and he even rejected the relevance of his compositional thinking to the audience:

People have gone through my works identifying rows and the like, and they think that they have somehow found the ‘secrets’ of my music, but however much the things they discover may have helped me, they don’t help the listener. This approach doesn’t ‘explain’ my music—not even the beginning of it.⁴

Georgina Born explains that during the 1980s and 1990s this high modernist stance was endemic within institutions such as the Institut de Recherche et de Coordination Acoustique/Musique (IRCAM), arguing that the centre represented both ‘the increased atomization of art and its opposite: an intensified subsumption—institutional, bureaucratic, scientific, technological—of the aesthetic’.⁵ Likewise, a number of twenty-first century musicological discourses denounce the elitist ideology of high musical modernism; for instance, in *Reviving the Muse: Music after Modernism*, Peter Davison dismissed Schoenberg as ‘pathological’ and ‘self-deceiving’.⁶ In a more moderate vein, Robin Holloway described the radical and aesthetic difficulty of modernist music as having gone ‘too far, too fast’.⁷ According to

² Absolute music (abstract music) is not explicit or representational.

³ McClary, “Terminal Prestige: The Case of Avant-Garde Music Composition,” 66.

⁴ Amy Bauer, “Tone-Color, Movement, Changing Harmonic Planes: Cognition, Constraints, and Conceptual Blends in Modernist Music,” *The Pleasure of Modernist Music: Listening, Meaning, Intention*, ed. Arved Ashby, Rochester, New York: University of Rochester Press, 2004, 145.

⁵ Born, *Rationalizing Culture IRCAM, Boulez, and the Institutionalization of the Musical Avant-Garde*, 30.

⁶ Peter Davison, ‘...the madness that is believed...: A Re-Evaluation of the Life and Work of Arnold Schoenberg’, *Reviving the Muse: Essays on Music After Modernism*, Brinkworth: Claridge Press, 2001, 73.

⁷ Robin Holloway, “Modernism and After,” *Reviving the Muse: Essays on Music After Modernism*, 107.

Andrew Timms, the linkage of modernism to atonality persists not because it is an adequate reading of the historical period but rather because it allows the latter to be equated with a stylistic tag that for the most part, the general music public view negatively.⁸

One of the factors that roused public negativity towards modernist music was its connection by critics and composers themselves with the tenet of 'pure music'. This, in general terms, referred to a concept of music as tonal and without words or extra-musical meaning whereby the effects of intimacy, passion and spiritual consolation are evoked by 'purely musical means' via established traditional genres including symphonies, concertos, piano sonatas and string quartets.⁹ In modernist music, however, listeners lost the familiar tonal markers that guided them through their listening of 'pure music', including the recognition of harmonic progressions, motives, themes and their transformations as well as musical form.

In turn, a significant factor that deterred mainstream audiences from modernist music is the specialised vocabulary created by music theorists and academics to describe the music. Composer Linda Dusman argues that the degree to which audience members do not possess this knowledge is 'perhaps proportional to the distance they feel'.¹⁰ Take, for example, in 1993, pianist David Burge's recollection that, after a concert that included Berio's *Sequenza IV*, he received a note from a member of the audience suggesting that future programs should include a warning concerning the complexity of such pieces, so that 'people who do not wish to be subjected to such offensive events may leave the room'.¹¹ In his review of 1995, Anthony Tommasini confirms these attitudes amongst the general public:

⁸ Andrew Timms, "Modernism's Moment of Plenitude," in *The Modernist Legacy: Essays on New Music*, ed. Björn Heile, Surrey, England and Burlington USA: Ashgate Publishing, 2009, 14.

⁹ Cook, *Music: A Very Short Introduction*, 38.

¹⁰ Linda Dusman, "Unheard-of: Music as Performance and the Reception of the New," *Perspectives of New Music*, 32, 2 (Summer 1994), 138.

¹¹ David Burge, "Mere Complexities," *Perspectives of New Music* 31, 1 (Winter 1993), 59.

No problem in the world of concert music is more troubling than the chasm between living composers and large segments of the audience, a situation unprecedented in music history. Some commentators fix the blame on a band of influential composers born in the 1920s who emerged in the late 1950s as post-Webernian Serialists: Pierre Boulez, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Luigi Nono, Gyorgy Ligeti, the front line of the international avant-garde.¹²

This phenomenon prevails even into the twenty-first century. In 2007, Alex Ross commented that modernist music sends ‘ripples of unease through concert audiences’.¹³ Further in 2012, Guy Noble explained the conundrum in these terms: audiences readily accept new films, plays and books but ‘have a real distrust of anything new when it comes to music’.¹⁴ However, Arved Ashby in his introduction to *The Pleasure of Modernist Music* acknowledges the lack of commercial success of most modernist compositions but suggests that the supposed ‘difficulty’ is erroneous:

Modernist music has never achieved much success and acceptance, beyond the *succès d’estime* that rules the Pulitzer Prizes and university appointments—or long did. But this doesn’t mean that modernist music hasn’t found an audience and couldn’t find *more* listeners if we took a fresh look at its fabled difficulty—if we stopped approaching modernist works as pseudopositivist experiments to be praised or censured for rejecting conventional ideas of musical ‘coherence’.¹⁵

Several musicologists have attempted to decipher musical coherence via the multi-linear patterning required for retention of musical material. Joseph Smith argues that the experience of musical time embodies a whole network of temporal phenomena in a pattern of thrust and trail analogous to ‘a comet plummeting through subjective space, leaving a trail of after-echoes’.¹⁶ This,

¹² Anthony Tommasini, “A Modernist for the Masses,” *New York Times* (New York: 12 November 1995), 2. 42.

¹³ Alex Ross, *The Rest is Noise: Listening to the Twentieth Century*, New York: Picador, 2007, Preface xvi.

¹⁴ Guy Noble, “The shock of the new,” *Limelight Magazine* (Australian Broadcasting Corporation), June 2012, 21.

¹⁵ Arved Ashby, “Introduction”, *The Pleasure of Modernist Music: Listening, Meaning, Intention*, ed. Arved Ashby, Rochester, New York: University of Rochester Press, 2004, 1.

¹⁶ Joseph F. Smith, “Phenomenological Theme with Dialectical Variation 1. Time Consciousness and Audial Phenomena in Husserl,” *The Experience of Musical Sound: Prelude to a Phenomenology of Music*, London: Gordon and Breach Science Publishers, 1979, 230.

in turn, as Robert Sharp suggests, enables the listener to anticipate, for instance, within tonal music a chord resolution or a modulation at a particular point in the listening experience.¹⁷ According to Barbara Barry, the perceptual structuring of musical material into definable motifs and themes occurs when 'sections of the note-stream [are] held in short-term memory, whose constituent notes and harmonies are retained and connected through the phenomenological present, so musical form depends on long-term memory to create coherent shape over a long extension of time'.¹⁸ Along these lines, Nicholas Cook argues that if one is to understand the ideas that the composer is trying to communicate one has 'to grasp the notes and their relations to one another'.¹⁹ The listener, therefore, needs 'to remember motifs and themes and observe their repetitions, follow harmonic progressions and successions of keys, and keep track of the unfolding of the musical form'.²⁰ Leonard Meyer elucidates that 'just as letters can be left out of a written statement or words omitted from a message without affecting our ability to understand and reconstruct the word or message, so tones can be omitted from a musical passage without affecting our ability to grasp its meaning'.²¹

In literature, writers may not conscientiously differentiate their reader base but a certain type of reader is already included within the very act of writing itself, as an internal structure of the text.²² Similarly, the musical language of a composer intrinsically implies one range of possible audiences rather than another. The hearing required by the high modernist aesthetic is prescribed by a composer's compositional design. For instance, Babbitt commands an analytic approach to listening to his works; the five-dimensional musical space which is determined by pitch-class, register, dynamic, duration, and

¹⁷ Robert A. Sharp, "Humanism Founders?" *Music and Humanism: An Essay in the Aesthetics of Music*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, 182.

¹⁸ Barbara R. Barry, *Musical Time: The Sense of Order*, New York: Pendragon Press, 1990, 65.

¹⁹ Cook, *Music, Imagination and Culture*, 182.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 182.

²¹ Leonard B. Meyer, *Music, the Arts and Ideas* 2nd Edition, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994, 16.

²² Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 2008, 73.

timbre. Wuorinen, Carter and Ferneyhough respectively disclose their desired type of listener as being:

Capable of attentive [and] retentive listening,²³

familiar with the field of cultivated and developed music,²⁴ and

able to decipher the musical content, most notably due to the works' rapid tempi as well as high density of information that suggest to the ear sequential bundles of possible paths through the labyrinth, which are mapped out in the synchronization of simultaneous processual layers with a view to encouraging the risky undertaking of instantaneously selecting between them.²⁵

Babbitt even describes the type of meaning he would like the listener to establish for his own music as:

Not that kind of understanding which reduces the rich manifestations, the rich ramifications, of musical relationships to some mundane banalities, not some sort of many-one mapping of all those wonderfully rich ramifications of musical relations to some sort of representation of the world out there...²⁶

In contrast to his high modernist counterparts, Berio is less dogmatic about the manner in which people listen to his music. The composer is cognisant that everyone understands music in their own fashion and there is no correct or incorrect way of listening, 'just more simple and more complex ones'.²⁷ Steve Reich argues that chance procedures²⁸ as well as serial techniques have no aural presence for listeners.²⁹ Reich's rejection of these modernist practices served as both an impetus and justification for his new compositional directions.³⁰ Judy Lochhead argues that Reich's compositions

²³ Bruce Duffie, "Composer: Charles Wuorinen, A Conversation with Bruce Duffie," (26 February 1987) <http://www.bruceduffie.com/wuorinen.html> (accessed 17 July 2013).

²⁴ Duffie, "A Conversation with Carter."

²⁵ James Boros, "Brian Ferneyhough in Conversation with James Boros: Shattering the Vessels of Received Wisdom," *Perspectives of New Music*, 28 (Summer 1990), 10.

²⁶ Milton Babbitt, *Milton Babbitt: Words About Music*, eds Stephan Dembski and Joseph N. Straus, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987, 182.

²⁷ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 25.

²⁸ Chance music refers to the elements of a composition that is left to 'chance,' and/or some primary element of a work's performance realisation is determined by the performer(s).

²⁹ Steve Reich, *Writings about Music*, Halifax, Nova Scotia: The Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1974, 10.

³⁰ Judy Lochhead, "Refiguring the Modernist Program for Hearing: Steve Reich and George Rochberg," *The Pleasure of Modernist Music Listening, Meaning: Intention*, ed. Arved Ashby, Rochester, New York: University of Rochester Press, 2004, 325.

as well as those of George Rochberg, refigure the listener's role and open the door to a newly conceived postmodern hearing —one that is indeterminate and based in the reflexivity between listener and musical work.³¹ Take, for example, Reich's *It's Gonna Rain* (for magnetic tape, 1965), which uses tape loops to create phrasing patterns. The piece opens with the story of Noah, and the phrase 'It's Gonna Rain'. The recording includes a Pentecostal preacher talking about the end of the world against a background of noise and the sound of a pigeon taking flight.

The nascent postmodern movement reacted to and repudiated modernism. Over the last few decades, scholars of postmodernism have focused more on the functionality of music and the effects of globalisation³² and its links with capitalism.³³ Peter Bürger argues along the lines of unifying art and life:

The unification of art and life intended by the avant-garde can only be achieved if it succeeds in liberating aesthetic potential from institutional constraints which block its social effectiveness: the attack on the institution of art is the condition for the possible realization of a utopia in which art and life are united.³⁴

Jonathan Kramer argues that postmodernism does not represent a period within music, but, rather exemplifies an 'attitude' which suggests ways listeners of today can understand music of various eras.³⁵ Within this parameter, Kramer broadly defines the characteristics of postmodern composition as:

not simply a repudiation of modernism or its continuation, but has aspects of both a break and an extension; on some level and in some way ironic; does not respect boundaries between sonorities and procedures of the past and the present; challenges barriers between 'high' and 'low' styles; shows disdain for the often unquestioned value of structural unity; questions the mutual exclusivity of elitist and populist values; avoids totalizing forms (example, does not want entire pieces to

³¹ Ibid., 340.

³² David Beard and Kenneth Gloag, *Musicology: The Key Concepts*, New York: Routledge Press, 2005, 142.

³³ Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, Durham: Duke University Press, 1991, 46.

³⁴ Peter Bürger, "Avant-Garde and Neo-Avant-Garde: An Attempt to Answer Certain Critics of Theory of the Avant-Garde," *New Literary History* 41, 4 (Autumn 2010), 695.

³⁵ Jonathan D. Kramer, "The Nature and Origins of Musical Postmodernism," *Current Musicology* 66 (Spring 1999), 11.

be tonal or serial or cast in a prescribed formal mold); considers music not as autonomous but as relevant to cultural, social and political context; includes quotations of or references to music of many traditions and cultures; considers technology not only as a way to preserve and transmit music but also as deeply implicated in the production and the essence of music; embraces contradictions; distrusts binary oppositions; includes fragmentations and discontinuities; encompasses pluralism and eclecticism; presents multiple meaning and temporalities; locates meaning and structure in listeners, more than in scores, performances, or composers.³⁶

The roots of postmodernism's more recent focus on music's societies and cultures can be seen in the last point on this list. Within this criterion, the following discussion contextualises Berio's works within the modernist milieu and the pieces that illustrate postmodernist thought.

4.1.2: Identifying Berio's chamber music as 'accessible' or 'complex'

Berio had an innate understanding of his audiences and organised his compositions accordingly. He understood that a person's cultural background shapes his/her tastes, preferences, customs, beliefs and values and that cultural diversity in music is apparent not only from country to country but also region to region. Take, for example, the musical public of North America; the East Coast is different from the West Coast public, and the musical public in the centre of the country is distinctly different from both the East and the West Coasts.³⁷ European high modernism was the aesthetic preference of East Coast composers including Carter and Babbitt. In contrast, the music of West Coast composers such as John Cage drew from Pacific and Oriental cultures as well as from the Californian rock music scene.³⁸ Wuorinen therefore argues that due to these vast cultural diversities 'to talk about addressing one's musical message to the public at large, I think is nearly meaningless'.³⁹

³⁶ Ibid., 10—11.

³⁷ Duffie, A Conversation with Wuorinen.

³⁸ Born, *Rationalizing Culture IRCAM, Boulez, and the Institutionalization of the Musical Avant-Garde*, 62.

³⁹ Duffie, A Conversation with Wuorinen.

For Berio, in contrast to his contemporaries including Wuorinen, Carter and Ferneyhough, complexity was not the main impetus for all his compositions. The following works demonstrate Berio's accessible music for audiences of all ages and cultural backgrounds. For instance, Berio's *Opus Number Zoo* (for wind quintet, 1951/1970) is in four movements: *Tom Cats*, *The Horse*, *The Grey Mouse* and *Barn Dance*. The musicians narrate individually or together the text by Rhonda Levine, and the music depicts the sounds of the barnyard animals. Allan Kozinn cites this work as Berio's 'lighter and more accessible side' and as 'sly entertainment in which easygoing and almost pictorial counterpoint illustrates brief descriptions of barnyard animals'.⁴⁰

Berio also suggests that playing an instrument is an important activity to help develop an innate form of musical understanding.⁴¹ For *Accordo* (for four wind bands, 1980—81), Berio includes at least four hundred amateur and professional wind players. The wind bands are placed on bandstands at compass points to surround the audience. For this work, Berio includes accessible excerpts from traditional operatic repertoire.

In *Twice upon...* (for six children's groups, 1994), the composer also promotes collective music making: the six groups of children play either a tuned/ untuned instruments or keyboards and are led by the following professional players:

- Clarinetist (Group I)
- Oboist (Group II),
- Violinist and violist (Group III)
- Trumpeter (Group IV)
- French hornist (Group V)
- Trombonist (Group VI)

Another important factor that distinguishes Berio from his high modernist peers is that he does not constrain his compositional strategies exclusively for the concert hall. Berio's innovative approach to introduce children to his

⁴⁰ Kozinn, "Happy Birthday, Luciano Berio, and ensemble gave the party," A. 19.

⁴¹ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 39.

music included a performance of *Twice Upon...* that involved players from the Halle Orchestra, London schoolchildren and viola player, Aldo Bennici, who dressed in a clown costume to captivate the children.⁴² Berio scheduled this work to commence thirty minutes before the main concert on the Festival Hall's Ballroom Floor and then the performers led the audience into the hall.⁴³

Berio's transcriptions also are straightforwardly pitched to mainstream audiences. Take, for example, his transcription of Claudio Monteverdi's madrigal depicting love and murder, titled *Il combattimento di tancredi e Clorinda* (for soprano, tenor, baritone, harpsichord and strings, 1966). Through the inclusion of ornaments, Berio preserves this work within the original style. Berio further diversifies his audience base by transcribing three cabaret songs by Kurt Weill— *Ballade von der sexuellen Horigkeit* (1967), *Le Grand Lustucru* (1972), and *Surabaya Johnny* (1972). 1960s pop music was also a source of inspiration. In 1967, Berio arranged three songs written by John Lennon and Paul McCartney including *Michelle*, *Ticket to Ride* and *Yesterday*. Michael Berkeley claims that Berio's wit and eclecticism inspires a 'wickedly arch tribute to the Beatles'.⁴⁴

Composers including Bela Bartók, Kodály, Stravinsky, da Falla and Vaughn Williams drew on folk music for its modes, melodies, rhythmic or structural forms to develop distinct nationalistic variants of modernism. David Osmond-Smith comments that Berio's 'visceral response to folk music runs like a thread throughout his career'.⁴⁵ Berio collected folk songs from old records, printed anthologies, and by oral tradition from folk musicians and friends.⁴⁶ *Due cori popolari* (1946) for unaccompanied choir and *Quattro canzoni popolari* (1947), for voice and piano, Berio composed while still a student at the Milan Conservatory. Berio draws on the music of a Sicilian lullaby for

⁴² Stephen Pettitt, "Recomposing composers; Luciano Berio," *Times* (London, United Kingdom: 26 April 1994), Features section, np.

⁴³ Ibid., Features section, np.

⁴⁴ Berkeley, "He knocked me out: Luciano Berio, groundbreaking, endlessly energetic composer, dies this week. Michael Berkeley pays tribute."

⁴⁵ Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 78.

⁴⁶ Luciano Berio, *Folk Songs* (Author's notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 11 July 2011).

E vó (for soprano and ensemble, 1972). Similarly, for *E si fussi pisci* (for mixed choir, 2002) Berio essentially uses the original melody of a Sicilian love song. The composer's intent for these simple songs, as well as the more substantial and complex works including *Voci* (subtitled *Folk Songs II*, 1984) and *Naturale* (1985), is to bring to the fore his interest in Sicilian folklore. Berio claims that the traditional folk music of this region is one of 'the richest, most complex and incandescent of our Mediterranean culture'.⁴⁷

Berio's interest in folk music also extends to calls of 'Old London' street vendors that are the basis for *Cries of London* (for two contraltos, tenor, two baritones and bass, 1974). In 1976, Berio further transcribes this work for eight voices: two sopranos, two contraltos, two tenors and two basses. *Call* (subtitled *St. Louis Fanfare*, for five brass instruments, 1985) is in the style of a ceremonial piece: 'a call to the audience; an invitation to listen— before the feast begins'.⁴⁸ Another work of the same ilk, *Re-call* (for twenty-three instruments, 1995), has relatively straightforward metre changes and instrumental interactions.

In the case of Berio's more experimental works such *Chamber Music* (1953), the composer offers the listener more traditional sonorities that include the soprano in combination with a clarinet, cello and harp. A mitigating factor to the dissonant musical language of this work is Berio's use of quite conventional vocal technique.⁴⁹ In *Circles* (1960), Berio explores unconventional instrumental groupings. This work includes a marimba, lujon, xylophone and a vibraphone in combination with the voice and harp. Berio presents new sonorities and imposes new emotional responses to e.e. cummings' poetry that, for the listener, is obscured in a plain reading of the text.

⁴⁷ Luciano Berio, "Voci," Program Notes to *Omaggio*: A Celebration of Luciano Berio 15—30 April 2004, South Bank Centre, London, 7.

⁴⁸ Luciano Berio, *Call* (Author's notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 18 July 2011).

⁴⁹ Janet K. Halfyard, "A few words for a woman to sing: the extended vocal repertoire of Cathy Berberian, (Paper presented at the University of Newcastle, England, 2004), 2. <http://www.sequenza> (accessed 11 May 2011).

Berio composed *Linea* (1972—73) for Felix Blaska and his dance company. This fifteen-minute piece is for two pianos, vibraphone and marimba and consists of thirteen sections divided into three principal groups titled: *Manege*, *Entrée*, *Ensemble*, and a final section, titled *Notturmo*. Berio chooses a simple melody that he then transforms into ‘more complex, differentiated and independent articulations’.⁵⁰ This simple melodic line enables the listener to grasp immediately the thematic material. The layers of similarity and dissimilarity of the instrumental textures, Berio controls by positioning one piano with the vibraphone, and the second piano with the marimba.⁵¹ Likewise, for *Ricorrenze* (1985—87), the composer chooses the flute, oboe, and clarinet in B flat, horn and bassoon to share the lyrical melodic material.⁵²

As discussed in Chapter 2, the modernist surface complexity and dissonance that characterise Berio’s *Chemins* series requires multiple listenings to appreciate the nuances within the music. An equally commanding work is Berio’s string quartet entitled *Notturmo* (1993) Berio’s epigraph to the score is a line from Paul Celan’s *Argumentum e silentio*, “Ihr das verschwiegene wort” (To her—the silenced word), which refers to the Holocaust. In encapsulating ‘silence’ Berio also defies the high modernist stance of ‘absolute music’:

It is silent because it is made up of unspoken words and incomplete discourses. It is silent even when it is loud, because the form itself is silent and non-argumentative. Every so often it turns back upon itself, bringing to the surface those silenced words; every so often it comes to a stop, insisting on a single figure dilating it obsessively.⁵³

Here ‘*Argumentum*’ means witness (or testimony) and as such it inhabits silence: the only possible mode of listening to the victims of genocide is

⁵⁰ Luciano Berio, *Linea* (Author’s notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 21 July 2011).

⁵¹ Clive Bennett, “Berio: *Linea*,” *Tempo*, New Series, 125 (January 1978), 37.

⁵² David Osmond-Smith, “Only Connect...” *Musical Times*, 134, 1800 (February 1993), 80.

⁵³ Luciano Berio, *Notturmo* (Author’s notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 1 August 2011).

silence, a silenced word against the language of pompous falsehood. As the title *Notturmo* suggests, this work is a night-piece (see Musical example 6: *Notturmo* [A] bars 1—3).⁵⁴ The slow tempo (marked crotchet MM = 54, *molto lontano e parlando*); the extremely soft dynamics (marked *pppp*, *quasi senza suono*) and salient tritone interval formed between the outer instrumental voices — cello, A3— viola, G3 — second violin, D4 — first violin E flat 4, collectively evoke the night ambience.

Musical example 6: *Notturmo*, [A] bars 1—3

The musical score for *Notturmo*, [A] bars 1–3, is presented in four staves. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 54 (*molto lontano e parlando*). The score includes the following performance instructions and dynamics:

- Violin I:** *con sord.*, *p*, *pppp quasi senza suono*, *sim.*, *sul pont.*, *ord.*
- Violin II:** *con sord.*, *pppp quasi senza suono*, *sim.*, *sul pont.*, *ord.*
- Viola:** *con sord.*, *pppp quasi senza suono*, *sim.*, *sul pont.*, *ord.*
- Cello:** *con sord.*, *pppp quasi senza suono*, *sim.*, *sul pont.*, *ord.*

The score also features various fingering and bowing indications, such as *III IV*, *IV 0 IV*, *0 IV 0 IV 0*, *IV 0 IV 0*, *0 II 0 II 0 II 0*, *sim.*, *sul pont.*, and *ord.*

An inherent difficulty in the first hearing of this work is the lack of development of any initial figures. However, the recurring tritone is immediately audible as a structural feature of the music. Take, for example, in the following excerpt (see Musical example 7: *Notturmo* [C] bar 31), Berio introduces a tritone-based arpeggio in the first and second violins (marked—*crescendo*—*p*— *decrescendo* —*pppp*).

⁵⁴ Luciano Berio, *Notturmo* (quartetto III, 1993), Universal Edition: 30134.

Musical example 7: *Notturmo*, [C] bar 31

The image shows a musical score for the piece 'Notturmo' by Luciano Berio, specifically measure 31 in section [C]. The score is written for a string quartet and consists of four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (pppp, p), articulation (sul pont., ord.), and fingering (I, II, III, V, 5, 0). The first staff (Violin I) starts with a triplet of eighth notes, followed by a series of sixteenth notes. The second staff (Violin II) features a series of eighth notes with a triplet. The third staff (Viola) has a series of eighth notes. The fourth staff (Cello) has a series of eighth notes. The score is marked with a box containing the letter 'C' and the number '31'.

In keeping with the atmosphere of a nocturne, Berio explores the possibility of relative formal openness: figures appear, then return, modified or unchanged, to follow separate paths, which turn upon themselves, get lost or disappear altogether.⁵⁵ David Murry of London's *Financial Times* suggests that the 'overlapping half-finished phrases' are 'long, quietly intricate, lyrical and suggestive'.⁵⁶ Andrew Clements comments that the music evokes mystery by way of 'highly concentrated, evocative gestures, some of which barely emerge out of silence, while others attempt to be more fiercely assertive'.⁵⁷ Take, for example, the following excerpt (see Musical example 8: *Notturmo* [H] bars 90–91) in which we hear the tritone in the arpeggiated gestures appearing as an extremely fast 'lyrical' and 'evocative' gesture—first in the viola (marked *subito*—*pppp*) followed by the second violin, then the first violin and then immediately by the cello.

⁵⁵ Galliano, "Luciano Berio: *Notturmo* (Quartetto III) for string quartet – Work Introduction."

⁵⁶ David Murray, "Pianists go 'pianissimo' Music in London," *Financial Times* (London: 8 March 2000), 11.

⁵⁷ Andrew Clements, "Berio: *Notturmo*; *Sincronie*; *Glosse*; *Quartet No. 1*: Arditti String Quartet," *Guardian* (London, United Kingdom: 7 March 2003), 18.

Musical example 8: *Notturmo*, [H] bars 90—91

Allen Gimbel describes *Notturmo* in the same ilk as Carter’s *Night Fantasies*: whereby ‘abstract blocks of figuration drift aimlessly through a hallucinatory dreamscape’.⁵⁸ Take, for example, the concluding bars (see Musical example 9: *Notturmo* [DD] bars 451—454), the sense of stillness Berio evokes by the long sustained pitches and extremely soft dynamics (first and second violins: marked *ord. Vibrato —f—decrescendo—pppp*)

Musical example 9: *Notturmo*, [DD] bars 451—454

⁵⁸ Allen Gimbel, “Berio: *Notturmo*; *Sincronie*; *Glosse*; *Quartet 1*,” *American Record Guide* 66, 3 (May/June 2003), 72.

Along the same lines, Berio's string quartet entitled *Glosse* (1997) may present difficulties for the newcomer. For this work, Berio avoids homogeneous development or continuous variation.⁵⁹ *Glosse* begins with a rhythmic and toneless strumming from violins and the viola, from which the cello emerges via a trilled, dissonant chord. For the listener, the rhythmic pulse is an audible structural element of this work. For instance, the rhythmic impulse of a Baroque fast movement is followed by a lyrical slow section, then a section in *pizzicato* chords, before the sustained notation of the concluding bars to evoke a state of serenity.

The following critical reception concurs with Lorin Maazel's account: Berio's voice is 'accessible, and to which people do react positively'.⁶⁰

William Hackman [*Chicago Tribune*, 1986]: while American composers—with the exception of David Del Tradici and Philip Glass—chose to explore various postmodern possibilities of minimalism and neo-Romanticism, their European counterparts including Berio, Penderecki and Boulez persevered with a modernist approach to composition.⁶¹

Paul Driver [*Times*, London, 1994]: Berio is a distinguished composer, who is faithful 'to modernist ideals of exploration and synthesis'.⁶²

John von Rhein [*Chicago Tribune*, 1996]: Berio is 'one of the most exciting and provocative voices in contemporary music'.⁶³

Jan Breslauer [*Los Angeles Times*, 2002]: Berio has been known for a sense of harmony and lyricism—an Italianate quality—that makes him more accessible to the untrained ear.⁶⁴

⁵⁹ Luciano Berio, *Glosse* (Author's notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 7 August 2011).

⁶⁰ Bruce Duffie, "Conductor Lorin Maazel: A Conversation with Bruce Duffie," (22 October 1986) <http://www.bruceduffie.com/maazel.html> (accessed 20 June 2012).

⁶¹ William Hackman, "Acclaimed *La Vera Storia* Typifies Modernism's Ambivalence to the Past," *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago: 26 January 1986), 16.

⁶² Driver, "Sounds of Silence; Luciano Berio; Culture Profile," Features Section.

⁶³ John von Rhein, "Art of Listening: Luciano Berio Reinvents and Researches Opera for the Future," *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago: 3 November 1996), 11.

⁶⁴ Jan Breslauer, "Bridge to the Future; With his new finale for Puccini's *Turandot*, leading Italian composer Luciano Berio is reaching into the musical past to reshape Los Angeles Opera's aesthetic," *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, California: 26 May 2002), 8.

Anthony Tommasini [*New York Times*, 2002]: Berio is a modernist master 'at the cutting edge of his field'.⁶⁵

Ivan Hewett [*Guardian*, London, 2003]: Berio's highly personal modernism is amongst the radical reforming composers including Stockhausen and Boulez, who pioneered the exploration of new technical resources, and extended Schoenberg's serial principle.⁶⁶

Geoffrey Norris [*Daily Telegraph*, London, 2004], Berio's music can simultaneously pose worthwhile challenges to the ear and intellect, yet be pleasant to listen to.⁶⁷

Berio asserts his aesthetic differentiation from his high modernist counterparts by forging an individualist approach to his chamber music compositions. His challenging of the barriers of 'high' and 'low' art forms, avoidance of entirely serial approaches, employment of musical quotations and references to the music of many traditions and cultures, choice of cultural, social, and political contexts for his music, and his exploration of new technologies epitomize Berio's rejection in his chamber works of elitism and overt abstraction.

4.1.3: Critics' scathing commentary on Berio's *Laborintus II* and *Voci*

Musical works present for the listener a wide range of meanings and emotions, and different meanings do not necessarily result in contradiction. Hans Robert Jauss explains that literary communication 'opens up a dialogue, in which the only criterion for truth or falsity depends on whether significance is capable of further developing the inexhaustible meaning of the

⁶⁵ Anthony Tommasini, "Well Balanced On a Pianistic Cutting Edge" *New York Times* (New York: 26 November, 2002), E. 3.

⁶⁶ Hewett, "Luciano Berio: Composer whose highly personal modernism embraced theatre, language and new sonorities," 23.

⁶⁷ Geoffrey Norris, "Challenging Charm," *Daily Telegraph* (London, United Kingdom: 20 April 2004), 17.

work of art'.⁶⁸ To derive meaning from a musical work requires critical thinking on the part of the reviewer and reader. Critical thinking is a process that develops a flexible and responsive openness of mind, conceptual sophistication in argument, and an ability to engage in dialogue with past and present cultural values.⁶⁹

In the context of modernist music, to capture a receptive reader base, a critic needs to develop incisive and objective ways to articulate aspects of musical modernism. A music critic also needs to assume the position of being more knowledgeable, discerning, coherent and articulate than the average reader. As James Ley explains, the necessary attributes of a literary critic aptly apply to the music critic:

The critic is the person who takes the 'inevitable' critical impulse and performs the secondary action of publicly articulating his ideas. He addresses his audience as an individual and thus faces the problem of presenting his views – which extend beyond merely aesthetic questions to touch on social, political, philosophical, psychological and theological issues – in an effective manner. He must individuate his voice, find a way to cut through, to project his ideas with authority. In his engagement with the modern agora, he embodies the problem of the enfranchised individual who must address the particularities of his immediate cultural context while remaining apart from the context, who must find a way to negotiate the tension between his own sense of personal conviction and the destabilizing cultural forces and shifting values of modern secular society.⁷⁰

Therefore, music critics need accurately to describe and interpret a piece within their own conceptual parameters, then evaluate the work within current cultural values, beliefs and perceptions. During the mid-late twentieth century, personal biases and prejudices shaped a select number of newspaper music critics' commentary. Berio was sceptical of critics who did not 'courageously and responsibly' help people's taste and choice evolve.⁷¹

⁶⁸ Hans Robert Jauss, "The Identity of the Poetic Text in the Changing Horizon of Understanding," in *Reception Study: From Literary Theory to Cultural Studies*, eds. James L. Machor and Philip Goldstein, New York and London: Routledge, 2001, 27.

⁶⁹ Karen Elaine Smyth, "Enhancing the agency of the listener: introducing reception theory in a lecture," *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 33, 2 (May 2009), 132.

⁷⁰ James Ley, *The Critic in the Modern World: Public Criticism from Samuel Johnson to James Wood*, Bloomsbury Publishing: New York, 2014, 2.

⁷¹ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 35.

Carter concedes that North American critics of the 1980s showed little interest in his string quartet music. These quartets illustrate a fusion of North American ultra-modernist ideas with some modernist European developments, most notably, the primacy of rhythm. For instance, Carter's application of metric modulation enables the music to move from one tempo to another by changing the time signature and redivision of the beat.⁷² Carter claims that if these quartets had been presented in New York during the 1980s, 'I doubt if I would have had one good review'.⁷³ Edward Rothstein of the *New York Times* acknowledges that even toward the end of the twentieth century, the music of modernist composers remained 'stubbornly unfamiliar'.⁷⁴

The following reviews highlight the limited perspective of Berio's works as described by North American critics Albert Goldberg and Donal Henahan during the 1960s and the latter part of the 1980s. Goldberg and Henahan worked respectively for the *Los Angeles Times* and the *New York Times*: both newspapers have credible reputations and a wide reader base. Goldberg is a discerning Romanticist and prefers the music of composers such as Aaron Copland, Roy Harris, Samuel Barber and Will Schuman and he 'publicly ridiculed' the modernist aesthetic.⁷⁵ Goldberg shows very little interest in tape-generated music. Kuo's account of Goldberg's review of 1960 for the performance of Berio's *Thema Omaggio (Omaggio a Joyce)* highlights that he 'belittled and satirized the use of extended performance techniques and electronic sounds'.⁷⁶ In fact, Goldberg categorically disapproves of the European modernist developments among contemporary North American composers adopted by Carter and Babbitt. In an inflammatory interview of 1986, Goldberg stated that these types of composers 'subscribe almost exclusively to the faceless international formulas ordained by Schoenberg,

⁷² Jonathan W. Bernard, "The Evolution of Elliott Carter's Rhythmic Practice," *Perspectives of New Music* 26, 2 (Summer 1988), 168.

⁷³ Duffie, A Conversation with Carter.

⁷⁴ Edward Rothstein, "Review/Music, Arditti String Quartet in a Disruptive Mode," *New York Times* (New York: 1 December 1992), C. 13.

⁷⁵ Martin Bernheimer, "Albert Goldberg: An Appreciation," *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, California: 6 February 1990), F. 1.

⁷⁶ Kuo, "Composing American Individualism: Luciano Berio in the United States, 1960— 1971," 10.

Berg, and Webern and not to mention Boulez and Stockhausen'.⁷⁷ Goldberg argues that these composers categorise Nationalism as well as Romanticism as 'dirty word[s]'.⁷⁸

In the following review of Boris Berman's performance of 1987 (which included works by a range of modernist composers), Goldberg, again, echoed the same type of prejudices:

The innate virtuosity began to flash in Berio's long and repetitious *Sequenza IV*, one of those things that attracts at first and bores by the end. Lukas Foss' 1981 *Solo*, his first piano piece since 1953, is in much the same category – ingenious, clever, modish, but finally tiresome. After this relentless modernity, two of Shostakovich's *Preludes* and *Fuges*, from Opus 87, seemed nothing less than heavenly in their orderly way, evoking reposeful tone and contrapuntal dexterity. It remained for Prokofiev's *Sonata* No. 7 to reach an orgiastic climax, pure Prokofiev in its sardonic humor, its tender lyricism and the frenetic abandon of the final *Toccata*.⁷⁹

Likewise, Henahan's predilection for neo-Romantic styles is evidenced by his critical acclaim of Barber's music 'which audiences could find congenial even at first hearing'.⁸⁰ Further, Henahan criticises the avant-garde circles for their unwarranted 'disdain' of Barber's musical aesthetic.⁸¹ In the following quote of 1986, Henahan openly attacked the experimental nature of Berio's *Laborinus II*, presenting an unconstructive and disapproving tone to the reader:

In addition to coordinated hand clapping and shouting, vocal gymnastics by the soloists and angry outcries from the instruments spread out across the stage, there was a long electronic episode in a technologically primitive idiom that merely slowed down an already plodding piece.⁸²

⁷⁷ Albert Goldberg, "Huneker: A Critic Remembered," *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles: 8 June 1986), Q. 51.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, Q. 51.

⁷⁹ Albert Goldberg, "Russian-trained Pianist: Boris Berman In Twentieth-century Works," *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, California: 24 April 1987), 10.

⁸⁰ Donal Henahan, "Samuel Barber, Composer, Dead; Twice Winner of Pulitzer Prize," *New York Times* (New York: 24 January 1981), C. 14.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, C. 14.

⁸² Donal Henahan, "Music: *Horizon's 86* Offers Berio Program," *New York Times* (New York: 3 June 1986), C. 14. [Performed by members of Speculum Musicae and conducted by Berio, Avery Fisher Hall].

Helen Davidson's review of 2014 also provides a description of *Laborinus II*; however, the tone, in contrast, is approving:

For much of the piece a frenetic, panicked cacophony of instruments, screaming, singing, muttering and booming turned the recital hall into an oppressive and chaotic auditory nightmare—and it was fantastic.⁸³

In 1986 Henahan also scathingly comments that Berio's *Voci* is among the decade's most 'ineffectual' compositions, describing the viola part as 'monotonous' and 'elementary'.⁸⁴ Henahan's expectation of the work appears to be along the lines of easily identifiable Sicilian folk songs that relate to work, love, lullabies or 'street cries' as he claims that no such associations were audible:

At several points, one could detect something like metamelodies, but they quickly were buried by Mr. Berio's over elaborate compositional devices. In this piece, at least, the composer's expressed aim of contributing to an interest in Sicilian folklore would seem to be a forlorn hope.⁸⁵

Sicily is located in the central Mediterranean Sea, south of the Italian Peninsular and is an autonomous region of Italy with mild and wet winters and very dry hot summers. Historically, Sicily has connections not only with mainland Italy, but also with ancient Greek and Arab cultures as evidenced by the modal melodies of the island's traditional folk songs. The psyche of many Sicilians is shaped with the presence and unpredictability of Europe's tallest active volcano —Mount Etna. The later critical reception of *Voci* demonstrates that reviewers understand the ways in which Berio evokes Sicily's climate, geography, culture and psyche. Take, for example, Geoffry Norris's review of Kim Kashkashian's recording of *Voci* that was released in 2002, in which he explains to the reader that folk music, is the basis for the composition but it does not portray a 'postcard' picture of Sicily:

⁸³ Helen Davidson, "Hurricane Transcriptions/Laborintus II," *Guardian* <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/australia-culture-blog/2014/jan/17/hurricane-transcriptionslaborintus-ii-review> (accessed 1 December 2014).

⁸⁴ Henahan, "Concert: Berio Conducts Berio," C. 27.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, C. 27.

Voci is a picture of Sicily, not a postcard in the sense that anything is clear-cut, but a shifting kaleidoscope of sounds and images that exude Sicilian heat, brooding, joy and sorrow.⁸⁶

In the following excerpt (See Musical example 10: *Voci*, staves 1—2),⁸⁷ in lieu of a singer, Berio chooses the solo viola to assume the folk song. The viola begins the modal melody with characteristic *appoggiaturas* (E sharp 4—F4; B sharp 4—C4) and then the pitch material moves predominantly in a chromatic and stepwise motion with occasional intervals of a third or sevenths. The player needs to place the bow near the bridge of the viola so as to bring out the higher harmonics that, in turn, produce the typical nasal tone quality of a Sicilian folk singer. This timbre in culmination with the long sustained pitches of the first viola (F4) and second viola (G3); the quarter tone oscillations in percussion I and the sonorous 'bell' like sounds of percussion II evoke the Sicilian heat.

⁸⁶ Geoffrey Norris, "Challenging Charm," *Daily Telegraph* (London, United Kingdom: 20 April 2004), 17. [Kim Kashkashian (violist), the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dennis Russell Davies].

⁸⁷ Luciano Berio, *Voci* (1984), Universal Edition: 31122.

Musical example 10: *Voci*, staves 1–2

*) oscillazione di un 1/4 di tono senza cambiare posizione.
oscillate a 1/4 tone without changing position.

*) = pizz. con due dita, quasi \hat{c}
= pizz. with two fingers, almost a \hat{c}

Likewise, Anna Picard of London's *The Independent* explicates that Berio only alludes to Sicilian folk songs and explores the mixed experience of remembering, as 'shreds of orchestration add associated sensory triggers to the half-extemporized melodies'.⁸⁸ Critic for the BBC Matt Fernand suggests that the listener is 'kept in touch with the soul of the songs, their general melodic shape and emotional mood'.⁸⁹ The latter critics better argue and explain to the reader Berio's evocations of Sicily, rather than allowing personal biases and prejudices to be at the fore of the review.

⁸⁸ Anna Picard, "Discs Etc: Sicilian folk fusion—Kim Kashkashian, Luciano Berio: *Voci*," *The Independent* (London, United Kingdom: 20 January 2002), 12.

⁸⁹ Matt Fernand, "Kim Kashkashian's evocative keening sears the ears," <http://www.bbc.co.uk/music/reviews/4zbd> (accessed 24 June 2010).

4.2.1: Composers' and musicians' initiatives to establish new music ensembles

In order to draw an audience, the reputation of the talent presented in a performance is a critical factor. To convince an audience, contemporary music entails the same performance practice as traditional repertoire.⁹⁰ Musicians, therefore, need to perform regularly with people who know each other and the music intimately.⁹¹ Complex music not only requires talented musicians but also a vigorous rehearsal schedule for the preparation of a new work. For instance, Boulez explains that for the premiere of his chamber work *Le Marteau sans maître* (1955), members of the Sudwestfunk orchestra and conductor Hans Rosbaud devoted fifty rehearsals to prepare for the occasion.⁹²

In North America during the 1960s, there was a lack of highly specialised and virtuosic ensemble groups to tackle complex new works by emerging modernist composers. In turn, this shortage had repercussions on composers' output. For instance, Carter in the late 1960s was discouraged from writing vocal music, primarily because he had access mostly to 'poor singers who sang out of tune, and who couldn't keep time'.⁹³ As a solution, modernist composers took the initiative to form and prepare ensembles within academic institutions to bring their music to the public.⁹⁴ Logistically and financially, it was (and still is) easier to get a work performed by a small ensemble rather than by an orchestra. Of particular note, Berio confined most of his works of the 1950s and 1960s to smaller instrumental groups rather than branching out to large scale works that required a full orchestra.

⁹⁰ Nicholas Wroe, "Review: A life in music: 'I am not shy:' Composer and conductor Pierre Boulez has endured poisonous rows on the new music scene and vilification in the press, yet he insists that disagreement is helpful," *Guardian* (London, United Kingdom: 26 April 2008), 11.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 11

⁹³ Jonathan W. Bernard, "Interview with Elliott Carter," *Perspectives of New Music* 28, 2 (1990), 185.

⁹⁴ Ken Smith, "Speak For Yourself! A Hyper-History of American Composer-Led New Music Ensembles," <http://www.newmusicbox.org/articles/Speak-For-Yourself-A-HyperHistory-of-American-Led-New> (accessed 17 July 2013).

In 1962, Joel Krosnick, Harvey Sollberger and Charles Wuorinen established The Group for Contemporary Music at Columbia University, which later, in 1971, took residency at the Manhattan School of Music. In 1965, Berio, also, during his position at the Juilliard School, formed the Juilliard Ensemble to premiere his new works for Cathy Berberian including *Circles* as well as his *Chemins II* at Piccola Scala, Milan, Italy. Musicians, also, formed ensemble groups specifically for performing new music. Take, for example, violinist Lewis Kaplan: in 1961 he founded the Aeolian Players, which now resides at Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine. This group is dedicated to performing and to commissioning new works, which also included Berio's *O King* of 1968.

Boulez suggests that within the modernist aesthetic, 'you always need a strong personality to get things done. If you are timid and unadventurous, no matter how good your ideas, nothing happens'.⁹⁵ For instance, in 1976, the then French Minister of Culture Michel Guy and the co-founder of the London Sinfonietta, Nicholas Snowman supported Boulez to form the new music group, Ensemble InterContemporain. This ensemble further promotes new music by its annual open call for scores from composers of any age or nationality.

Since the 1960s, many new music ensembles have been established and hold esteemed reputations for their virtuosity as well as their dedication to performing and commissioning new works. Many new music ensembles also have performed and recorded Berio's works. For instance, the Arditti Quartet recorded Berio's string quartets and the personnel included violinists Irvine Arditti and Graeme Jennings, violist Ralf Ehlers and cellist Rohan de Saram. Another North American ensemble that has tackled Berio's *Naturale* is the International Contemporary Ensemble. Ensemble Intercontemporain and the London Sinfonietta are the main exponents of Berio's *Chemins* series. The London Sinfonietta commissioned *Chemins IV* and premiered this work in

⁹⁵ Wroe, "Review: A life in music: 'I am not shy:' Composer and conductor Pierre Boulez has endured poisonous rows on the new music scene and vilification in the press, yet he insists that disagreement is helpful," 11.

1975, London, with oboe soloist Heinz Holliger. In 2003, the resident ensemble at the Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester, named Musica Nova and oboist Jacqueline Leclair undertook to play *Chemins IV*.

Eliot Fisk premiered *Chemins V* for guitar and chamber orchestra, in 1992 in Bonn, with the Orchestra der Beethovenhalle. Other reputable new music ensembles include Sydney's Ensemble Offspring who have performed Berio's *Laborintus II* and Julliard's new ensemble AXIOM have presented Berio's *Corale*, *Circles* and *Points on a curve to find*. The Australian Chamber Orchestra and the New York based Ensemble Misc-en have included *Chemins IVb* in their repertoire.

Berio's chamber music works are performed by a number of high profile ensembles. The following section discusses ways in which music promoters and musicians enhance the audience reception of modernist music.

4.2.2: Berio's chamber music in the commercial music market

To vie for consumers within concert halls and the current diverse range of music delivery channels, journalist and composer Gordon Kerry stresses the importance of an administrator who 'goes in to bat for it' and 'a critic, who will try eloquently to interpret the music'.⁹⁶ Berio was observant of audiences and recognised that the average listener requires help to better understand modernist music. The composer even sought to introduce modernist music to the mainstream television audiences. Between 1971 and 1973, Berio, in collaboration with Vittoria Ottolenghi and Gianfranco Mingozzi, prepared a series of twelve broadcasts for television titled *C'e musica e Musica* (There's music and music). The aim was to introduce the average viewer to composers including Stockhausen, Bernstein, Dallapiccola, Ligeti, Mila, Copland, Nono, Messiaen, Maderna, Berberian, Cage and Boulez.⁹⁷ These

⁹⁶ Gordon Kerry, *New Classical Music: Composing Australia*, Sydney, Australia: University of New South Wales Press, 2009, 2.

⁹⁷ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 35.

are valuable media additions to promote the music of these composers, and in June 2013 Italian Television released a box set of the twelve broadcasts.⁹⁸

A number of factors determine the availability of a cultural product within the commercial market: the national idea of culture, the assumptions of academic institutions and the horizon of expectations by a person choosing to attend a particular genre of performance arts.⁹⁹ According to Berio, during the 1980s modernist music in North America was 'fairly often' performed; however, from a cultural standpoint this type of music was for the most extraneous:

In America you can feel the presence of money as a social adhesive more strongly than elsewhere—defeating attempts at political and cultural renewal, because it casts a shadow of futility and uselessness over any possibility of renewal. I believe that great scientific, technological and industrial innovations that are a constant feature of American life give an illusion of renewal, but that nothing really changes—even though these transformations impinge on a society that is culturally very richly heterogeneous.¹⁰⁰

Large venue music promoters typically react to audience tastes, and there is a prevailing culture of presenting accessible and established works that are guaranteed to be financially viable. Promoters tend to reject scheduling works that are 'too modern'.¹⁰¹ Berio acknowledges that the music industry distinguishes people according to their 'real or virtual buying power'.¹⁰² Also in an interview of 1993 with Duffie, arranged by the Public Relations Manager of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Berio disparagingly claims that programs 'must sell', as he gestures in the direction of the manager.¹⁰³

To address this issue, cellist Fred Sherry played a hand in presenting modernist music to New York audiences. In 2001, the cellist presented a festival titled 'A Great Day in New York' held at the Lincoln Centre's Alice

⁹⁸ "News," Centro Studi Luciano Berio, <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 14 January 2014).

⁹⁹ Susan Bennett, *Theatre Audiences: A theory of production and reception*, London and New York: Routledge, 1990, 94.

¹⁰⁰ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 55.

¹⁰¹ Cook, *Music: A Very Short Introduction*, 46.

¹⁰² Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 25.

¹⁰³ Duffie, A Conversation with Berio.

Tully Hall. This was a series of nine concerts each with a symposium attached, which featured living New York composers including Babbitt, Meredith Monk, Ned Rorem, Steve Reich, Charles Wuorinen and John Zorn. Sherry claims that the success of these concerts prove that New York audiences did not 'just want to hear the Trout Quintet'.¹⁰⁴ Critics also applauded this contemporary music venture.¹⁰⁵

A person's idiosyncratic prejudices and biases also determine their artistic choices. Individuals particularly respond to disciplines in which they have grown such as the classical ballet, contemporary dance, theatre, opera, chamber music, or symphonic performances. In North America, Britain and Australia the proportion of the population that purchases tickets for cultural events is substantially higher for middle-aged, high income, high education, professional, managerial and white-collar groups.¹⁰⁶ Therefore, when attending a concert or play, in New York, London or Sydney, you are likely to be sitting among a group of people whose financial status, education and occupation are similar.¹⁰⁷ Urban studies theorist Richard Florida describes the contemporary audiences of North America, and arguably the United Kingdom and Australia, as the 'new creative class':

A fast-growing, highly educated, and well-paid segment of the workforce on whose efforts corporate profits and economic growth increasingly depend. Members of the creative class do a wide variety of work in a wide variety of industries – from technology to entertainment, journalism to finance, high-end manufacturing to the arts. They do not consciously think of themselves as a class. Yet they share a common ethos that values creativity, individuality, difference, and merit.¹⁰⁸

Both music administrators and promoters of the early twenty-first century, concede that new music attracts the press and new funding as well as adds a

¹⁰⁴ Fred Sherry, "Never Standing Still," *Contemporary Music Review*, 21, 1 (2002), 94.

¹⁰⁵ James R. Oestreich "Snapshot of a City's Composers." *New York Times* (New York: 12 January 2001), E.1: 1.

¹⁰⁶ Charles David Throsby, Glenn Withers, *The Economics of the Performing Arts*, Melbourne, Australia: Edward Arnold, 1979, 96.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 100—101.

¹⁰⁸ Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Classes: And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure and Everyday Life*, New York: Basic Books, 2002, 167.

more general *caché* to a concert program.¹⁰⁹ However, promoters' preoccupation with financial returns and the lack of community support is an ongoing consideration. Take, for example, Monday Evening Concerts was on the verge of closure in 2005 because of its low budget, low profile and small audiences.¹¹⁰ Artistic Director of London's South Bank Centre Jude Kelly admits that the industry promoters are, in part, to blame for the lack of support in encouraging mainstream audiences to modernist music:

To some extent, those of us who stage classical music must take some of the blame for keeping the concert hall a place of nineteenth century ritual: the formal dress of the orchestras.¹¹¹

To appeal to younger audiences and disband elitism, many new music ensembles choose more informal, modern designer concert attire instead of the traditional coat and tails. Likewise, audiences today do not have to conform to the formal dress code of the nineteenth century. Artistic Director of Opera Australia Lyndon Terracini suggests to further break down the barriers of elitism associated with modernist music ensemble groups should stage events at informal venues.¹¹² These may include small community theatres and halls, commercial art galleries or churches that also are more intimate settings for chamber music concerts.

The ongoing struggle to attract new audiences appears endemic. In 2013, Kelly concedes that much of 'contemporary music is difficult; to the ear steeped in classical harmony it can even be painful. With so little help offered to audiences to come to terms with it, who can blame them for staying away?'¹¹³ Kelly admits that the industry promoters also are in part, to blame for the 'reverential atmosphere' of the concert hall, and the mystique of the maestro.¹¹⁴ To address these types of negative responses to modernist

¹⁰⁹ Sherry, "Never standing still," 94.

¹¹⁰ Richard S. Ginell, "Los Angeles: Monday Evening Concerts Face the Future," <http://www.newmusicbox.org/articles/Los-Angeles-Monday-Evening-Concerts-Face-The-Future/> (accessed 26 July 2013).

¹¹¹ Jude Kelly, "The Thrill of shining new light on classical music," *Standard* (16 December 2013), 15.

¹¹² Lyndon Terracini. "Bravely Demanding New Australian Music," *Sounds Australian* 63 (2004), 49.

¹¹³ Kelly, "The thrill of shining new light on classical music," 15.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 15.

music, Kelly suggests that we need to discuss and contextualise the genre in a similar way to the visual arts and literature:

In art appreciation, context is critical. The visual arts, through analysis of their social and cultural background by education, commentary and wonderful mass media events such as Robert Hughes's *Shock of the New*, have regularly had their context explained. Literature speaks in its own environment. But contemporary classical music, from which extracting meaning is most elusive of all, has had too little public analysis, despite wonderful work over the years by top ensembles, venues and individuals.¹¹⁵

Dusman also stresses that 'through thoughtful listening and languaging, the difficult has become comprehensible'.¹¹⁶ To heighten audience understanding of complex modernist works, Kelly sought an innovative approach to the South Bank Centre festival entitled 'The Rest Is Noise.' In thirteen weekends throughout 2013, the festival presented works by many modernist composers including Berio, Schoenberg, Ligeti and Nancarrow. Kelly also included talks from Shirley Williams on twentieth-century nationalism, Jocelyn Bell Burnell on space and time; Robert Elms discussing mods, Lisa Appigeniesi on Freud, Marcus Du Sautoy on maths and probability theory, Angela Davis discussed the civil rights movement and Orlando Figes on repression of Russians under Stalinism.¹¹⁷ These lectures, describing the social, aesthetic and political contexts in which modernist music was produced, were a way in which Kelly helped the London audiences better understand not just 'what you're about to hear but why it sounds the way it does'.¹¹⁸

Modernist composers understood that their music was and still is a niche product. As Nicholas Cook suggests, the difference is the size of the niche, and the degree of economic leverage associated with it.¹¹⁹ From the 1970s in the United Kingdom there was a surge of interest in Berio's music with

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 15.

¹¹⁶ Dusman, "Unheard-of: Music as Performance and the Reception of the New," 135.

¹¹⁷ Kelly, "The thrill of shining new light on classical music," 15.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 15.

¹¹⁹ Cook, *Music, Imagination and Culture*, 47—48.

performances often included in the British Broadcasting Corporation Proms season.¹²⁰ The South Bank Centre even co-commissioned Berio's *Notturmo* with the Internationale Musikforschungsgesellschaft/ Konzerthaus Wien. The following table shows the performances of Berio's chamber music works for the BBC Proms.

Table 1: Berio's chamber music performances for BBC Chamber Music Proms¹²¹

Year	Work	Instruments
1971	<i>Laborintus II</i>	voices, eight actors, one speaker, instruments and tape
1974/1988	<i>Recital I</i> (for Cathy)	mezzo-soprano and seventeen instruments
1976/ 2003	<i>Chemins IV</i>	soprano saxophone and eleven strings
1979/ 1987	<i>Chemins II</i>	viola and nine instruments
1985	<i>Corale</i>	violin, two horns and strings
1986	<i>Folk Songs</i>	mezzo-soprano and seven instruments
2000	<i>Opus Number Zoo</i>	wind quintet
2000	<i>Cries of London</i>	two contraltos, tenor, two baritones and bass
2013	<i>O King</i>	mezzo-soprano, flute, clarinet, piano, violin and cello

In addition to the above performances, in 1994, Eliot Fisk premiered *Chemins V* with the London Sinfonietta for South Bank's 'Berio *Renderings*' festival. Recently, Berio's *Laborintus II* featured at the Sydney Festival of 2014; *Folk Songs*, *O King* and *Opus Zoo* were presented at the University of Arizona Music Festival of 2015.

¹²⁰ Alasdair Steven, "Obituary: Luciano Berio," *Scotsman* (Edinburgh, United Kingdom: 29 May 2003), 20.

¹²¹ British Broadcasting Corporation Proms –Works: <http://www.bbc.uk/proms/events/composers/d61e77cc-80b3-4586-bf4e-91fe7f131> (accessed 15 March 2015).

Berio's chamber music works, therefore, continue to be performed steadily throughout the English-speaking countries. These performances show that Berio's 'complex' and 'accessible' works both feature on the concert platform aimed at mainstream audiences.

Conclusion

Critics and musicologists alike agree that many of Berio's works are accessible to mainstream audiences. In fusing high art and the vernacular, in using novel instrumental combinations, social commentary and the lyrical qualities within the music, Berio repudiates high modernism aesthetics.

On a commercial level, the critics' role is to supply information to the music consumer without personal biases, prejudices or cultural intimidation. Further, the role of critics is to enhance the reception of, shape public opinions on and encourage their readers to listen to modernist music. The hostile reactions to musical modernism by Goldberg and Henahan did little to promote the artistic integrity of *Laborintus II* and *Voci*. However, by the twenty-first century, attitudes towards the merits of these works, and modernist music in general, did change. The continued performances and recordings of Berio's works by high profile soloists and ensembles will generate further reappraisal and revaluation of the composer's chamber music.

CHAPTER 5

Evaluating the Critical Reception of Berio's Orchestral Works within Patrick Juslin's Code Levels

Berio is 'the perfect avant-gardist for people who normally abhor the avant-garde.'

—Martin Bernheimer (*New York Times*, 1981)¹

This chapter evaluates the critical reception of Berio's orchestral works. While all of Berio's works that I address in this thesis present challenges to listeners attuned to tonal repertoires of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the critics cited in this study convey an appreciation of the expressive and emotional content in Berio's *Alternatim* (1977), *Ekphrasis* (1996), *Formazioni* (1987) *Epiphanies* (voice and orchestra, 1991), *Bewegung* (1971), *Sinfonia* (for eight voices and orchestra, 1968), *Coro* (for forty voices and instruments, 1975) and *Stanza* (for baritone, three small male choirs and orchestra, 2003).

This chapter examines the critical reception of Berio's works within the framework of psychologist Patrick Juslin's three primary levels for decoding emotional expressiveness in music— iconic, intrinsic and associative code levels.² On the part of the listener, Juslin bases his research on the effects of functional tonal repertoires. I argue that Juslin's code levels are equally applicable to the listeners of Berio's music. The critical reception I draw from major newspapers of North America, the United Kingdom and Australia. Another area of study concerns critics' appraisal of Berio's music and their perceptions as to which of the works will claim an important position within the orchestral repertoire of the twenty-first century.

¹ Martin Bernheimer, "Berio Day/ New York Philharmonic," *Financial Times* (New York: 6 February 2008), 17.

² Patrick N. Juslin, "What does music express? Basic emotions and beyond," *Frontiers in Psychology*, 4 (September 2013), 203.

An integral part for continuing critical reception is the ongoing public performances of Berio's music. This study examines Berio's reputation among promoters and orchestral administrators. A further area of study in this chapter relates to the ways concert promoters of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries introduced and shaped the reception of Berio's works.

5.1.1: Iconic, intrinsic and associative code levels in Berio's orchestral works

For the listener, music is expressive of motion, tension, human characters, identity, beauty, religious faith and social conditions.³ Jerrold Levinson argues that 'intelligible music stands to literal thinking in precisely the same relation as intelligible verbal discourse'.⁴ Along the same lines, Juslin claims that the emotional dimension of music comes to the fore through three primary levels of coding —iconic, intrinsic and associative.⁵ The first level of iconic coding is linked to the innate and universal 'affect programs' for human vocal expression of emotions. Within this framework, expressions are involuntary and emotion-specific with the physiological changes associated with the innate aspects of voice production.⁶ Iconically coded expressions, therefore, are intimately related to our fundamental levels of emotions such as happiness, sadness or anger.

The research undertaken to confirm this hypothesis was by way of interviewing a range of listeners' responses to the emotions experienced in selected recordings of traditional classical music. An outcome of this study was that listeners perceived the fundamental emotions of happiness, sadness, anger, fear, love, anxiety, calm, tension, humour and tenderness that correlated to score indications: *dolce*— tenderness; *expressive*— desire;

³ Ibid., 203.

⁴ Jerrold Levinson, "Musical Thinking," *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* 27, 1 (August 2003), 68.

⁵ Juslin, "What does music express? Basic emotions and beyond," 203.

⁶ Ibid., 205.

furioso— anger; *grave* — sadness; *scherzando*— happiness; *spiritoso*— surprise; *temoros*— anxiety and fear.⁷ The decoding of these emotions in the music was swift and did not require musical training.⁸ This is mainly due to the fact that the decoding of fundamental emotions in music performance involves many of the same regions in the brain as the perception of fundamental emotions in vocal expression.⁹ On this basis of evolutionary origin, iconic coding has for the most a uniform impact on musical expression. However, the listener’s ability to decode fundamental emotions in music performance is specifically correlated to the measure of her/his emotional intelligence.¹⁰

The iconic coding level of musical expression can be extended, qualified or even modified by additional of intrinsic coding, which involves an internal syntactic relationship with the music itself.¹¹ Along the lines of music theory, this references tonal or harmonic motion and gravitational forces between notes and chords which create: tension—release— climax—repose— relaxation.¹² Lawrence Meyer’s well known book *Emotion and Meaning in Music* focuses primarily on how the thwarting of musical expression might arouse emotion in listeners.¹³ By shifting the levels of tension, arousal and stability in music may help to express more complex, time dependent emotions such as ‘apprehension’ and ‘hope’.¹⁴ This type of coding, also, requires longer musical excerpts in order to be effective and its recognition will depend on having the necessary knowledge and experience.¹⁵

⁷ Ibid., 203.

⁸ Ibid., 203.

⁹ Ibid., 203.

¹⁰ Joel E. Resnicow, Peter Salovey and Bruno H. Repp, “Is Recognition of Emotion in Music Performance an Aspect of Emotional Intelligence,” *Music Perspectives* 22, 1 (Fall 2004), 150.

¹¹ Juslin, “What does music express? Basic emotions and beyond,” 210—211.

¹² Ibid., 210.

¹³ Lawrence B. Meyer, *Emotion and Meaning in Music*, Chicago, Illinois: Chicago University Press, 1956.

¹⁴ Ibid., 29.

¹⁵ Ibid., 41—42.

Music may also be perceived as expressing emotions through associative coding—a performance of music may be realised as expressive of a specific emotion because a melody or instrumental timbre has been repeatedly and arbitrarily paired with other meaningful stimuli or events in the past.¹⁶ For instance, we may associate the organ with church music and the saxophone with jazz music. Listeners also may recognise more personal complex emotions in music that are associated with, for example, a personal tragedy. Hence, emotional expression through associative coding will be more context— and/ or listener—dependent. Beyond a certain level, the associations will be personal.¹⁷ Hence, at the iconic level, basic emotions in everyday vocal production and musical expression are comparatively similar. The divergence from this code level enables listeners to perceive more complex and meaningful personal emotions with the additional layers of intrinsic and associate codings.

The following critical reception demonstrates that the iconic coding in Berio's *Alternatim* is direct. For both critics, the changes in tempi, dynamics and textural density within the music arouse similar sentiments. In the first musical excerpt (see Musical example 11: bars 1—5),¹⁸ the listener immediately senses calm by the slow tempo (marked MM crotchet equals 64), long note durations that are further sustained by the use of tie sign markings, the soft dynamics in both the clarinet (marked *pp—p—mf—decrescendo*) and the viola (marked *pp—p—crescendo—mf—decrescendo*) and relatively static pitch structure in both instruments.

¹⁶ Juslin, "What does music express? Basic emotions and beyond," 210.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 210.

¹⁸ Luciano Berio, *Alternatim* (1977), Universal Edition: 31439.

Musical example 11: *Alternatim* Introduction, bars 1–5

The image shows a musical score for two instruments: Clarinetto solo and Viola sola. The Clarinetto solo part is written in 5/4 time with a tempo marking of ♩ = 64. The Viola sola part is written in 4/4 time. The score includes dynamic markings such as *pp*, *p*, and *mf*, and performance instructions like *sord.* (sordina). There are also some markings above the staff, possibly indicating breath marks or phrasing, such as $\Delta \times 6$, $\Delta \times 5$, $\Delta \times 5$, and $\Delta \times 4$.

The expressive dimension of this work is also differentiated by the soloist's interaction with the orchestra. Through recognisable thematic figures, the clarinet and viola alternate with the orchestra to emerge from and subside in the orchestral texture. Greg Sandow suggests that Berio's melodies are 'freely sculpted' and do not conform to tradition either in their 'harmony or in their elusive rhythm'. Further the clarinet and viola 'seesaw on a random breeze, the musical balance tilting toward one, then to the other'.¹⁹ Bernard Holland likens the interaction of the viola and clarinet to a 'bold conversation' that 'argue antiphonally gradually setting off a complex series of questions and answers in the larger orchestral body'.²⁰

In the following excerpt (see Musical example 12: *Alternatim* end of section 10 and beginning of section 11), the clarinet and viola subside and give way to the orchestra. The culmination of the fast semiquaver motion (marked *sempre ff e molto staccato*), the wide traversing melodic line, the sudden hesitations (marked quaver and crotchet rests), the high registers of the wind and brass sections as well as the flurry of orchestral sounds around a single pitch (E4 in flutes) generate an impression of 'excitement'. Holland implies that this sensation created by the 'dense, often strident textures' emerge 'clearly'.²¹ Sandow also, experiences a 'sense of deep emotion' in this work by the 'easy sliding of the soloists, massed clouds of sound from the

¹⁹ Greg Sandow, "Listening With Innocent Ears," *Wall Street Journal* (New York: 6 November 1997), 1.

²⁰ Bernard Holland, "Music Review; Engaging the Listener in a Bold Conversation," *New York Times* (New York: 24 October 1997), E. 7.

²¹ *Ibid.*, E. 7.

orchestra, abrupt jagged leaps of melody, sudden hesitations, or places where the music swirls around a single note'.²²

²² Sandow, "Listening With Innocent Ears," 1.

Musical example 12: *Alternatim* end section 10, beginning section 11

2

11

1^a Fl.

2^a Fl.

3^a Fl.

4^a Fl.

Ob.

il. picc.

1^a Cl.

2^a Cl.

3^a Cl.

Cl. b.

Sax. s.

Sax. a.

Fg.

1^a Tr.

2^a Tr.

Cor.

Ton.

Tuba

Cl. solo

fa. solo

Vi. I
div. a. 2

Vi. II
div. a. 2

Via.
div. a. 2

Vc.
div. a. 2

Cb.

sempre *ff* e molto stacc.

sfz

The critical reception of the following works also supports the argument that listeners easily decode modes of expressiveness within Berio's music at an iconic level, despite the work's textural, harmonic and rhythmic complexities. Jan Breslauer attributes this to the mostly lyrical quality of the music that, in turn, is accessible to the untrained ear.²³ George Flynn even implies that the iconic level is all that is required to appreciate Berio's works:

The listener need not chase tone rows, intervals, durational patterns, or otherwise discover and keep track of pre-compositional production plan. Such denotative activity can only damage the listener's primary, poetic responsibility to the music.²⁴

Take, for example, the continuous motion of song-like harmonic progressions of *Ekphrasis*, in which certain intervals and motives recur. Andrew Clements describes this as 'weightless and hypnotically beautiful as sheer sound';²⁵ while Michael Paoletta experiences the music as hanging 'in the air like beautifully fluid sonic architecture'.²⁶

Contrary to Flynn's evaluation, certain works do stimulate a more analytic type of listening. For instance, in *Formazioni* the instrumental interplay includes a group of five clarinets and contrabassoons at the centre of the stage, surrounded by strings with the bass instruments to the front of the stage. Around this central core the brass occupy the stage at the extreme right and left perimeters of the stage, while the flutes are set amidst the violins. These spatial arrangements create an echo-effect between the massive orchestral sound blocks and the chamber-like gestures. The instrumental redistributions also bring to the fore the structural elements of the work. The formations disperse, and as the textures become dense and

²³ Jan Breslauer, "Bridge to the Future; With his new finale for Puccini's *Turandot*, leading Italian composer Luciano Berio is reaching into the musical past to reshape Los Angeles Opera's aesthetic," *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, California: 26 May 2002), 8.

²⁴ Flynn, "Listening to Berio's Music," 393.

²⁵ Andrew Clements, "Friday Review: Past Master: Classical CD Releases: Luciano Berio could hardly be more different from Brahms and Schubert—but somehow they shake hands across the centuries," *Guardian* (London, United Kingdom: 8 July 2005), 19.

²⁶ Michael Paoletta, "Luciano Berio: *Ekphrasis*, *Coro*: Frankfurt Radio Orchestra/Bavarian Radio Choir, Luciano Berio and Lucas Vis," *Billboard* 112, 24 (Nielsen Business Media, New York: 10 June 2000), 31.

the simultaneous layers of musical activity are differentiated by their different trajectories around the ensemble.²⁷ Meirion Bowen argues that these sonic layers inadvertently stimulate a ‘more analytic kind of listening’.²⁸

The critical reception of *Epiphanies* suggests that the associative coding in texts fragments by Bertolt Brecht, James Joyce, Antonio Machado, Marcel Proust, Edoardo Sanguineti and Claude Simon are a meaningful source of expression within the music. For Bowen, this work is ‘dream-like’ and the text ‘weaves a spell’, but then is shattered in the Brecht movement, which interposes ‘to bring us back to hard reality’.²⁹ Another example is the continuous sound flow of repeated motivic fragments, amid a kaleidoscope changing orchestral timbres of *Bewegung*. Elliott Schwartz associates this work with the minimalist techniques of Steve Reich and Terry Riley. For this critic, Berio’s deployment of repetitive minimum harmonic material creates the sensation of ‘quasi-mystical’ sonorities.³⁰

Associative coding is the basis of Edward Rothstein’s interpretation for *Sinfonia*. The critic states that this work is about the ‘modern age with all its violence and alienation—a crisis in Western society’.³¹ The associative coding rouses more complex emotions associated with tragic events. Take, for example, the second movement entitled *O King*: Rothstein’s reference to ‘violence’ and ‘alienation’ arouses a deep emotional response to the tumultuous events of the 1960s, in particular, the assassination of civil rights leader Martin Luther King. North Americans during the 1960s experienced one of the most violent periods in their history. The arrest of a drunk driver from the Watts section of Los Angeles (11 August 1965) triggered a riot that

²⁷ Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 88.

²⁸ Meirion Bowen, “Articles & Publications: Luciano Berio,” <http://www.meirion-bowen.com/martberio.htm> (Accessed 27 April 2010).

²⁹ Meirion Bowen, “Arts: Berio—Festival Hall,” *Guardian* (London, United Kingdom: 11 October 1990), 26.

³⁰ Elliott Schwartz, “Current Chronicle,” *The Musical Quarterly* 58, 4 (October 1972), 655.

³¹ Edward Rothstein, “Concert: Berio *Sinfonia*,” *New York Times* (New York: 29 August 1982), 60.

initially lasted five days and took the lives of thirty-four people.³² During this period, African American rioters looted and set fire to stores while bystanders chanted the slogan of a popular disc jockey, 'Burn, Baby Burn'.³³ In the following three years, more than three hundred riots throughout the urban cities across North America resulted in the further deaths of two hundred people as well as the destruction of several thousand businesses.³⁴

Critics describe this movement as 'elegiac and haunting'³⁵ and immensely 'vivid'.³⁶ Therefore, on an iconic level, the melancholy is unambiguous. The text consists of the words 'O Martin Luther King', for which the soprano enunciates first the vowels, and then the consonants, singing the full text only in the final bars. The instruments echo the soprano line, creating a resonant sound around the voice, while the piano evokes 'violence' and 'brutality' with a series of isolated accents. In the following excerpt (see Musical example 13: *Sinfonia*, Movement II *O King*, [G] bars 1—9, marked *Immobile e lontano*),³⁷ is dominated by very soft dynamic levels. Soprano 1 sings the pitches which flow in a downward motion (a metaphor for death) and the full text 'Martin Luther King' we hear only in the conclusion of the movement. The syllables are divided among the soprano, alto, tenor and bass (marked *pp*).

³² Jonathan J. Bean, "Burn, Baby, Burn: Small Business in the Urban Riots of the 1960s." *Independent Review* 5, 2 (fall, 2000), 165.

³³ *Ibid.*, 165.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 165.

³⁵ Allan Kozinn, "Concert of Italian Works," *New York Times* (New York: 20 September 1989), 23.

³⁶ Bernard Holland, "Pierre Boulez Conducts a History Lesson," *New York Times* (New York: 20 June 1988), C. 15.

³⁷ Luciano Berio, *Sinfonia* (1968) Universal Edition: 13783.

Musical example 13: *Sinfonia*, Movement II, *O King*, [G] bars 1—9

The musical score is arranged in a standard orchestral layout. At the top, there are staves for strings (Violins I, Violins II, Violas, Cellos, and Double Basses). Below these are staves for woodwinds (Flutes, Oboes, Clarinets, Bassoons) and brass (Trumpets, Trombones, and Tuba/Euphonium). The piano part is shown in grand staff notation. The vocal soloists' parts are at the bottom, with lyrics written below the notes. The lyrics are: "Mar - tin Lu - ther King". The score includes various dynamic markings such as *p*, *pp*, *f*, and *mf*. There are also performance instructions like "2 Trd." and "3". The score is divided into sections with time signatures: 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4. A tempo marking of ♩ = 60 is present. The section is labeled with a box containing the letter "G".

The integration of intrinsic and associate codes demonstrates another level of emotional expression in Berio's *Sinfonia*, Part III entitled *In Ruhig Fließender Bewegung* (with quietly flowing movements).³⁸ The associative code discussed in this example is the third movement of Mahler's Second Symphony in C minor, which Berio places within a comparable position in *Sinfonia*. Mahler explores what 'humor' might be in instrumental music, without the suggestion of a text.³⁹ Mahler foregrounds an individual orchestral voice—an E flat clarinet, whose *ostinato* gesture (marked *mit Humor*) is distorted in pitch and register. In the introductory measures, the timbre of the contra-bassoon and cor anglais contribute to a non-homogeneity sonority that is accentuated by the rhythmic tapping of the *Ruthe* (a switch); this *ostinato* figure is subsequently taken up by a pair of clarinets and a pair of flutes that spiral out of harmonic control.⁴⁰

Musicologists most often distinguish musical quotations in postmodernist composition as pastiche, parody or collage. Fredric Jameson defines composers who choose to parody a work as capitalising on the 'uniqueness' of a pre-existing musical style and seizing on their 'idiosyncrasies and eccentricities' to produce an imitation that mocks the original.⁴¹ In contrast, 'pastiche' is a neutral practice of such mimicry.⁴² Collage technique subverts the concept of unity within a composition by the juxtaposition of various fragmentary quotations from different musical styles.⁴³ Within this context, Berio's employs parody as the basis for his composition.

³⁸ David Osmond-Smith's *Playing on Words: A Guide to Berio's Sinfonia*, Royal Musical Association 1985, provides an in depth analysis of the ways in which Berio used the Bororo myths from Claude Lévi-Strauss' *Le cru et le cuit (The Raw and the Cooked)*, 1964) as well as providing all the source musical quotations in this work, also John Wesley Flinn's "Reconstructive Postmodernism, Quotation, and Musical Analysis: A Methodology with Reference to the Third Movement of Luciano Berio's *Sinfonia*," PhD dissertation, University of Cincinnati, 2011.

³⁹ Julian Johnson, *Mahler's Voices: Expression and Irony in the Songs and Symphonies*, New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 2009, 126.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 126.

⁴¹ Fredric Jameson, "Postmodernism and Consumer Society," *Postmodernism and Its Discontents: Theories, Practices*, ed., Ann E. Kaplan, London: Verso, 1988, 13.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 13.

⁴³ Catherine Losada, "Between Modernism and Postmodernism: Strands of Continuity in Collage Compositions by Rochberg, Berio and Zimmermann," *Music Theory Spectrum* (Spring 2009), 57.

Berio states that his intention for all his transcriptions and musical quotations was to 'share musical experiences that invite us to revise or suspend our relation with the past and to rediscover it as part of a future trajectory'.⁴⁴ Along these lines, Jonathan Kramer argues that Berio's *Sinfonia* demonstrates that the composer simultaneously embraces and repudiates music history.⁴⁵ It is notable that Berio's score indication for the introduction of Mahler's theme is also marked 'with humor'.

Within the intrinsic code level, the listener may also experience and understand finer gradations in the tension levels in the music. For instance, the emotion of 'suspense' aroused by Mahler's thematic material in C minor tonality is periodically obliterated by Berio's chromatic clusters and chromatic lines. For the listener, this aspect of the composition also creates ambiguity. Meyer states that the longer ambiguity and uncertainty persist within the music, the greater the feeling of suspense.⁴⁶ The concept of harmonic resolution arises when the music returns to the harmonic base from which it began or moves to one that was in some way implicit in the opening materials.⁴⁷ In this movement, the feeling of resolution is undermined constantly with each disappearance of Mahler's tonal gestures. In turn, for the listener, this heightens the tension levels and increases an urge towards a resolution. It is these unresolved conflicts between the two opposing sonorities that create the most expressive impact.

Within the intrinsic code level, Ivan Hewett describes the effect of the appearing and disappearing Mahler theme as an 'underground river breaking surface'.⁴⁸ For Tom Service, the Mahler theme appears through the 'cracks' of 'kaleidoscopic tumult'.⁴⁹ Take, for example, Berio's direct quote of Mahler's

⁴⁴ Berio, *Remembering the Future*, 2.

⁴⁵ Kramer, "The Nature and Origins of Musical Postmodernism," 7.

⁴⁶ Meyer, *Emotion and Meaning in Music*, 28.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 150.

⁴⁸ Hewett, "Luciano Berio: Composer whose highly personal modernism embraced theatre, language and new sonorities," 23.

⁴⁹ Tom Service, "A guide to Luciano Berio's music," <http://www.theguardian.com/music/tomserviceblog/2012/dec/10/contemporary-music-guide-luciano-berio> (accessed 2 November 2014).

thematic material (marked 'with humor') in the following excerpt (see Musical example 14: *Sinfonia III*, bars 50—61). Mahler's harmonic and melodic structure, reinforcing the tonality of C minor, is obscured by Berio's 'kaleidoscopic tumult' created by the chromatic sonority within the orchestra.

Musical example 14: *Sinfonia, III* bars 50—61

The second appearance of this theme (marked 'with humor') presents only the first six bars of the original gesture (see Musical example 15: *Sinfonia, III* bars 89-100). The remainder of the gesture is also saturated with chromatic lines.

Musical example 15: *Sinfonia, III* bars 89—100

of an 'underground river breaking surface'. This final appearance, most notably, is not marked 'with humor' (see Musical example 16: *Sinfonia, III* bars 408—427). The only remaining segments of the Mahler quote include two fragments at the beginning (staff 7) and in the middle (staff 4) of this gesture. The harmony then descends with a gesture of thirds and tritones that extend well beyond the original theme.

Musical example 16: *Sinfonia, III* bars 408—427

U
staccatissimo tutti

1
Fl. 1
2
3
Ott.
Cl. 1
2
3
Cl. picc.
Ob. 1
2
C. 1.
Sax. 4.

Tr. 1
2
3
4

Org.
II Bass.
III Celeste.

1
2
A 1
2
T 1
2
B 1
2

U

Vcl. A
Vcl. B
Vcl. C
Vcl. A
Vcl. B
Vcl. C
Cb.

This page of a musical score contains the following sections and markings:

- Woodwinds:** Flutes (Fl. 1, 2, 3), Oboes (Ob. 1, 2), Clarinets (Cl. 1, 2, 3), Clarinet in E-flat (Cl. pte.), Bassoons (Bsg. 1, 2), and Saxophones (Sax. a., Sax. b.).
- Brass:** Trumpets (Tr. 1-4), Trombones (Tbn. 1-3), and Horns (Or.).
- Drum and Percussion:** Snare drum (Sn. drum), Timpani (Timp.), and other percussion (Perc.).
- Vocal Soloists:** Soprano (S.), Alto (A.), Tenor (T.), and Bass (B.).
- String Section:** Violins (Vni A, Vni B), Viola (Vlc), Violoncello (Vcl), and Contrabass (Cb.).
- Key Markings:** A large 'V' is placed above several measures in the Flute, Clarinet, Oboe, Horn, and Violin sections.
- Dynamics and Performance Instructions:** The score includes various dynamic markings such as *ppp*, *pp*, *p*, *f*, *ff*, *mf*, *mfz*, *ffz*, *dim*, *rit*, and *legato*. Specific performance instructions include *via sord.* (mute), *arco* (arco), *div.* (divisi), *legno* (legno), and *sempre leggissimo e pp*.
- Lyrics:** The vocal soloists have the lyrics: "Ti l'am here so litto, l'see th."

In varying degrees of associative coding, Paul Griffiths, Tom Service, Clements and Meirion Bowen identify the fundamental experiences that transcend cultural distinctions, which include love, death and work, in *Coro*. The text draws on a wide range of folk poetry based on work and love, interleaved with fragments from the poem, *Residencia en la tierra* (1925—32) by Chilean poet, Pablo Neruda.⁵⁰ The North and South American, Polynesian and African folk texts are sung in literal English translations that do not necessarily shape the syntactic norms of their host language.⁵¹ Croatian texts are sung in French, Persian texts in German; however, Italian songs and a fragment from the Hebrew *Song of Songs* are sung in their original languages. With this type of approach to the original melodies, Griffiths suggests that Berio ‘invents his own folk techniques’.⁵² The synthesis of texts and musical styles Bowen describes as embracing ‘many expressive purposes polemic, ritualistic, celebratory’ that culminate in a statement of ‘rare beauty’.⁵³ Service defines *Coro* as ‘meta-world music’ and the Neruda poem as a ‘dissonant lament’.⁵⁴

As evidenced in the following critical reception, Griffiths, Service and Andrew Clements realise the associative code of ‘death’ which stirs deeper and more complex emotions. The recurring image of children killed in an air raid is depicted by Neruda’s words ‘Come see the blood in the streets’ and is characterised by blocks of chords to evoke a grave and sombre atmosphere. For Griffiths this statement runs as a thread throughout the work to evoke the feeling of ‘hopelessness’.⁵⁵ Service perceives this refrain as a ‘musical scream’.⁵⁶ The more melancholy and sombre movements of this work are

⁵⁰ Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 81.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 81.

⁵² Paul Griffiths, Liner notes to recording of Luciano Berio’s *Coro*, Cologne Radio Chorus, Cologne Radio Symphony Orchestra, Conductor, Luciano Berio, (Hamburg: Deutsche Grammophon, 471 587—2, 1980), 10.

⁵³ Meirion Bowen, “Arts: Outrage and accolade—Meirion Bowen reviews the Berio Festival at the Barbican.” *Guardian* (London, United Kingdom: 19 January 1990), 36.

⁵⁴ Service, “A guide to Luciano Berio’s music.”

⁵⁵ Griffiths, Liner notes to recording *Luciano Berio Coro*, 11.

⁵⁶ Tom Service, “London Sinfonietta/Masson: Royal Albert Hall,” *Guardian* (London, United Kingdom: 5 August 2005), 28.

juxtaposed with energetic dance songs. Take, for example, the following excerpt (see Musical example 17: *Coro*, Episode XIII, bars 1—31),⁵⁷ which is a setting of a Peruvian dancing song in both triple and duple metres.

Musical example 17: *Coro*, Episode XIII, bars 1—31

⁵⁷ Luciano Berio, *Coro* (1975), Universal Edition: 15044.

XIII

Musical score for measures 1-6. The score includes parts for Flute (1st and 2nd), Oboe, Trombone, Percussion (5 Tom-toms and Crochet), Organ, Violin (1st and 2nd), Viola, and Tuba. The vocal line features the lyrics: "wake up wake up wake up wake up wake up wake up". Performance markings include *ppp*, *mf stacc*, and *pp*. Measure numbers 1 through 6 are indicated above the staves.

Musical score for measures 7-16. The score includes parts for Flute (1st and 2nd), Oboe, Trombone, Percussion (5 Tom-toms and Crochet), Organ, Violin (1st and 2nd), Viola, and Tuba. The vocal line features the lyrics: "wake up wo - man ri - se up wo - man ri - se up wo - man wo - man". Performance markings include *ppp*, *mf stacc*, and *pp*. Measure numbers 7 through 16 are indicated above the staves.

52

17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

Fl. 1st, 2nd
Fl. 3rd, 4th

C. ing. *pp*
Cl. 1st *ppp*

T. b.

Perc.
5 Tamt. I
Crot.
5 Tamt. II
Crot.

Org.

17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

Vlc. 1st, 2nd
Vlc. 3rd, 4th

T. 1
Vc. 1st
T. 10
Vc. 4th

set up wo - man
us para ready
prece libradu
wo - man you must dance you must dance you must dance wake up wo -

25 26 27 28 29 30 31

Fl. 1st, 2nd
Fl. 3rd, 4th

Ob.
Cl. 1st

T. b.

Perc.
5 Tamt. I
Crot.
5 Tamt. II
Crot.

Org.

25 26 27 28 29 30 31

Vlc. 1st, 2nd
Vlc. 3rd, 4th

T. 9
Vc. 3rd
T. 10
Vc. 4th

wake up wo - man rise up wo - man wo - man you must dance you must dance you must dance
man

T. 8
Vc. 2nd

The text is shared among the tenor soloists who each sit with a cellist. Tenor 7 begins this section with F sharp—G (bar 2), and after seven bars he adds

the pitches C sharp —G —B flat. Tenor 10 enters (bar 18) to develop this pitch repertoire, after which Tenor 9 enters (bar 25) and expands the material even further, then Tenor 8 enters (bar 31). Service explains that the effect of the vocal and instrumental lines that appear from ‘unpredictable’ places within the orchestra ‘explode around the stage’ as each individual voice takes on the melody.⁵⁸ Clements comments that Berio’s multi-division of voices and instruments highlights how ‘text and music can be combined in original and unexpected ways’.⁵⁹

Berio also brings to the fore two alternative forms of behaviour that are diametrically opposed and that often do not blend harmoniously or polyphonically.⁶⁰ The accompanying double reeds including cor anglais (bar 18, marked *pp*) use a broader version of the same fixed pitch field. By contrast, the accompanying cellos provide an animated counterpoint that is independent of the voice’s pitches, and gong thuds (beginning at bar 2, staves 7 and 8, marked *ppp*) start each bar. Initially, the vocal lines receive heterophonic commentary from oboe or cor anglais. In the meantime, the flutter-tongue sonorities in the flutes, the muted sounds of the violas together with the electronic organ and percussion provide a sustained background to this gesture. Clements describes the effect as a ‘beguiling sound tapestry in which perspectives are constantly changing’.⁶¹ Service suggests that Berio successfully illustrates a ‘musical metaphor for togetherness, for tolerance and diversity’.⁶²

The following critical reception also demonstrates that critics understand the associative code (explicitly, death), and are aware of the intrinsic level that includes shifting levels of tension, arousal and stability in *Stanza*. The five movements of *Stanza* and authors of the poems are as follows:

⁵⁸ Service, “London Sinfonietta/Masson: Royal Albert Hall,” 28.

⁵⁹ Andrew Clements, “Come, see the blood,” *Guardian* (London, United Kingdom: 29 July 2005), 7.

⁶⁰ Griffiths, Liner notes to recording *Luciano Berio Coro*, 8.

⁶¹ Andrew Clements, “Proms: *Coro* London,” *Guardian* (London, United Kingdom: 30 July 2005), 24.

⁶² Service, “London Sinfonietta/ Masson: Royal Albert Hall,” 28.

- I Tenebrae* by Paul Celan;
- II Congedo del viaggiatore cerimonioso (The Ceremonious Traveller's Farewell)* by Giorgio Caproni;
- III* untitled poem by Edoardo Sanguineti
- IV* untitled by Alfred Brendel
- V The Battle* by Dan Pagis.

Berio explores postmodern conceptions and perceptions of God, and the idea that God is present in different situations, contexts or—mental rooms:

We are not dealing with stanzas, or strophes, with poetic composition or an old song. Rather, we are dealing with actual rooms (*stanze*) that have doors and windows, like the habitable spaces of a building. Each room is inhabited by a different poem that evokes the ironic, anguished or detached image of an unmentionable 'other' and 'other place'.⁶³

Clements clarifies that Berio's confrontation with death is 'head on or obliquely in all the poems'.⁶⁴ Marco Uvietta explicates this work as Berio's exploration of the idea of God in different situations: blasphemous in *Congedo del viaggiatore cerimonioso*, elusive in Sanguineti's third poem, ironic in Brendel's poem and guilty in *The Battle*.⁶⁵ According to Annette Morreau these poems evoke a man 'not going peacefully to his Maker'.⁶⁶

Each poem represents a different character and emotional expression. The text of the first poem deals with imagery of the Holocaust and the predominantly soft and low registers of the orchestral sonorities evoke an ominous atmosphere. In the following excerpt (see Musical example 18: *Stanza, I Tenebrae* bars 31—35),⁶⁷ at the word 'Herr' (Lord) the baritone descends from C3 to pitch A2, which establishes the pedal note for 'Herr'. This melodic descent is also a metaphor for death, which climaxes once the

⁶³ Luciano Berio, *Stanza* for baritone, three small male choirs and orchestra – Work Introduction.” Universal Edition: <http://www.universaledition.com/Luciano-Berio/composers-and-works/54/>. (Accessed 30 August 2012).

⁶⁴ Andrew Clements, “Review: Classical; Berio: Queen Elizabeth Hall, London 4/5,” *Guardian* (London, United Kingdom: 22 April 2004), 28.

⁶⁵ Marco Uvietta, “Luciano Berio, *Stanza* for baritone, three small male choirs and orchestra – Work Introduction.” Universal Edition: <http://www.universaledition.com/Luciano-Berio/composers-and-works/54/>. (Accessed 30 August 2012).

⁶⁶ Annette Morreau, “Classical: *Omaggio*: A Celebration of Luciano Berio, Royal Festival Hall,” *The Independent* (London, United Kingdom: 23 April 2004), 29.

⁶⁷ Berio, *Stanza* (2003) Universal Edition: 32653.

soloist reaches B4 (marked with an accent). Morreau describes the effect of this uttered mid-register pitch as 'chilling'.⁶⁸ Orchestral clusters and rarefied blends of timbres that support the vocal line also contribute to both the 'chilling' and grave mood of this movement.

⁶⁸ Morreau, "Classical: *Omaggio*: A Celebration of Luciano Berio, Royal Festival Hall," 29.

Musical example 18: Stanza, I Tenebrae bars 31–35

This musical score is for the 'Stanza, I Tenebrae' section, bars 31–35. It is a full orchestral score with vocal soloists. The instruments listed on the left are: Oboe (Ott.), Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet in B-flat (Cl. b.), Alto Saxophone (Sax. A.), Tenor Saxophone (Sax. T.), Bassoon (Fg.), Contrabassoon (Cb.), Trumpet (Tr.), Horn (Cor.), Trombone (Tbn.), Tuba, Glockenspiel (Glock.), Piano (Pf.), Baritone (Bar.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Via.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Double Bass (Cb.). The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (e.g., *mf*, *fff*, *ppp*), articulation (e.g., *acc.*, *rit.*), and performance instructions (e.g., *div.*, *scid.*, *arco*, *pizz.*). A box with the number '3' is placed above the Baritone staff at the beginning of bar 31. The lyrics for the Baritone part are: 'je - den von uns dein Leib, Herr. Be - te, Herr. be -'. The score is written in a common time signature and features complex rhythmic patterns and dynamic contrasts throughout the passage.

Peter McCallum comments that Berio presents a 'profound engagement with text'.⁶⁹ For instance, in the following excerpt (see Musical example 19: *Stanza, I Tenebrae* bars 43—48), the sustained low register orchestral chromatic clusters intensify the reference to death with the text 'to the watering place we went, Lord, it was blood, that you shed, Lord'. Likewise, the orchestral clusters that usher in the text 'Eyes and mouth are open and empty, Lord' stimulate the reference to the dead. Holland experiences the effect as 'dark and supplicating'.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Peter McCallum, "Orchestre de Paris, Christoph Eschenbach: *Luciano Berio: In Memoriam* (Ondine)," *Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney, Australia: 12 November 2005), 36.

⁷⁰ Bernard Holland, "Facing Death, Armed Only With Sound, Not Drama," *New York Times* (New York: 20 January 2005), E. 5.

Musical example 19: Stanza, I Tenebrae bars 43—48

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system (top) covers measures 43-48 and includes staves for Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet in B-flat (Cl. B.), Bassoon (Fg.), Contrabassoon (Cb.), Trumpet (Tr.), Trombone (Tbn.), Tuba, Glockenspiel (Glock.), Piano (Pf.), and Baritone (Bar.). The second system (bottom) covers measures 5-7 and includes staves for Baritone (Bar.), Violin I (Vin. I), Violin II (Vin. II), Viola (Via.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.).

The Baritone part in the second system contains the following lyrics:

Zur Trän-ke gin-gen wir, gin - gen, gin - gen wir, Herr. Es war Blut, es war.

The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (e.g., *ppp*, *mf*, *pp*), articulation (e.g., *acc.*, *stacc.*), and performance instructions (e.g., *senza sord.*, *div. trav.*, *post.*). Measure numbers 8, 6, 4, 5, 7, and 4 are indicated at the top and bottom of the score.

In the following movement, *Congedo del viaggiatore cerimonioso* (see Musical example 20: *Stanza II Congedo del viaggiatore cerimonioso* bars 13—16), the frantically busy textures conveys a sense of relentless energy. For the listener, the emotional impact is the train imagery that may be expressive of the Holocaust deportation, distance, nostalgia or even emigration. The evocation of train noises we hear by the pressing rhythms of the bongos, snare drum and maracas, the flutes imitate the train whistling and the puffing of the steam engine we hear by whispered voices of the chorus and onomatopoeic low brass simulating braking engines. For Clements the constant flux in orchestra sounds contributes to feeling of ‘uncertainty’.⁷¹ Being aboard a crowded train is invoked by the text:

My friends, I think I would do better [to begin]
To take my suitcase down.
Even if I don't know know exactly what time I arrive.

Holland comments that Caproni offers ‘a sly and wistful metaphor’.⁷² However, for Morreau this evokes the sense of a terrified traveller ‘uncertain of everything’.⁷³ Holland experiences the feeling of ‘uncertainty’ at the moments in the music where the chorus enunciates words in a syllabic and fragmentary manner.⁷⁴

**Musical example 20: *Stanza, II The Ceremonious Traveller's Farewell*
bars 13—16**

⁷¹ Andrew Clements, “Review: Classical; Berio: Queen Elizabeth Hall, London 4/5,” *Guardian* (London, United Kingdom: 22 April 2004), 28.

⁷² Holland, “Facing Death, Armed Only With Sound, Not Drama,” E. 5.

⁷³ Morreau, “Classical: *Omaggio*: A celebration of Luciano Berio, Royal Festival Hall,” 29.

⁷⁴ Holland, “Facing Death, Armed Only With Sound, Not Drama,” E. 5.

The perceptibility of the text Berio enhances with the baritone's plain syllabic delivery. In the following example (see Musical example 21: *Stanza III* untitled, Section 21, bars 1—11), Berio reduces the voice to a bitter *parlando*, for the intonation of 'don't add anything, if you speak.' According to Morreau this conjures a 'threatening' mood.⁷⁵

Musical example 21: *Stanza, III* untitled, Section 21, bars 1—11

⁷⁵ Morreau, "Classical: *Omaggio*: A Celebration of Luciano Berio, Royal Festival Hall," 29.

21 ♩ = 64

45

21 ♩ = 64

21 ♩ = 64

The image shows a page of a musical score, likely for a symphony. It features multiple staves for different instruments and voices. The instruments listed are Tbn. (Trumpets), Tuba, Perc. (Snare drum), Coro I, II, III (Chorus), Bar. (Bass), Vla. (Violins), Vc. (Violas), and Cb. (Celli). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'ppp' (pianissimo) and 'sforz' (sforzando). Performance instructions like 'rall.' (rallentando) and 'attacca' are also present. The time signature is 2/4. The page number 'UE 32 813' is visible at the bottom.

The following critical reception supports that within the intrinsic level, the fourth movement balances the previous movements by functioning as a ‘light’ relief before the overwhelming emotional expression of the final poem. In the final movement, the harmony is more consonant so there is a sense of progression and conclusion. Morreau attributes the lightened mood of the fourth movement to Brendel’s reference of the Tritsch-Tratsch-Polka, which ironically ‘captures the Viennese obsession with the polka’.⁷⁶ Holland perceives that Brendel ironically finds the ‘voice of God’ in a Strauss polka.⁷⁷ For Clements the polka symbolises ‘a haunted dance of death’ before the final poem. In the following excerpt (see Musical example 22: *Stanza IV* untitled, Section 37, bars 8—13), the polka we hear through the characteristic

⁷⁶ Ibid., 29

⁷⁷ Holland, “Facing Death, Armed Only With Sound, Not Drama,” E. 5.

rhythmic gestures, *acciaccaturas*, rapid semiquaver, descending and ascending scales and use of percussion.

Musical example 22: *Stanza, IV* untitled, Section 37, bars 8—13

This page of a musical score, numbered 152, contains the following instruments and parts:

- Ottobass (Ott.)
- Flute (Fl.)
- Oboe (Ob.)
- Clarinet in Piccolo (Cl. picc.)
- Clarinet in E-flat (Cl.)
- Clarinet in Bass (Cl. b.)
- Alto Saxophone (Sax. A.)
- Tenor Saxophone (Sax. T.)
- Bassoon (Fg.)
- Trumpet (Tr.)
- Cor Anglais (Cor.)
- Trumpet (Tbn.)
- Tuba
- Percussion (Perc.) - includes Tam-tam
- Baritone (Bar.)
- Violin I (Vln. I)
- Violin II (Vln. II)
- Viola (Via.)
- Violoncello (Vc.)
- Double Bass (Cb.)

The score features dynamic markings such as *f* (forte), *pp* (pianissimo), and *mf* (mezzo-forte), along with articulation and phrasing slurs. The page is marked with a '3' in a box at the top right and a '6' in a box at the bottom right.

Miller identifies the final movement entitled *The Battle* as a ‘struggle against the concept of silence and against the resistance to the articulation of suffering’.⁷⁸ Here the image of the Shoah and human suffering culminates in the dead coming together ‘With large and strange eyes and broken brows’ while a guilty God arbitrarily ordains ‘who was cursed and who was blessed in the burning dust’. Morreau describes the words as ‘disturbing’ and Berio’s God is undoubtedly ‘no Christian God’.⁷⁹ Berio poignantly translates Pagis’s Hebrew text into German as a further reminder of the perpetrator. In the following excerpt (see Musical example 23: *Stanza, V The Battle* Section 47, bars 1—3), the word ‘schweigen’ (to keep silent) is the climax of the whole cycle, and the soloist is accompanied by the chorus (marked *f*) to sustain and intensify the cry.

Musical example 23: *Stanza, V The Battle* Section 47, bars 1—3

⁷⁸ Miller, “London, South Bank and RAM: *Omaggio*: A Celebration of Luciano Berio,” 42.

⁷⁹ Morreau, “Classical: *Omaggio*: A Celebration of Luciano Berio, Royal Festival Hall,” 29.

47

5/4

3/4

sord. (straight)

47

5/4

3/4

[y] [e] schwei - gen, schwei - gen

[y] [e] schwei - gen, schwei - gen

[y] [e] schwei - gen, schwei - gen

[y] [e] schwei - gen, schwei - gen

[y] [e] schwei - gen, schwei - gen

[y] [e] schwei - gen, schwei - gen

[y] [e] schwei - gen, schwei - gen

— Mün - dern [e] schwei - gen: /gen\

div. un.

47

5/4

3/4

Within Juslin's intrinsic code level, this movement acts as the climax of the work (see Musical example 24: *Stanza, V The Battle* Section 48, bars 1—3). The orchestra explodes into violent trembling gestures (marked *ff*), with a rapid semiquaver rhythmic structure and the chorus simulates terrifying howls through the indeterminate pitches. For the listener, the emotional expression of suffering and anger is heightened even further.

Musical example 24: *Stanza, V The Battle* Section 48, bars 1—3

48 $\frac{3}{4}$ = 104

Ott. *ff*

Fl. 19 *ff*

Fl. 29 *ff*

Ob. 19 *ff*

Ob. 29 *ff*

C. i. *ff*

Cl. picc. *ff*

Cl. 19 *ff*

Cl. 29 *ff*

Cl. 39 *ff*

Cl. b. *ff*

Sax. A. *ff*

Sax. A. *ff*

Sax. T. *ff*

Fg. 19 *ff*

Fg. 29 *ff*

Tr. 19 *ff*

Tr. 29 *ff*

Tr. 39 *ff*

Cor. 19 *ff*

Cor. 29 *ff*

Cor. 39 *ff*

Tbn. 19 *ff*

Tbn. 29 *ff*

Tbn. 39 *ff*

Tuba *ff*

Perc. 19 (T-t) metal sticks *ff*

Perc. 29 (T-t) metal sticks *ff*

Perc. 39 Tam-tam metal sticks *ff*

48 $\frac{3}{4}$ = 104

Coro I, II, III

T. *div.* tutti un. *ff* (urlato)

B. *div.* tutti un. *ff* (urlato)

Vin. I *div.* *ff*

Vin. II *div.* *ff*

Vla. *div.* *ff*

Vc. *ff*

Cb. *ff*

48 $\frac{3}{4}$ = 104

Analysing the critical reception of Berio's works within Juslin's three levels of coding highlights the emotional effect of his music. The composer's choice of pitch, harmonic and rhythmic structures, the wide-ranging dynamics and orchestral timbres collectively produce an emotional effect within the iconic code level. Further, Berio's text choices enhance the reception of *Sinfonia*, *Coro* and *Stanza* within the associative code level. As an example of Juslin's intrinsic code level, we evidence in the protracted analysis of *Stanza*, whereby the movements as a whole create tension, light relief, climax and resolution.

5.1.2: Critics' suggestions as to which works will enter the orchestral repertoire

The integrity of the composition is a critical factor for its survival in both the public and scholarly arena and its potential entry to the musical canon. The work of a composer may be measured by commercial success or the level of prestige 'conferred by official arbiters of taste'.⁸⁰ Within the commercial music market, the measure of success is exemplified by ongoing positive reviews, the number of high-profile musicians that choose to perform a particular work as well as the sale of concert tickets and recordings (either compact discs or download purchases). Joseph Kerman distinguishes the canon in the arts as 'an enduring exemplary collection of books, buildings, and paintings authorised in the same way for contemplation, admiration, interpretation and determination of value'.⁸¹ With respect to the musical canon, Kerman suggests that 'repertoires are determined by performers, canons by critics'.⁸² Mark Everist, however, disputes Kerman's conceptualisation as this 'assigns a more important role to the critic and a less important role to the performer than each seems to deserve'.⁸³ Arguably, musical works are continually evaluated and re-evaluated collectively by the public, professional musicians

⁸⁰ McClary, "Terminal Prestige: The case of Avant-Garde Music Composition," 60.

⁸¹ Joseph Kerman, "A Few Canonic Variations," *Critical Inquiry* 10, 1 (September 1983), 107.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 112

⁸³ Everist, "Reception Theories, Canonic Discourses," 394.

and promoters. In turn, canons are susceptible to many changes in keeping with audience reception.⁸⁴

Even within the canon there may be different functional streams. The scholarly canon is linked to music academia, while the pedagogical canon is linked to the teaching of music. As discussed in Chapter 3, high modernist composers were disparaging about all commercial ventures and willingly committed to catering to a minority specialist group. Charles Wuorinen, in particular, argues that there is some confusion of artistic merit if we measure success in terms of subscriber numbers 'streaming into the hall'.⁸⁵ Lorin Maazel philosophically agrees that audience numbers are not important in a democratic society.⁸⁶ For this reason, Kerman argues that modernist works such as Schoenberg's violin concertos, Boulez's piano sonatas and Carter's string quartets are not part of the performing canon.⁸⁷

Conductor Zubin Mehta advocates that, first, it is the obligation of the music community to give all 'new pieces a chance so that we can sort through them, and find the masterpieces'.⁸⁸ Mehta admits that 'you have to put a certain amount of new music through the sieve'.⁸⁹ Works also are subjective. For instance, Cynthia Cherrier recommends that not all new works are successful: 'I have sometimes played quite bad contemporary music, boring works, and screaming pieces which give everyone a headache'.⁹⁰

In not conforming to high modernist ideology and rejecting the public at large, Berio willingly engaged with audiences and critics to help shape and reshape the reception of his music within the public sphere. The following critical

⁸⁴ Audience reception here refers to all music listeners.

⁸⁵ Duffie, A Conversation with Wuorinen.

⁸⁶ Duffie, A Conversation with Maazel.

⁸⁷ Kerman, "A few Canonic Variations." 116.

⁸⁸ Bruce Duffie, "Conductor: Zubin Mehta, Two Conversations with Bruce Duffie," (8 December 1993) <http://www.bruceduffie.com/mehta.html> (accessed 17 July 2013).

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Nina Perlove and Sophie Cherrier, "Transmission, Interpretation, Collaboration—A Performer's Perspective on the Language of Contemporary Music: An Interview with Sophie Cherrier," *Perspectives of New Music*, 36, 1 (Winter 1998), 52.

reception reiterates the accessibility of Berio's music. Anthony Tommasini suggests that the composer's works are 'continually intriguing, even to many listeners indifferent to contemporary music'.⁹¹ John Warnaby credits these positive audience reactions to the composer's avoidance of undue abstraction and use of literary sources to 'spur creativity'.⁹² As an example, critics accolade *Sinfonia* in particular, as:

Tim Page [1984]: a 'most celebrated work'.⁹³

Bernard Holland [1988]: an 'extraordinary piece'.⁹⁴

John von Rhein [2000]: 'still packs an exhilarating wallop on sheer musical terms, sounding as provocative as when it was new'.⁹⁵

Ivan Hewett [2003]: the 'most characteristic work'.⁹⁶

John Warnaby [2003]: the 'best-known work'.⁹⁷

Andrew Clements [2005]: the 'most performed and most popular piece'.⁹⁸

James Oestreich [2005]: a 'distinctive product of its time and place'.⁹⁹

Erica Jeal [2013]: 'exuberant'.¹⁰⁰

Richard Fairman [2013]: a 'showpiece'.¹⁰¹

⁹¹ Anthony Tommasini, "A Modernist for the Masses," *New York Times* (New York: 12 November 1995), 2. 42.

⁹² Warnaby, "Obituary: Luciano Berio," 5.

⁹³ Tim Page, "An Avant-Gardist Takes on a Staid Italian Festival," *New York Times* (New York: 10 June 1984), 21.

⁹⁴ Bernard Holland, "Pierre Boulez Conducts a History Lesson," *New York Times* (New York: 20 June 1988), C. 15.

⁹⁵ John von Rhein, "*Sinfonia* Delivers a Tour of Twentieth Century Music," *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago: 21 October 2000), 33.

⁹⁶ Hewett, "Luciano Berio: Composer whose highly personal modernism embraced theatre, language and new sonorities," 23.

⁹⁷ Warnaby, "Obituary: Luciano Berio," 5.

⁹⁸ Clements, "Come see the blood," 7.

⁹⁹ Oestreich, "He Chose to View the Past as Prologue," 2. 32.

¹⁰⁰ Erica Jeal, "Royal Festival Hall, Last Night of the Proms hero Marin Alsop recharged her celebrity glow on this rare UK visit by the São Paulo SO, playing Guarneri, Berio and Bernstein," *Guardian* (London, United Kingdom: 28 October 2013), <http://www.theguardian.com/music/2013/oct/27/sao-paulo-symphony-orchestra-alsop> (accessed 13 January 2014).

¹⁰¹ Richard Fairman, "Alsop's pan-American party," *Financial Times* (London, United Kingdom: 29 October 2013), 13.

These overwhelmingly positive reactions to performances of *Sinfonia* have also been challenged by a select number of critics. For instance, Rothstein, in his review of 1982, observes that some members of the audience exited the performance, while others were cheering at the end.¹⁰² The critic suggests that this work is about coming too late on the scene to say anything new:

It is about the end of a tradition that once included story, myth and community. And it is so true to its own views that it has very little new to add to this cliché litany. This concert performance proved that the work has not aged well, despite its reputation. Similar points of view have been expressed before, with greater power, and less reliance on a tendentious message. My guess is that the people who cheered it understood that tendentious, as did the people who left.¹⁰³

In a later 1995 review, Tommasini also suggests that the eclectic mixes of genres and pontifical texts seem ‘somewhat dated’.¹⁰⁴ Regarding Berio’s *Formazioni*, Paul Cagney argues that this work presents no formal development, and the material is ‘not strong enough’ to retain attention of the listener.¹⁰⁵ However, *Coro* is regarded as a great introduction to Berio’s music.¹⁰⁶ This work, in particular, will continue to appeal to listeners sympathetic to the avant-garde of the 1970s.¹⁰⁷ Clements recommends that *Coro* will survive in future concert programs because it ‘brings together all that is best in Berio’s music: his acute sensitivity to the possibilities of voices and instruments, and how text and music can be combined in original and unexpected ways’.¹⁰⁸ Likewise, Paul Driver recommends that few composers since Bartók ‘have made more pungently original use of ethno-musicological sources’.¹⁰⁹ Rockwell suggests that the virtuosic collective exploitation of the

¹⁰² Rothstein, “Concert: Berio *Sinfonia*,” 60. [*Sinfonia*: performance by the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the New Swingle Singers].

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 60.

¹⁰⁴ Tommasini, “A Modernist for the Masses,” 2. 42.

¹⁰⁵ Cagney, “Agora Festival: Week One, Ensemble Intercontemporain, Capella Amsterdam, Orchestra de Paris/Malkki, Holten, Deroyer, Tabachnit.”

¹⁰⁶ Paoletta, “Luciano Berio: *Ekphrasis*, *Coro*: Frankfurt Radio Orchestra/Bavarian Radio Choir, Luciano Berio and Lucas Vis.”

¹⁰⁷ Barnett, “Berio: *Coro* Brilliant Classics 9018 [RB]: Classical Music Reviews—March 2010.”

¹⁰⁸ Clements, “Come see the blood,” 7.

¹⁰⁹ Driver, “Sounds of silence; Luciano Berio,” Features section, np.

instruments, the chorus and their interactions make *Coro* ‘a mid-1970s summa of Berio’s technical diversity and his urge to bind diversity together’.¹¹⁰

Performances of *Coro* continue to attract audiences. Bowen recounts that the audience reaction to *Coro* at a 1990 performance at London’s Barbican Centre was ‘utterly overwhelming’ and without doubt the ‘climax’ of the festival event.¹¹¹ Even for a later performance of *Coro* by the London Sinfonietta and the London Sinfonietta Voices at the Proms season in 2005, Service reports that listeners not only experienced a sonic ‘thrill’ but also an ‘overwhelming emotional power’.¹¹² Paoletta claims that Berio’s folk idioms present a fascinating and ‘sensual sound-scape’.¹¹³

Future performances, recordings and discussions of Berio’s music will ensure the works discussed above survive in the public domain. The semantic depth and the expressiveness of Berio’s orchestral music will, for this generation and for succeeding generations, continue to offer new paths of criticism, reinterpretation and explanation. Clements regards Berio as one of the ‘leading composers of our time’.¹¹⁴ Jon von Rhein is confident about the survival of Berio’s works for their ‘fastidious craftsmanship, flair for acutely imagined sound’ and his ability to make intellectually rigorous gestures seductively appealing’.¹¹⁵ In von Rhein’s summation *Continuo* is an ‘important contribution to the contemporary orchestral repertory from one of today’s most important composers’.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁰ John Rockwell, “The Re-emergence of Luciano Berio,” *New York Times* (New York: 19 October 1980), A. 23.

¹¹¹ Bowen, “Arts: Outrage and accolade —Meirion Bowen reviews the Berio Festival at the Barbican,” 36.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 36

¹¹³ Paoletta, “Luciano Berio: *Ekphrasis*, *Coro*: Frankfurt Radio Orchestra/Bavarian Radio Choir, Luciano Berio and Lucas Vis,” 31.

¹¹⁴ Clements, “Come see the blood,” 7.

¹¹⁵ John von Rhein, “*Continuo* Premiere Challenges Rewards,” *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago: 8 January 1993), 24.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 24.

These critiques present an important evaluation of Berio's orchestral works within the public domain at a particular moment in time. However, Berio was not entirely satisfied with the slow development and take on of the new music scene. The following is a discussion of Berio's frustration with the attitudes of North American classical music administrators and promoters of the 1970s and 1980s. Though progress was slow, attitudes amongst promoters did change in the latter part of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

5.2.1: Berio's orchestral works within the commercial classical music market

As discussed in Chapter 4, Berio aimed for a wide-ranging audience and he understood the lucrative financial opportunities in North America for both a professional orchestral musician and a composer. For instance, the New York Philharmonic's orchestral administrators actively sought Berio and commissioned *Sinfonia* of 1968.¹¹⁷ Lucy Kraus (*New York Times*) claims that from the onset of the work's North American premiere it was an 'instant hit'.¹¹⁸ By 1982, over 130 world-wide performances of *Sinfonia* had occurred.¹¹⁹ Yet, even with his early commercial success, Berio was sceptical of the North American new music scene. In a published interview with Rossana Dalmonte of 1985, Berio explains that, even with financial recognition, the music of a modernist composer is 'less fortunate, despite appearances'.¹²⁰

Berio further argues that, regardless of the great number of esteemed North American orchestras being engaged in an enormous amount of musical activity, these orchestras had a reputation primarily for providing accessible repertoire driven by the 'law of the market place'.¹²¹ For specific reason,

¹¹⁷ Bernheimer, "Berio Day/ New York Philharmonic," 17.

¹¹⁸ Kraus, "Tuning in on the latest Swingle Singers," A. 19.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., A. 19.

¹²⁰ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 56.

¹²¹ Ibid., 55.

Berio explains that Boulez who was the artistic director and conductor of the New York Philharmonic from 1971 to 1977 had to leave because his modernist ideas did not find an adequate market, so subscriptions 'slumped'.¹²²

In an interview of 1986 with Bruce Duffie, Carter concedes that from a cultural standpoint, this attitude among North American classical music promoters was 'symptomatic'.¹²³ On the contrary, in the United Kingdom the Scottish National Orchestra's performance of Berio's *Bewegung* in 1971 triggered a surge of public interest in the composer's other works.¹²⁴ No doubt the orchestra's commendable performance of this work also contributed its success. As Alasdair Steven explains, *Bewegung* is not an easy piece for an orchestra to tackle but conductor Sir Alexander Gibson championed it with 'enthusiasm'.¹²⁵ Many British orchestras continue to perform Berio's music and his works feature regularly in the BBC Proms season.¹²⁶

One of the ways in which North American concert organisers of the latter part of the twentieth century decided to introduce subscribers to new music or an existing modernist work was to present the piece with a traditional 'classic'. Take, for example, the New York Philharmonic's Horizons 1986 concert series presented Haydn's Symphony No. 90 in C major in the first half, followed then by Berio's Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra (1972—73). However, this approach was not entirely successful and substantiated promoters' concerns. For this concert, a third of the hall emptied before the Concerto, and a number of attendees left during the performance.¹²⁷ It appears that Berio's atonal language was a contributing factor for the departure of these attendees.

¹²² Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 56.

¹²³ Duffie, A Conversation with Carter.

¹²⁴ Alasdair Steven, "Obituary: Luciano Berio," *Scotsman* (Edinburgh, United Kingdom: 29 May 2003) 20.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 20.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 20.

¹²⁷ Henahan, "Concert: Berio Conducts Berio," C. 27.

As discussed in Chapter 2, Berio sought a new soundscape for his listeners; therefore, in this instance it may have been helpful to explain the composer's compositional approaches. These include non-traditional relationships between the soloists and the orchestra that often create chamber ensembles; for instance, piano I with piano II, flute with piano I, violin with piano II, clarinet and piano I and piano II with strings. At times, the orchestra interacts with the piano soloists, amplifying their parts in a kind of simultaneous transcription. The two piano soloists are diverse in regard to their techniques and identification with the orchestra; however, the unifying element lies within the harmonic process. The beginning of the Concerto introduces the thematic material that hints at a G-centred tonality and the persisting Stravinsky-style *ostinati* functions as a major structural role in the work.

Berio understood audience reactions when faced with a new and challenging work:

This makes sense because for the listener the past is the most available resource of musical knowledge, although this tendency often carries the signs of an unconscious ideological frustration, since it is rooted not in a plausible code of musical values but in the way we are conditioned by the market.¹²⁸

The established pattern of programming modernist music in conjunction with traditional tonal classical music has continued into the early twenty-first century. For instance, Joe Queenan of the *Sydney Morning Herald* observes that during a performance of the composer's *Sinfonia* at Carnegie Hall, New York in 2008, many audience members appeared indifferent and by comparison 'very few dismissed Brahms' Fourth Symphony'.¹²⁹ In presenting to subscription audiences an entire program of Berio's music, concert promoters tend to schedule the composer's more accessible works. Take, for instance, in 2009, the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by

¹²⁸ Berio, *Remembering the Future*, 61.

¹²⁹ Joe Queenan, "Stop the music, my ears hurt," *Sydney Morning Herald* (24 July, 2008), Arts and Entertainment, 15.

Gustavo Dudamel presented at the Walt Disney Concert Hall Berio's *Folk Songs* that included vocalist Dawn Upshaw along with *Rendering* (1989).

Rendering, which is Berio's ending for the two final movements of Franz Schubert's unfinished Tenth Symphony in D major, and indeed all of the composer's transcriptions of earlier established works, go some of the way to cater for the commercial music market. Even though Berio embeds the Schubert sketches in a matrix of his atonal language, it enables organisers to program this work within a specialist eighteenth-century music concert. For instance, in 2012, *Rendering* featured in the Mostly Mozart Festival concert series at Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center. This little-known work was presented with one of the most standard concert repertoire; Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 5, *Emperor*.¹³⁰ In turn, *Rendering* presented the opportunity for concert attendees who were unfamiliar with atonal music to have the experience of a new sonic soundscape within a classical idiom. For the listener, Berio's passages are ushered in by the sounds of a celesta. As David Fanning remarks, *Rendering* is a 'perspective of Jugendstil Vienna eighty years further on'.¹³¹ The following critical reception suggests that for the listener, Berio's juxtapositions are effective:

Evan Mitchell: 'just at the moment we drift off from the work completely, it launches, magically and inexplicably, into another finished strain from Schubert'.¹³²

Mark Lehman: the effect is a 'hallucinatory blur'.¹³³

Paul Griffiths: the Schubert passages begin to 'stutter' and 'dissolve' before Schubert's ideas are 'carried on into late twentieth-century territory'.¹³⁴

¹³⁰ Evan Mitchell, "Getting into the heads of Schubert, Berio, and Beethoven at the Mostly Mozart Festival," Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra/ Lincoln Centre: Avery Fisher Hall/ Concert Review: <http://www.bachtrack.com/review-mostly-mozart-festival-2012-malkki-berio-rendering-o> (Accessed 18 August 2012).

¹³¹ David Fanning, "Berio in orchestral mode with the Halle in Manchester's latest encounter with Luciano Berio," *The Independent* (London, United Kingdom: 30 April 1994), Weekend Arts Page, np.

¹³² Mitchell, "Getting into the heads of Schubert, Berio, and Beethoven at the Mostly Mozart Festival."

¹³³ Mark Lehman, "Berio: Orchestral Transcriptions," *American Record Guide*, 68, 6 (Washington, November/December, 2005), 78.

¹³⁴ Paul Griffiths, "Critic's Choice/ Classical Compact Discs; The Latest Interpretations of Berio," *New York Times* (New York: 30 October 1997), E. 5.

Edward Rothstein: Berio's *Rendering* is 'often haunting: beautiful fragments of melody in eight-bar phrases, fading into a misty, groundless haze of Berio's plaster' whereby the original material floats in a 'ghostly contemporary space'.¹³⁵

Orchestral administrators also recognised the merit and importance of Berio's artistic endeavours and also sought to commission new works: the Scottish National Orchestra commissioned *Bewegung* (1971); the Chicago Symphony Orchestra commissioned Berio's *Continuo* (1989–91) and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, together with the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich and the International Trombone Association, commissioned Berio's *Solo* (1999–2000). At the turn of the twenty-first century, North American orchestral administrators also recognised the importance of supporting contemporary music composers. The New York Philharmonic now has commissioned and premiered many works, including Stephan Hanke's *Symphony No. 3* (2003), Emily Dickinson's *Settings for Soprano and Orchestra* (2004), Esa-Pekka Salonen's *Piano Concerto* (2007), Marc Neikrug's *Quintessence* (2008), Bernard Rand's *Chains Like the Sea* (2008) and Magnus Lindberg's *Al Largo* (2010).

In turn, a vibrant new music scene attracts lucrative private patronage. The New York Philharmonic orchestra attracts personal funding to perform new works as well as, to financially acknowledge the musical contributions of established composers. For instance, in 2009, Henry and Marie-Josée Kravis donated US \$10 million to the orchestra. This money goes toward financing the Composer-in-Residence position and biannually the Marie-Josée Kravis Prize for New Music.¹³⁶ The sum of US \$200,000 is bestowed on a composer in recognition of her/his artistic endeavour in the field of new music. The award further allocates a sum of US \$50,000 for the commissioning of a new work from an emerging composer.¹³⁷ In turn, this provides valuable public

¹³⁵ Rothstien, "The Past as Enemy and Totem," C. 15.

¹³⁶ The Marie-Josée Kravis Prize for New Music at the New York Philharmonic, 2011. <http://www.nyphil.org/about-us/the-orchestra/marie-josée-kravis-prize> (accessed 6 August 2013).

¹³⁷ Ibid.

exposure to an upcoming composer and elevates the status of an established composer.

The issue of music industry awards also heightens substantially the public's perception of composers, individual musicians and orchestras. Accolades such as the North American Grammy Award recognise the high quality and achievements of musicians and composers. Indeed, Berio's Grammy Award of 1969 for *Sinfonia* consolidated not only this work's future performances but also the composer's reputation within new music circles. This work also established Berio's international fame.¹³⁸ In turn, many listeners who discover Berio's works seek then to explore other composers of the post-war avant-garde.¹³⁹ As evidenced, promoters and orchestral administrators play a vital role in supporting a composer, both artistically and financially.

The following section discusses ways in which music promoters, composers and musicians undertook to shape the reception of Berio's music by concert attendees.

5.2.2: Enhancing the reception of Berio's orchestral works for concert attendees

In addition to critics' reviews, the explication of a composer's works requires the ongoing commitment of music promoters, composers, and musicians. This will go some of the way to explain to audience members what they are about to hear and why the music sounds the way it does. For instance, during the mid-1980s, Lukas Foss, the then director of the Brooklyn Philharmonic, sought to provide commentary on the works presented to audiences via his program entitled 'Brooklyn Philharmonic's Meet the Moderns' that also included interviews with the composers.¹⁴⁰ During the

¹³⁸ James Oestreich, "He Chose to View the Past as Prologue," *New York Times* (New York: 30 October 2005), 2. 32.

¹³⁹ Warnaby, "Obituary: Luciano Berio," 5.

¹⁴⁰ Donal Henahan, "Music: Foss's Moderns," *New York Times* (New York: 28 April 1984), 1. 13.

1990s, Simon Rattle presented at seven-part television series with an overview of the twentieth century music with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and, in 2005, published the related book entitled *Leaving Home: Orchestral Music in the 20th Century*.¹⁴¹ Berio was very much in favour of these types of programs and discussions and, in particular, those for young audiences.¹⁴² Berio also willingly participated in these types of discussions with concert audiences. For instance, in 1990 he gave a talk on the perspectives of his works at London's Barbican Centre during a festival of his music.¹⁴³

Orchestral administrators found merit in these events and formalised the activities as part of an ongoing educational program. For instance, in 1990, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra inaugurated a program entitled *Meet the Music* and pre-concert talks were established in 1993. The SSO's premiere performance (May 2000) of Berio's *Solo*, which included Christian Lindberg and conductor Edo de Waart, was preceded with a talk to give the audience a perspective on the un-concerto-like dialogue between the trombonist and orchestra and other innovative features in the work.

In 2006, the New York Philharmonic started the *Hear and Now* program, which includes live demonstrations by orchestras and musicians as well as discussions with composers and conductors.¹⁴⁴ For example, in 2008 Lorin Maazel presented with the orchestra a talk on Berio's *Sinfonia*. This included a demonstration performance and a discussion of the ways in which the composer links the music of Mahler to *Sinfonia*.¹⁴⁵ In another New York Philharmonic concert of the same year, the *Hear and Now* program included

¹⁴¹ Simon Rattle, Hillary Chadwick, Sue Knussen, Peter West and Barrie Gavin, *Leaving Home: Orchestral Music in the 20th Century*, Leipzig: ArtHaus Musik, 2005.

¹⁴² Moore and MacLennan, Interview with Berio.

¹⁴³ Edward Greenfield, "Arts: Luciano Berio— Barbican," *Guardian* (London, United Kingdom: 16 January 1990), 38.

¹⁴⁴ Steven Stucky, "New York Philharmonic: The New Hear and Now," *Playbill Arts* (16 January 2008), <http://www.playbillarts.com/features/articles/7544.html> (accessed 2 August 2008).

¹⁴⁵ Bernheimer, "Berio Day/New York Philharmonic," 17.

a biographical film of Berio, followed then by a panel discussion led by Steven Stucky and Talia Pecker Berio.¹⁴⁶

New Music festivals also include a wide range of educational programs that discuss the music of composers. For instance, London's 'The Rest Is Noise Festival' of 2013 included more than 100 concerts as well as television and radio broadcasts of these performances. Taking a further measure to enhance the reception of these works, BBC Four presented a three-part documentary entitled 'The Sound of Fury: A Century of Modern Music' that traced the history of music within the twentieth century.¹⁴⁷ Former Controller of BBC Four Richard Klein explains that the objective of this project was to 'broaden the range of people for whom this music is accessible'.¹⁴⁸ Conductor Vladimir Jurowski clarifies that another objective of this program was to do away with public perception of the 'cult genius' as prescribed by the nineteenth-century idea of the composer as a 'holy, untouchable figure'.¹⁴⁹ These types of public discussions go some of the way to enhance the listener's reception of a composer's music and stimulate thought within the conceptual parameters of the music.

Conclusion

The analysis of *Sinfonia*, *Bewegung*, *Eindruck*, *Ekphrasis*, *Alternatim*, *Coro* and *Stanza* within Juslin's iconic, intrinsic and associative code levels demonstrates the engendered emotional power and impact of these works among critics. As is the case with Berio's chamber works, his orchestral writing also demonstrates his aspiration for a broad range of listeners. The critical reception suggests that Berio's more accessible works include *Sinfonia*, *Coro* and *Rendering* that, in turn, continue to be a drawcard for subscription audiences.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 17.

¹⁴⁷ Imogen Tildon, "The Rest Is Noise Festival to launch at Southbank Centre in 2013," *Guardian* (27 November 2012), <http://www.theguardian.com/2012/nov/27/rest-noise-festival-2013> (accessed 14 June 2014).

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

The critical reception of Berio's more abstract oeuvre including *Bewegung*, *Eindrück*, *Ekphrasis*, *Alternatim* and *Stanza* illustrates not so much the deficiencies in the compositions themselves but rather suggests these pieces may require multi-listening. Engaging with the score and background information on Berio's compositional processes may further enhance their reception. These works mainly appeal to a niche group of listeners including modernist music aficionados, composers and academia: in turn, the works are not widely or frequently performed.

Berio's renowned reputation endowed him with many commissions and accolades for his orchestral works. Concert organisers also sought a number of ways to promote Berio's music, and most notably, undertook measures to educate audiences. Ongoing performances and recordings, in turn, will generate the opportunity for future generations of critics and listeners to assess, appraise and evaluate Berio's orchestral works with new perspectives and insights within the conceptual parameters of the composer's music.

CHAPTER 6

The Critical Reception of Berio's *azione musicale*

'Contemporary opera is not for the masses.'

—Franco Donatoni (*Perspectives of New Music* 1989)¹

During the modernist period, opera underwent a transformation from what had become, by the early twentieth century, clichéd melodramas to works that tackled issues that question the human condition within social, ideological and political parameters. Berio, together with fellow Italian avant-garde writers including Umberto Eco, Italo Calvino and Edoardo Sanguineti, sought to break away from the traditional operatic culture and conventions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The first area of examination in this chapter concerns the factors that shaped Berio's early *azione musicali*. I argue that Berio's early works were influenced by experimental theatre and dance as well as by social and political conditions in the 1960s of the Western world. The works I discuss include *Allez Hop* (for mezzo-soprano, eight actors, dancers and orchestra, 1952—59); *Passaggio* (for soprano, chorus and orchestra, 1961—62); *Traces* (for soprano and mezzo-soprano solos, two actors, chorus and orchestra, 1963); and *Esposizione* (for mezzo-soprano, two treble voices, mimes, dancers, fourteen players and tape, 1963). Another area of study relates to the critical reception and the audience reactions to these works.

The second area of investigation concerns the critical reception of Berio's *La Vera Storia* (1977—80); *Un Re In Ascolto* (A King Listening, 1979—1983); *Outis* (for thirteen singers, one actor, five instrumentalists, a vocal group of eight singers, chorus, orchestra and live electronics 1995—96); and *Cronaca del Luogo* (*Chronicle of the Place*, for soloists, actors, choir and orchestra

¹ Harry James Wignall, "Current Trends in Italian Opera," *Perspectives of New Music* 28, 2 (1990), 317.

1998—99). The aim of this study is to verify the accessibility of Berio's works to mainstream opera audiences.

6.1.1: Critics' and audience reactions to Berio's *azione musicale* of the 1960s

During the 1960s, Berio attempted to forge a new form of musical theatre within the confines of an opera house and he undertook commercial risks by disbanding the conventions of standard operatic performances practices.² During this period, musical theatre was a way for composers to engage the public in debates on social and political matters. This was in contrast to the melodramatic librettos of traditional opera. By way of example, Berio explains that if, for reasons of social class, it was not acceptable for Violetta Valéry to marry Alfredo, along would come death, which was a solution to every moral dilemma.³

Berio chooses to distinguish his *azione musicali* from the traditional opera types associated with composers such as Giacomo Puccini and Gian Carlo Menotti (1911—2007). In fact, Berio prefers the term *azione musicale* to define the new directions in which he steers the narrative, music and stage actions. Berio explains that his type of music theatre 'is not always explicit and it does not necessarily produce action but, rather, thought'.⁴ Even in the mid-1990s, critic for the London *Times* Paul Driver admits that Berio was 'cagey about the term opera'.⁵ Berio aligned with his Italian counterparts of the day. Take, for instance, Luigi Nono's *Intolleranza* (1960), which deals with the victimisation of immigrants and Bruno Maderna's *Hyperion* (1964), on the subject of marginalisation introduced by Italy's new materialistic and consumerist society.

² Daniel Quinn, "Re-Visioning Opera," *Performing Arts Journal*, 5, 1 (1980), 87.

³ Berio, *Remembering the Future*, 105.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 120.

⁵ Paul Driver, "Sounds of Silence," *Times* (London, United Kingdom: 17 April 1994), Features section, np.

During the 1960s radical artists within the performing, literary and visual arts began to experiment with new ways of politicising to the audience and expressing their disenchantment with the status quo.⁶ Non-mainstream groups often stem from a particular cultural, linguistic or political situation and, by staging alternatives, provide a challenge to the paradigms of Western hegemonic culture.⁷ These groups reacted against the social and cultural repression perpetrated by fascist, authoritarian and dictatorial regimes.⁸ For instance, New York's Living Theatre was established in 1950 by Judith Malina and Julian Beck to denounce these organisations openly. This group spread their ideology also outside of traditional theatre spaces, including schools, factories, hospitals, plazas, streets and alleyways.⁹ Likewise, in 1963, Peter Schumann established The Bread and Puppet Theater which uses puppetry to stage political demonstrations.

Non-mainstream theatre therefore helped to open new cultural dialogues between the margins and the mainstream.¹⁰ For instance, Barbara Garson's 1967 satire entitled *Macbird* superimposes the transfer of power to Lyndon Johnson following the assassination of John F. Kennedy as a plot of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. Among activists and artists, the 1968 assassinations of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy spurred even more disillusionment with the mainstream political establishment. Berio was based in North America from 1960 to 1971, and his works of this period echo the same the same contemplations and frustrations. As discussed in Chapter 5, *Sinfonia* of 1968 reflects the same disenchantment with King's assassination. Berio's withdrawn work *Traces* explicitly dealt with racism and the composer

⁶ James Penner, "On Aggro Performance: Audience Participation and the Dystopian Response to the Living Theatre's *Paradise Now*," *Comparative Drama* 48, 1—2 (Spring-Summer 2014), 75.

⁷ Madelena Gonzalez, "Introduction," in *Minority Theatre on the Global Stage: Challenging Paradigms from the Margins*, ed. Madelena Gonzalez and Helene Laplace-Claverie, Newcastle upon Tyne, United Kingdom: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012, xv.

⁸ Mark Amitin, "Living Theatre Abroad: Radicalizing the Classics," *Performing Arts Journal* 5, 2(1981), 28.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 27.

¹⁰ Gonzalez, "Introduction," *Minority Theatre on the Global Stage: Challenging Paradigms from the Margins*, xv.

further chose a chorus of forty-eight African Americans who were to sing the following text for the opening and closing scenes:

Come we turn we wait.
Your face in shadow in ashen light.
My words in silence to distance cries.
Who shall stand after the fire.¹¹

The sexual revolution of the 1960s also represented another form of liberation from repressive social mores. Experimental theatre groups were at the forefront of doing away with the social taboo of on-stage nudity. For instance, the Living Theatre's presentation of *Paradise Now* of 1968 included the actors disrobing down to a 'g-string' (so as to avoid police arrest) and extended the invitation to the audience to do likewise.¹² A select number of audience members did choose to form naked 'body piles' on the stage; however, the majority chose not to participate.¹³ In a less contentious manner, Berio's *Opera* also included, for only a brief moment at the beginning of the work, a fully exposed man as well as a naked woman on a table. In 1970, this work was staged at the Santa Fe Opera, a mainstream opera theatre that undoubtedly would have attracted a more conservative audience base: indeed, a select number of attendees did take offence to the nudity. In part, this is due to the fact that opera and classical ballet traditionally have served as entertainment for the mainly conservative ruling-class.¹⁴ In describing the opera genre as 'elitist', conductor Simone Young also implies the conservative nature of some opera subscribers.¹⁵ Berio adopts the modernist approach to theatre of Bertolt Brecht, whom the

¹¹ Kuo, "Composing American Individualism: Luciano Berio in the United States," 84.

¹² Penner, "On Aggro Performance: Audience Participation and the Dystopian Response to the Living Theatre's *Paradise Now*," 85.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 85.

¹⁴ Nicholas Till, "I don't mind if something's operatic, just as long it's not opera: A Critical Practice for New Opera and Music Theatre," *Contemporary Theatre Review*, 14, 1 (2004), 19.

¹⁵ Monica Attard, Interview with Simone Young, "Sunday Profile: Simone Young," Australian Broadcasting Corporation (30 July 2009). <http://www.abc.net.au/sundayprofile/stories/2641053.htm> (accessed 2 February 2014).

composer met in 1955 through Bruno Maderna.¹⁶ This meeting was seminal as Brecht became a major influence on all of Berio's future *azione musicale*.¹⁷ As evidenced in his article of 1961, Brecht recognised the attraction of theatre as a form of entertainment:

Human beings go to the theatre in order to be swept away, captivated, impressed, uplifted, horrified, moved, kept in suspense, released, diverted, set free, set going, transplanted from their own time, and supplied with illusions.¹⁸

However, Brecht aimed to create a new type of theatre—the fusion of entertainment with instruction.¹⁹ Brecht's modernist approaches abandon the theatrical conventions of the realist and naturalist stage that had developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, associated in particular with the works of Gerhart Hauptmann and Henrik Ibsen. Realist and naturalist stage conventions regard the stage set as a 'real' room and when the curtain rises, the fourth wall is removed, the actors in the room are 'real' people who are oblivious to the presence of the audience and the theatre audience plays the role of an unseen eavesdropper.²⁰ This type of theatre is defined as traditional dramatic form, whereby, the character is a known quality.²¹ In contrast to Brecht's epic form of theatre, the character is subject to investigation.²² Further, in the dramatic form, the audience is projected into an event; in the epic form the audience confronts an event.²³ Brecht's works convey an array of social behaviour, to facilitate the spectator's understanding of her/his social surroundings and aims to assist them in controlling the issues rationally and emotionally.²⁴ Take, for example, Brecht's *The Three Penny Opera* (music by Kurt Weill, 1928) which

¹⁶ Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 121.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 121.

¹⁸ Bertolt Brecht, "On the Experimental Theatre," *The Tulane Drama Review* 6, 1 (September, 1961), 13.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 9.

²⁰ Steve Giles, "A New Theatre," *Brecht on Theatre*, Bertolt Brecht, Eds. Marc Silberman, Steve Giles and Tom Kuhn, London, New York: Bloomsbury, 2014, 10.

²¹ Bertolt Brecht, "Theatre for learning," *Brecht Sourcebook*, eds. Carol Martin and Henry Bial, London, New York: Routledge, 2000, 23.

²² *Ibid.*, 23.

²³ *Ibid.*, 23.

²⁴ Brecht, "On the Experimental Theatre," 9.

challenges audiences with the social implications of capitalism, as the playwright explains:

This work engages with bourgeois ideas not only as content, on that it represents them, but also through the way it represents them. It is a kind of report on the aspects of life that spectators wish to see on stage. But alongside these aspects, spectators also see plenty of things they do not wish to see —they see their wishes not only fulfilled, therefore, but also criticized (they see themselves not as subjects but as objects), and this theoretically puts them in a position to confer a new function on the theatre.²⁵

Brecht disbands the idea that an audience member needs to identify emotionally or to develop empathy with the characters on stage, preferring instead to provoke self-reflection and a critical viewpoint of the stage action. This technique is identified as Brecht's '*Verfremdung*' ('distancing') method which is also known as 'de-familiarisation'.²⁶ In this way, Brecht's epic form of theatre aims to bring his political and social messages to the fore.

Similarly, Berio seeks to have 'real people' in his *azione musicale*. Arguably for this reason the composer rejects *bel canto* singing, and often calls for actors rather than exclusively operatic singers. Berio also highlights that *bel canto* singing limits the development and the evolution, not only of vocal technique, but also of the musical conception.²⁷ For instance, Berio's *E Vó* at the conclusion of *Opera* is a Sicilian lullaby that calls for the vocalist to sing in the manner of folk singer with nasal and very slight *vibrato* tone. Berio even chose the Italian pop star Milva to sing in the style of traditional *cantastorie* for the six ballads of *La Vera Storia* (The True Story). The Open Theater Group added another skill set and further enhanced the dramatic content of Berio's *Opera*. These types of operatic innovations, as Daniel Quinn has argued, helped to forge a 'new kind of musical and performance language for the opera stage. Risks were being taken, and the naturalistic conventions of standard operatic performance were being thrown into question'.²⁸

²⁵ Brecht, "A New Theatre," *Brecht on Theatre*, 71.

²⁶ Brecht, "Theatre for learning," *Brecht Sourcebook*, 22.

²⁷ Wignall, "Current Trends in Italian Opera," 324.

²⁸ Daniel Quinn, "Re-Visioning Opera," *Performing Arts Journal*, 5, 1 (1980), 87.

Along the same lines, Berio's *azione musicale*—typical of modernist theatre and opera—also aim to combine entertainment with instruction. For *Allez Hop* Italo Calvino provides the scenario, which is a commentary on the complacency of human society. The story depicts a travelling showman who puts his fleas to work. Unfortunately, one of the fleas gets loose, and reduces the complacent stability of human society to mayhem with a few swift jumps and bites. Eventually order is restored and with it, complacency. The showman takes stock of the situation, opens the door of the fleas' cage, and walks away.²⁹ This work is an early example of stage gestures conveyed in the Brechtian manner that are without redundancy and have a certain 'purity of image'.³⁰ For the early, less successful performances of *Allez-Hop*, Berio concedes that the producers tended to complicate the action and to exaggerate and overload the situations.³¹ Also the work's duration of approximately thirty minutes requires the stage images to 'slide past like a film'; instead, producers often inserted pauses between one section and the next in order to develop their pantomimes that, in turn, complicated the production excessively.³²

In the revised edition of 1968, for a performance in Rome, Berio decided to add a final piece for orchestra, which included electric guitars and a drum-kit to depict the attitudes of the then 'flower generation'. During this movement, the mimes came down from the stage and circulated around the stalls, painting the heads of distinguished elderly men. In Berio's summation, 'all hell broke loose'.³³ In part, this was due to the link between the neo-fascists and the right-wing bourgeois that frequented the Opera.³⁴

²⁹ Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 92.

³⁰ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 111.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 111.

³² *Ibid.*, 111.

³³ *Ibid.*, 111.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 111.

Another work of the same ilk is Berio's *Passaggio*. This work can only take place in an opera house, however, to be correctly understood Berio suggests that it must only 'imply the experience of opera'.³⁵ During the 1960s, certain critics found it difficult to process the content and grasp the conceptual challenges in this new form of opera, so their critiques frequently are a simple description of the performance. Take, for example, Robert Coren's review of 1967 that describes the premiere performances of *Passaggio* that took place at the Juilliard School and Harvard University.

Apparently *Passaggio* portrays the passage of a single character called 'She', at odds with and seemingly at the mercy of a heartless and mindless society, represented by the choruses next to the stage and at the sides of the house. The hostility of the chorus was evident from the moment its opening hisses, murmurs and shouts began to fill the darkened theatre, while both Her helplessness and humanness came through largely from Miss Mandac's presence on stage. She turned in a superb performance, as she passed from a small chair to a prison cell, a drab bedroom and, finally, a huge bare rehearsal stage, she movingly conveyed everything from lyrical calm to hopeless despair which reduced her by the end to shouting "Go away!" at the entire theatre.³⁶

This critique offers only a description of the stage events, character/choruses commentary and the quality of the performers. This review offers no insights within the conceptual parameters or an evaluation of the artistic merit of the work. There also is a immediate sense of unease about this review, perhaps because Coren opens with the word 'apparently' which implies that he lacks certainty of interpretation. Aside from highlighting the quality and attributes of the performers, it appears that the decoding of Berio's messages and intentions is paramount in gauging the success of this work. Literary critic Roland Barthes (1915—1980) in his article of 1967 entitled 'The Death of the Author,' argues against this type of traditional criticism within literature. Barthes suggests that the text is reader-based and therefore a 'multi-dimensional space,' hence, the 'text's unity lies not in its origins but in its

³⁵ Ibid., 160.

³⁶ Robert S. Coren, "Monteverdi and Berio at the Loeb this weekend," *Harvard Crimson*: <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/1976/1/16monteverdi-and-berio-this-weekend-harvard/> (accessed 18 June 2012).

destination'.³⁷ Within this criterion, Coren does not offer a critique from his own standpoint. In not citing or drawing on Brecht's already well established epic theatre form as a parallel to *Passaggio* suggests that Coren was unsure as how to interpret the stage actions. In understanding Brecht's epic theatre form we immediately grasp Berio's 'politically instructive' stage action.³⁸ Firstly, the generic title 'She', distances the spectator's emotional attachment with the character, so as to investigate the universality of social and political issues that here, is mass aggression against individual freedom.³⁹ In choosing a female character, the ramifications of social injustices are suggestive of perhaps, the fight for voting rights, pay inequality and educational opportunities.

The choruses function as the mass aggressor that usher in the solitary female character 'She' who appears under a spotlight, crouched in the corner of the stage with a suitcase, jacket and coat.⁴⁰ Provocative images of 'She' being tied up, collapsing on an old mattress and reading scraps of paper that she pulls from her suitcase confront the audience. For instance, 'She' passes from one helpless situation into another, which includes being questioned (perhaps by the Gestapo), imprisoned, sold, or left alone.⁴¹ 'She' communicates and gives insights into the adverse psychological effects of losing our individual freedom. The epic form treats the audience members as observers, therefore these events arouse moral decision-making instead of only feeling empathy for the character.

The final provocation culminates at the conclusion of the work whereby 'She' shouts to the audience 'Go Away'.⁴² Berio quotes these words from Jean

³⁷ Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author," *Image, Music, Text*, trans. Stephan Heath, New York: Hill and Wang, 1977, 148.

³⁸ Berio, *Remembering the Future*, 108.

³⁹ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 160.

⁴⁰ Liam Cagney, "Agora Festival Week 1: Ensemble Intercontemporain, Capella Amsterdam, Orchestra de Paris/Mälkki, Holten, Deroyer, Tabachnit," *Musical Criticism*, United Kingdom: <http://www.musicalcriticism.com/concerts/agora-1-0609.html> (accessed 10 August 2012).

⁴¹ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 161.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 160.

Genet's play *Le Balcon* (1957), which is set in a brothel where clients dress in disguises to role-play with the prostitutes.⁴³ Take, for example, the first scene, in which a man masquerades as a bishop who is obsessed with the power to forgive sins. At the conclusion of the 'act,' the prostitute asks him to pay and then tells him to 'go home'. In the following scene, another man chooses the persona of a judge who orders an executioner to whip a confession from a girl. Throughout these escapades in the brothel, the streets are besieged by rebels who desire to purge the city of its pomp and decay. Scene 3 introduces a general whose fantasy is war: the scene culminates in his own funeral. The fourth scene presents a man dressed as a beggar who employs a prostitute in corset and boots to degrade him. At the end of *Le Balcon*, the brothel owner on hearing that the revolution is nearing, turns off the light and tells her clients to 'Go away, go to your home'.⁴⁴

Le Balcon has multiple meaning. For instance, Richard Coe suggests that this work is first and foremost a political play; the main issues are those of the inter-relationship within the power-hierarchy of society.⁴⁵ Martin Esslin's explication of this work is within the parameters of sexual domination and submission; 'the power of the state, which manifests itself in the domination of the prisoner by the court and its policeman; and the romantic ceremonial, the manifestation of myth in sex as well as in power, are basically one'.⁴⁶ Therefore, a more sympathetic reading of Genet's play is that Berio heightens our awareness of his protagonist's plight and frustration. The shouting at the audience to 'Go away' may dissipate any empathy for the character but arguably, the primary objective is to stimulate thought on issues of domination, power and aggression on the vulnerable members of our society.

⁴³ Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 93.

⁴⁴ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 160.

⁴⁵ Richard N. Coe, *The Vision of Jean Genet*, London: Peter Owen, 1968, 268.

⁴⁶ Martin Esslin, *The Theatre of the Absurd*, Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1969, 184—85.

To foreground the spectator's awareness of her/his political and moral stances, experimental theatre groups also put questions directly to their audience.⁴⁷ Berio, together with Sanguineti, also adopts this tactic for *Passaggio*, which deals with concept of mass aggression against the freedom of the individual.⁴⁸ This work intentionally challenges the bourgeois societal mores.⁴⁹ In contrast to traditional opera, whereby the chorus is on stage, Berio chooses two choruses; one in the orchestra pit, the other strategically within the audience.⁵⁰ The unlit theatre in which the choruses hiss, murmur and shout create drama, tension and 'hostility'.

Berio places a chorus of five groups within the audience to give voice to his perceptions about the inner thoughts of a cultured, bourgeois audience.⁵¹ At various intervals the chorus shout orders and threats in Italian, English, German and Latin at the nameless character 'She' to invoke social order, abuse or lust for the character. Berio's insinuation of aggression also is depicted via the chorus' recitation of consumer goods, which include a catalogue of weapons.⁵²

For the premiere performance of 1963 that took place at the Piccola Scala, Milan, Berio instructed the Zurich Kammerchor chorus to join in once the audience began to shout. Take, for example, an audience member shouted 'Buffoni!' (Fool) and the chorus took it over, sped it up, whispered it and lengthened the 'o'.⁵³ At the end of the work, the soprano addressed the audience directly, saying 'Go Away', at which point the chorus loudly applauded. This perplexed and infuriated the attendees even further. Berio recounts that the audience was completely 'hysterical' because they had lost

⁴⁷ Penner, "On Aggro Performance: Audience Participation and the Dystopian Response to the Living Theatre's *Paradise Now*, 77.

⁴⁸ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 160.

⁴⁹ Cagney, "Agora Festival Week 1: Ensemble Intercontemporain, Capella Amsterdam, Orchestra de Paris/Mälkki, Holten, Deroyer, Tabachnit."

⁵⁰ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 160.

⁵¹ Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 92.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 93.

⁵³ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 160—161.

their chance to protest.⁵⁴ Umberto Eco, who was present at this performance, claims 'we were all delighted'.⁵⁵

This contrasts with the passive audience reactions for the premiere of *Passaggio* in 1967, which took place at the Julliard School of Music, New York City.⁵⁶ The audience chose not to voice their political and social views. Unlike the reactions of the Milanese audience, Coren claimed that Berio's attempt to involve the New York audience was not a success.⁵⁷ From a cultural standpoint, North American audiences applaud dutifully even for inferior performances.⁵⁸ For example, John von Rhein observes that Chicago audiences who attend symphony concerts and other classical events 'almost never boo at anything'.⁵⁹

Later, in 1994, Berio experienced yet an even more unreceptive audience for the premiere of *Passaggio* at the Barbican Centre, London, for the festival entitled 'Berio at the Barbican'. This performance included soprano Luisa Castellani and students from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and the BBC Orchestra conducted by Berio. Meirion Bowen blames the indifferent audience response on the poor performance of the choral groups, arguing that if the groups had 'memorised their parts' and their conductors had turned into 'demo leaders' more excitement might have been generated'.⁶⁰

Anna Halprin's experimental dance piece entitled the *Five-Legged Stool* of 1963 was the inspiration for Berio's *Esposizione*.⁶¹ Halprin designed the *Five-Legged Stool* as a sensory experience without deliberate meaning or

⁵⁴ Ibid., 161.

⁵⁵ Umberto Eco, "Eco in ascolto," *Contemporary Music Review* 5, 1 (1989), 5.

⁵⁶ Kuo, "Composing American Individualism: Luciano Berio in the United States, 1960—1971," 134.

⁵⁷ Coren, "Monteverdi and Berio at the Loeb this weekend."

⁵⁸ John von Rhein, "Forget the standing O- - try the standing boo, for a change," *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago: 11 May 2009), http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2009-05-11/entertainment/0905100138_1_music-review (accessed 2 February 2012).

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Bowen, "Arts: Outrage and accolade—Meirion Bowen reviews the Berio Festival at the Barbican," 36.

⁶¹ Yvonne Rainer, "Yvonne Rainer Interviews Ann Halprin," *Tulane Drama Review*, 10, 2 (Winter 1965), 150.

continuity.⁶² In the performance realisation, the dancers used the corridors, basement and the outside areas of the theatre, so the audience to varying degrees only heard their footsteps.⁶³ Inside the theatre, the audience was seated in the centre and the choreography included the theatre aisles both horizontally and vertically —by way of a plank attached to a ceiling beam that enabled the dancers to crawl up and then slide down the structure.⁶⁴

Berio, together with Halprin, designed a similar concept for *Esposizione*. This work premiered on 18 April 1963 for the XXVI Festival Internazionale di Musica Contemporanea, Teatro La Venice, Italy. Halprin's dance group appeared from all the areas within the theatre, including the prompter's pit. To allow the dancers to move vertically, Berio erected on the stage a forty-foot high cargo net.⁶⁵ The dancers' main task was to first burden themselves with luggage such as filled gunnysacks, hassocks that contained tennis balls, bundles of rags, parachutes tucked into containers or rolled up newspapers. The dancers then, in an acrobatic manner, climbed up the cargo net and let go of their objects to give an explosive effect as items flew in all directions within the theatre space.⁶⁶

This work received a hostile reaction from the audience which was, in part, due to the complexity of the overall production. Halprin admits that there were enormous challenges conceptually, physically and logistically for the performers. Logistically, the first major problem was the enormous space of the Venice Opera House that made the six-member dance troupe appear 'like little ants'.⁶⁷ Physically, in addition to an acrobatic climb up a cargo net, the dancers had to carry cumbersome objects including automobile tyres, as well as singing and speaking in Italian, English and Greek.⁶⁸

⁶² Ibid., 149.

⁶³ Ibid., 150.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 148.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 151.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 151.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 150.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 154.

As well as the enormity of the tasks in the performance, a major problem was that the dancers had not conceptually internalised the work due to no rehearsals with the music. Halprin explains that on the night, there were five people stationed in the hall giving cues to the dancers.⁶⁹ Further, in her account of this performance, the audience seemed overwhelmed with the theatrics; however, when the music became repetitious and monotonous, they yelled, 'Basta! Basta!' (Enough! Enough!).⁷⁰ However, the spectacle of the on-stage acrobatics within the confines of an opera house did create some 'excitement' among the attendees.⁷¹ Given the overall ambivalent audience response and Halprin's admission of the innate difficulty of performing this work, Berio decided to withdraw *Esposizione* and then revised some of the material to form part of *Laborintus II* of 1965.

The theatre genre is a social convention, and as for all social conventions, it generates horizons of expectation for the theatrical consumer.⁷² Berio commented that mainstream twentieth-century opera, as in the nineteenth century, 'belonged to the people; it was a form of collective ritual, and could therefore become a cultural meeting point providing a sense of collective identity and a facile emotive instrument of social awareness, almost as much as popular songs, marches, hymns and fireworks'.⁷³ However, Berio intentionally sought to challenge social conventions and mainstream expectations:

If we wish to engage in a dialogue with them [mainstream opera audiences], we must frustrate them and, above all, we must attempt to educate them to separate and analyse the different elements of the work.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ Ibid., 154.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 156.

⁷¹ Ibid., 151.

⁷² Eco, "Eco in ascolto," 1.

⁷³ Berio, *Remembering the Future*, 105.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 113.

Berio's serious and contemplative social and political issues fell well short of 'light entertainment'. Audiences' perception of being scrutinised in *Allez Hop* and *Passaggio* resulted in either an ambivalent or hostile reaction to these works. Audience scrutiny in *Traces* was even foreshadowed by the then Chief of the Music Division Harold Spivake, who chose to ban the scheduled public premiere of 1967 at Iowa University.⁷⁵ Spivake argued that the work's political overtones of the civil rights movement would undermine a harmonious image of North American freedom and democracy.⁷⁶

6.1.2: Subjective narrative in *La Vera Storia*

In the traditional form of opera, the events narrated always reach their destination.⁷⁷ Berio's *azione musicali* are composed of a subjective and non-linear narrative that is characteristic of twentieth-century avant-garde opera. Berio also prefers no plots, similar to Claude Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*, which 'emerges from nothingness and dissolves into nothingness, neither eliciting nor resolving moral conflicts'.⁷⁸ Likewise, the modernist approach of Alban Berg's *Wozzeck* (1914—22) was a source of interest for the composer:

Berg seems to synthesize on the stage the intensity and rigor of his musical thinking, whose structural complexity is visualized and condensed in a sequence of self-sufficient scenes. The scenic gestures seem like episodes from an imaginary film, skilfully edited by the music.⁷⁹

A subjective approach to the narrative is defined as an 'open work' whereby the composer arranges a sequence of communicative effects in a manner such that each individual can modify the original composition.⁸⁰ As the

⁷⁵ Kuo, "Composing American Individualism: Luciano Berio in the United States," 28.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁷⁷ Berio, *Remembering the Future*, 104—105.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 99.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 99—100.

⁸⁰ Umberto Eco, "The Poetics of the Open Work," *The Role of the Reader: Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts*, Bloomington, United States of America: Indiana University Press, 1984, 62.

composer reacts to the play of stimuli and his own response to their patterning, the individual addressee will supply her/his own existential credentials, according to her/his culture, taste, personal inclinations and prejudices.⁸¹ Therefore, the comprehension of the original work is modified by a person's particular and individual perspective. In this way, the work gains its aesthetic validity in proportion to the number of different perspectives from which it can be viewed and understood. Hence, every reception of a work takes on a fresh perspective of itself.

The aim of this narrative approach is to produce a wide range of resonances and echoes without impairing the original essence of the work. For instance, Brecht's plays appear to elicit free and arbitrary responses on the part of the audience. However, they are rhetorically constructed in a manner so as to bring forth a reaction oriented toward Marxist dialectic logic as a primary focus for the possible responses.⁸² Likewise, the narrative and stage action of *La Vera Storia (The True Story)* are constructed so that the audience members question and contemplate the effects of fascism, authoritarianism or dictatorship on individual freedom and social justice.

In the reception of these types of works, Hans Jauss suggests that the first level of aesthetic perception for the audience relies on the 'communicative framework for an imaginative consciousness which is prepared to enter into emotional identification with the action and the situation of the character'.⁸³ The explication of a work then occurs 'on a second, reflective level of aesthetic experience, when the spectator or reader turns back critically toward his primary aesthetic experience'.⁸⁴ In the same manner, a person's initial perception of *La Vera Storia* must be grasped at first viewing/listening, in the same way as understanding a book that is read for the first time

⁸¹ Ibid., 49.

⁸² Ibid., 62.

⁸³ Hans Robert Jauss, "Levels of Identification of Hero and Audience," translated by Benjamin Bennett and Helga Bennett, *New Literary History* 5, 2 (Winter 1974), 287.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 287.

(provided you know something about the author), or listening to a story being told (provided you know something about the person telling or singing the story).⁸⁵ William Hackman alludes to Jauss' second reflective level as a means to fully comprehend the dramatic substance in *La Vera Storia* by claiming that the work only initially appears 'opaque'.⁸⁶

However, the critical reception of *La Vera Storia* for the premiere at La Scala, Milan on 3 March 1982 suggests that the overall ambiguity of the dramatic substance could pose a threat in attracting future audiences:

Henry Kamm: 'first-nighters were unsure of what precisely they had witnessed' as the 'libretto and stage action do not make it clear who ultimately wins the struggle'.⁸⁷

Ivan Hewett: the 'lack of plain statement is, in part, one of the main burdens of modernism'.⁸⁸

Paul Driver: Berio's avoidance of a 'straight narrative is pathological'.⁸⁹

La Vera Storia draws on Sicilian *cantastorie*, who are traditional story-singers who attract an audience at fiestas with the words, 'come close, come close, and I'll tell you the story of'⁹⁰ Berio and Calvino approached the essence of opera theatre in its prime elements to suggest that a 'true story' is always different from the way it appears at first, and that in back of it there may be another even truer.⁹¹ *La Vera Storia* presents no plot but rather a series of events. Part I is set in a piazza and four large choruses that dominate this section help to develop the image of a feast day celebration. The *Prima Festa* opens with the chorus singing 'nella festa tutto' (in the festival, everything) as an antithesis to the subsequent images of brutality and the

⁸⁵ Berio, *La Vera Storia* (Author's notes).

⁸⁶ William Hackman, "Acclaimed *La Vera Storia* Typifies Modernism's Ambivalence to the Past," *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago: 26 January 1986), 16.

⁸⁷ Henry Kamm, "La Scala Has Premiere and Some Traditions Fall," *New York Times* (New York: 11 March 1982), 20.

⁸⁸ Hewett, "Luciano Berio: Composer whose highly personal modernism embraced theatre, language and new sonorities," 23.

⁸⁹ Paul Driver, "Berio's *Chemins de flair*; Music," *Times* (London, United Kingdom: 22 May 1994), Features Section, np.

⁹⁰ Luciano Berio, *La Vera Storia* (Author's notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio:

<http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 26 July 2012).

⁹¹ Berio, *Remembering the Future*, 109.

execution by firing squad of a condemned man. In the face of death, the character composes his thoughts while the chorus comments with a mixture of pity and sadistic glee.

Berio and Calvino then introduce the female character, Ada (perhaps the daughter of the executed man), who steals the child of Ugo, the city governor, whom Ada thinks was responsible for the execution. The *cantastoria* then enter and sing the first ballad offering potential reasons for the abduction. Ugo, consumed by grief, collapses and dies; Ivo, the eldest son of the governor, swears vengeance in the form of general reprisals.

Then another scenario presents itself: Ivo and his younger brother Luca are both rivals for the love of Leonora. A dual between the two brothers leaves Ivo wounded and, as retribution, Luca is sentenced to prison and death. In this case, the viewer/listener may perceive the character of Ivo as supported by the police and Luca as supported by the people. The scenarios of Part I are narrated through an archetypal operatic form that includes solos, duets, trios, arias, ballads and choruses.⁹² To conclude Part I, Ada emerges alone to the front of the stage and sings of her hope for a better future.

These narratives echo Verdi's opera *Il Trovatore*.⁹³ Take, for example, the death of Count di Luna's youngest son. In the opening act, Ferrando, a captain of the guards, narrates the story to his soldiers that the Count's son fell ill after being bewitched by a gypsy. Then, as retribution, the Count ordered that this gypsy be burnt at the stake. The gypsy's proclamations of innocence fall on deaf ears, and in the final moments before dying she commands that her daughter Azucena seek revenge. The daughter abducts the Count's child, and burnt bones of a child are found in the ashes of the pyre. Azucena's version of the same story to her companions consolidates the abduction; however, amidst the confusion of this horrific event she threw her own child into the flames. The actual death of the gypsy child is not

⁹² Berio, *La Vera Storia* (Author's notes).

⁹³ David Osmond-Smith, "Here Comes Nobody: A Dramaturgical Exploration of Luciano Berio's *Outis*," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 12, 2 (July 2000), 166.

witnessed by the audience; therefore, the truer story is as perceived by the listener/viewer.

In a similar manner, the text of Part II is a transfiguration of the text in Part I that presents an analysis of the initial conflicts in a new musical and dramaturgical perspective.⁹⁴ For Part II, the stage is dimly lit with street lights and the stage scenery includes a building facade that functions as a dwelling, barracks or a prison. Segments of the text by specific characters in Part I are then in Part II spoken or sung by unnamed pedestrians. The first passer-by is seized by the police, interrogated, and pushed from the upper window to his death.

The audience members extract their own perception of the story by listening to the ballad singers, who also present their version of events similarly to the slightly varied accounts of Ferrando and Azucena. At an institutional level, the listener/viewer may interpret this scene as corruption within the police force or alternatively as law and order, depending on the individual's perception of the man as a criminal or an innocent bystander. To enhance the reception of the story, the music steers these events towards an interpretation of a corrupt institutional regime. For instance, the evocation of fear and oppression is implied by the chorus, which interjects sparingly as characters move in an anxious manner across the stage. The terror is further enhanced by distant voices that sing from the orchestra pit. John Warnaby describes the narrative of Part II as being 'refracted through a distorting mirror as in a dream'.⁹⁵ Stephen Pettitt perceives the narrative style as one that 'blurs' the distinction between drama and reality.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Berio, *La Vera Storia* (Author's notes).

⁹⁵ Warnaby, "Obituary: Luciano Berio," 5.

⁹⁶ Stephen Pettitt, "Recomposing composers; Luciano Berio," *Times* (London, United Kingdom: 26 April 1994), Features section, np.

6.1.3: Defining common understanding through storytelling in *Outis* and *Cronaca del Luogo*:

Musical theatre is one of a number of genres that retell seminal stories. Culture requires these types of stories to define a common understanding of what we expect to encounter in others and/or identify within ourselves.⁹⁷ Jauss suggests that the epic or legendary hero 'satisfies the need of collective memory for the glorification of a historical deed which surpasses everyday reality'.⁹⁸ Berio drew on the Ulysses myth to enhance the reception of *Outis*. The text is by Dario Del Corno and includes Italian, German and English words.

Berio's *Outis* represents the famous mythical character Odysseus/Ulysses, who took ten years to come home after the Trojan War; Steve represents Telemachus (Ulysses's son); Emily stands for Penelope (Ulysses's wife); Olga and Samantha may represent Circe (the enchantress goddess) and Calypso (goddess-nymph), who were both Ulysses's mistresses; Marina represents Nausicaa, who finds Ulysses washed up on the shore, just as he has woken from a deep sleep. Nausicaa offers Ulysses her hospitality and later sings him a song that recounts all of his sad endeavours, which reduces Ulysses to tears. Bernard Holland recommends that we ponder the mysteries of 'being a non-being with the story of Ulysses as backdrop'.⁹⁹

In the first narrative, *Outis* is killed by his son Isaac and is reborn. Berio then introduces the hero's other son Steve, who laments the loss. The auction of images from familiar fairy-tale stories such as Little Red Riding Hood, the Babes in the Woods, Cinderella and Snow White allude to the reduction of human values to consumerism and the myths of childhood. *Outis*'s wife Emily also appears, leading another son Rudy by the hand. The auctioneer then swells to a monstrous size and tries to engulf Rudy. In defence, *Outis*

⁹⁷ Osmond-Smith, "Here comes nobody: A Dramaturgical exploration of Luciano Berio's *Outis*," 163.

⁹⁸ Jauss, "Levels of Identification of Hero and Audience," 306.

⁹⁹ Bernard Holland, "Parade of Images With a Choice Of Meanings," *New York Times* (New York: 2 August 1999), E. 1.

punctures and destroys the auctioneer. Emily puts on a bride's dress; however, Outis appears to show no interest and departs.

In the second narrative, the audience is confronted by the sexual energy and aggression of a bank director for whom the 'male' bank clerks strip, only then revealing themselves as females. At this point, the bank transmutes into a brothel, which alludes to Ulysses's infidelities as well as another form of consumerism. The set of the bordello scene includes glass doorways similar to those found in the red light district in Amsterdam.¹⁰⁰ For this scene, naked, oiled dancers repeatedly throw themselves against the glass doors and slide slowly down to the floor while Olga and Samantha simulate violent sexual acts around Outis.¹⁰¹ Mark Swed describes this scene as highly 'provocative'.¹⁰²

The third narrative also deals with consumerism; however, this time the scene is set in a supermarket that entices customers with consumer goods. The images also include news clips depicting war and suffering. Outis's son Steve appears to be unfazed by the goings on and takes a book from the shelf to read. He offers his hand to Outis, who does not respond. The supermarket then transforms into a concentration camp. The text fragments that echo Shylock, the Venetian Jewish moneylender from Shakespeare's play *The Merchant of Venice*, rouse the abhorrence of anti-Semitism. The chorus portrays the Holocaust survivors and sings the text from Paul Celan's *Die Posaunenstelle* (1969):

The place that cries aloud for judgement
deep in the glowing
empty-text
the extremity of flame
the hole in time
listen inward
with your mouth.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Heather Cairncross, "The Show That Didn't Go On," <http://www.heathercairncross.com/the-show-that-didnt-go-on> (accessed 27 February 2014).

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Mark Swed, "A Legend Turns Into a Virtual Nobody," *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, California: 9 October 1996), 1.

¹⁰³ Luciano Berio, *Outis*, (Milan, Italy, Ricordi: LB13730900).

The fourth narrative presents each of the women in Outis's life who then each address him under the Director's orders. Children enter and the Director coaxes them to play make-believe soldiers and provides them with toy weapons. Berio alludes to the fake glamour of militarism, the children become frightened and then hide for protection behind Outis. Clowns then enter the stage to console and entertain the children. A procession of displaced war refugees then enter the stage and embrace each other. Outis, however, continues on his journey. The fifth cycle opens upon the deck of a cruise ship. As in Ulysses's case, the ship is taken by a storm and Outis's body is cast upon the shore.

To enhance the reception of a work, Berio proposes that contemporary music theatre 'must promote relative auto-sufficiency between the musical discourse, scenic discourse and text, and thus make it possible to develop a polyphony between three different but jointly responsible discourses, between three narratives that become one.'¹⁰⁴ The following excerpt is an example of the connectivity between these three discourses (see Musical example 25: *Outis*, Fifth cycle [15V], bars 4—19). The stage action includes Marina, who approaches Outis and moves over him and sings in a tender manner. Marina is the witness to Outis's lonely voyage (as Nausicaa was to Ulysses) and sings of his sorrowful journey: 'o you that are so sorrowful and that have presages of horror'. For the audience, Marina's tenderness is evoked by the lyrical quality of the vocal line with soft dynamics (ranging from *pp-mf*) and the lulling effects of the triplet metre. Berio allocates Outis an aural character by way of a harmonic pedal including a fourth or augmented fourth. At bar 17, the sleeping Outis is echoed by the alto saxophone in combination with the same pitches of Marina's vocal line (F sharp 3— C3—F sharp 3).

¹⁰⁴ Luciano Berio, "Of Sounds and Images," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 9, 3 (November 1997), 298.

Musical example 25: *Outis*, Fifth cycle [15V], bars 4—19

Musical score for *Outis*, Fifth cycle [15V], bars 4–19. The score is in 4/4 time with a tempo of quarter note = 64. It features a vocal line for Marina and an orchestral accompaniment. The vocal line includes lyrics: "O tu che sei co-si tri-ste", "e e e hai e hai pre-sa", "gi e hai pre-sa-gi d'or-ro", and "re d'or-ro-re". The orchestration includes Violins 1 and 2, Piccolo, Piano and Harp, Flute, Clarinet in B-flat, Bassoon, Trumpet, Trombone, Saxophone (Alto and Tenor), and Violoncello. Dynamics range from *ppp* to *f*. The score shows complex rhythmic patterns and melodic lines for both voice and instruments.

The critical reception implies that Berio's depiction of a familiar story in combination with the vivid stage images and the music enhanced the overall reception of this work:

Driver: describes *Outis* as Berio's 'structuralist-anthropological enquiry'.¹⁰⁵

Holland: recommends that *Outis*, 'attaches itself to just about every time period, venue and culture imaginable'.¹⁰⁶

Swed: the libretto 'considers what Ulysses has represented throughout European history as Homer's hero has been reborn again and again in different interpretations'. *Outis* can 'hold the listener easily enthralled for its two hours'.¹⁰⁷

To enhance the reception of *Cronaca del Luogo*, Berio chooses Biblical themes from the Old Testament that Holland describes as 'a receptacle for memory'.¹⁰⁸ This work includes a prologue and five scenes. The text was compiled by Talia Pecker Berio and incorporates excerpts from Rabbinic literature as well as the poetry of Paul Celan and Marina Tsvetayeva.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the audience sits in the venue facing a wall that may be perceived as a barrier, observation point, building site, dwelling place or as a home that has had to be abandoned.¹⁰⁹ In the reception of this work, Clements comments that the wall represents 'Babel, Jericho or Jerusalem'.¹¹⁰ Griffiths perceives the wall as Jerusalem that evokes a 'city of hope and dispute, of white stone and blood'.¹¹¹ On another level, this wall also represents civilisation, stability, home-building and safety as well as power and its abuses.¹¹² Alternatively, the piazza (stage) is a constant dangerous zone.¹¹³ Holland describes the wall as telling us 'what was and remains', the piazza as 'what is and might be'.¹¹⁴ The wall is also 'God, unknowable and unnameable as Jewish belief dictates'.¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁵ Driver, "Sounds of Silence; Luciano Berio; Culture Profile," Features Section, np.

¹⁰⁶ Holland, "A Hero Who Defies Morality and Logic," C. 19.

¹⁰⁷ Swed, "A Legend Turns Into a Virtual Nobody," 1.

¹⁰⁸ Holland, "Parade of Images With a Choice Of Meanings," E. 1.

¹⁰⁹ Paul Griffiths, "Luciano Berio's music-theatre work," Centro Studi Luciano Berio <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 7 August 2015).

¹¹⁰ Andrew Clements, "Beating heads against the wall," *Guardian* (London, United Kingdom: 3 August 1999), <http://www.theguardian/culture/1999/aug/artsfeatures2> (accessed 12 December 2014).

¹¹¹ Griffiths, "Luciano Berio's music-theatre work."

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Holland, "Parade of Images With a Choice Of Meanings," E. 1.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., E. 1.

The opening prologue begins with slow moving voices of the chorus and the sound of wind instruments that emanate from the wall to evoke an 'ancient society'.¹¹⁶ Clements comments that 'everything in the music seems to grow out of the sombre, unsettling wind chord with which the piece opens, spreading across the wall as the electronics multiply the aural images'.¹¹⁷ The character 'R' takes on the role of Rahab, a prostitute who lived in Jericho (the Promised Land) and assisted the Israelites in capturing the city. Symbolically 'R' represents the story of the Jewish Nation and her opening aria summons the night to 'ignite memory', and she then disappears into the wall to a total blackout. Holland suggests that 'R' wanders throughout the five scenes more as a 'moderator and editorialist than narrator'.¹¹⁸

Blinding lights and frantic orchestral chords usher in the first scene. A bass and tenor each accompanied by a bass clarinet sing a love song, and a messenger appears whom 'R' sends away. The piazza fills with people and among them a General (the character of Joshua, who was one of the twelve spies of Israel sent by Moses to explore the land of Canaan. After Moses's death, he led the Israelite tribes in the conquest of Canaan, and distributed the lands among these tribes). Phaneul (an angel) instructs the General to take off his shoes, as he is now on holy ground. The General gives his battle cry to which Phaneul requests that not a tree be destroyed. The crowd in the piazza mimic the Israelites by circling the walls of Jericho, then the General returns to declare victory. This scene concludes with 'R' singing a lament accompanied by quiet *tremolo* gestures in the violin and viola, and a keyboard drone further supported by the wind section.

The second scene begins with 'R's' aria entitled *Il campo (The field)*, which deals with expectation and her ominous premonitions. An Ageless Man pursued by children then arrives on the piazza. He predicts torrential rainfall and the chorus from the wall counter this prediction by singing of blood falling on stone.

¹¹⁶ Griffiths, "Luciano Berio's music-theatre work."

¹¹⁷ Clements, "Beating heads against the wall."

¹¹⁸ Holland, "Parade of Images With a Choice Of Meanings," E. 1.

At the beginning of the third scene, Nino (an abbreviation for Nimrod, who is traditionally associated with the building of the Tower of Babel) enters and sings in an exalted manner, clapping his hands to the accompaniment of trombones, tubas and strings. As the piazza fills with builders and supervisors, a Woman in Pain gives birth then sings of a warning. However, to the sounds of an accelerating orchestra, the flurry of building activity continues. On the piazza, the chorus form two factions, the just and the idolators who are dressed in animal masks and costumes, and we see Nino frantically running from one faction to the other. This scene culminates with the singing of different syllables and words in different languages and then subsides on the word 'Shibboleth'. This was the password used by the Gileadites to distinguish their own men from the enemy— the Ephraimites who constantly attempted to cross the River Jordan back into their own home territory. 'Shibboleth' was the chosen password as the Ephraimites could not pronounce the 'sh' sound.

In the fourth scene entitled *La Casa (The home)*, 'R' stands silently on the piazza by a tree. Meanwhile the chorus provides a commentary or an interrogation concerning the content of the previous scene as well as the real nature of 'R'. The wall is illuminated from within, as if it were an apartment block, and various people come and go silently while the voices within the wall murmur and then climax on the password 'Shibboleth'.

The final scene, *La piazza*, opens with the orchestra employing a slow tempo and soft dynamic ranges. 'R' stands on the piazza and watches the two workers who arrive and begin to measure the wall and the piazza. 'R' begins her aria, which foresees disaster and calls for flight. The children return, now leading the Ageless Man. The Mayor returns with 'sinister' visitors who seem to be taking possession of the piazza.¹¹⁹ The characters line up as if to go or be taken somewhere. Doctors measure huddled choristers with 'Auschwitz-

¹¹⁹ Griffiths, "Luciano Berio's music-theatre work."

like menace'.¹²⁰ 'R' calls on them to sing even without moving their lips: to sit on the ruins and sing. The chorus now on the piazza sing the following text:

Flute, double flute of the night, ignite the question, in the night, nobody answers, in the wind of the night, then comes the fire, after the fire the voice of a long silence.

This work presents no plot or linear argument; therefore, an understanding and knowledge of the events in the Old Testament will go some way to aid the reception of this work. Holland implies the complexity of this work by describing it as being both 'heavy thinking for the ear and the eye'.¹²¹ Clements also describes the work as 'elusive' and 'hard' to grasp; however, says it is one of Berio's 'greatest achievements' with 'utterly fresh sensual sonorities and vocal lines of arching expressiveness and dramatic power'.¹²²

6.1.4: Metaphors to shape the reception in *Un re in ascolto*:

The central metaphor for *Un re in ascolto* is that of a rehearsal. This work is in two parts and the text is by Italo Calvino. Berio recognises the expectations of mainstream opera audiences, acknowledging that when composing an opera it is important to have a link to the traditional form of the genre.¹²³ *Un re in ascolto* offers the audience some of these traditional links by way of a series of arias, duets and *concertati*. Nevertheless, like all of Berio's *azione musicale*, this work also has no plot or linear narrative. The complexity of the text fragments is dissipated to some extent by the stage imagery that stimulates our 'imagination'.¹²⁴ Berio challenges the audience to contemplate aspects of the performance that present reality, illusion or fantasy.¹²⁵

¹²⁰ Holland, "Parade of Images With a Choice Of Meanings," E. 1.

¹²¹ Bernard Holland, "A Hero Who Defies Morality and Logic," *New York Times* (New York: 10 October 1996), C. 19.

¹²² Clements, "Beating heads against the wall."

¹²³ Wignall, "Current Trends in Italian Opera," 317.

¹²⁴ Von Rhein, "Art of Listening: Luciano Berio Reinvents and Researches Opera for the Future," 11.

¹²⁵ Pettitt, "Recomposing composers; Luciano Berio," Features Section, np.

The opening of Act I presents the king of theatre, Prospero, an old impresario who is sitting in his office, while outside rehearsals take place. Chaos is immediately evoked by the manic on-stage activity. The characters each act independently from each other and often independently of the music. Some actors recite their lines, while acrobats who are suspended on wires high above the stage practise against a backdrop of tumblers, dancers and a woman sawn in half by a magician.¹²⁶ In the meantime, some of chorus members fling themselves to the floor and crawl across the stage and others practise their exercise routines.¹²⁷ The conductor and orchestra also are trying things out; for instance, they experiment with different chords and repeat waltz-like figures.¹²⁸ To add to the confusion, in addition to the orchestra rehearsing, soloists also practise their own sections.¹²⁹ Swed describes the imagery as ‘comic-book realism’.¹³⁰

Berio invokes multiple stories and insights as to the different types of characters and personalities that are attracted to the theatre. For instance, the character of Prospero seeks to realise his own objective of a theatre performance that contradicts the style of the egotistical and domineering modern director.¹³¹ Griffiths suggests that in a tongue-in-cheek manner, Berio presents operatic singers as caricatures of a dumb diva, a seductress and nervous ingénue.¹³² Prospero, however, is not seeking these types of singers. During the course of this work, Prospero listens to three auditions. The following musical excerpts demonstrate the way in which Berio elaborates the music of the same audition piece. For Audition I (marked crotchet equals 80), the vocal line encompasses standard writing for a mezzo-soprano and draws its pitch material from the static harmonic field of the on stage piano accompaniment. The dynamic range is varied (marked *crescendo — pp—crescendo —mf—p—crescendo—f—decrescendo*) and

¹²⁶ Von Rhein, “Art of Listening: Luciano Berio Reinvents and Researches Opera for the Future,” 11.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹³⁰ Swed, “A Legend Turns Into a Virtual Nobody,” 1.

¹³¹ Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 109.

¹³² Griffiths, “Heeding Perceptions of the Past While Listening for the Future,” C. 12.

the vocalist concludes on a long dotted minim pitch (F sharp 4) with a loud dynamic (marked *f*). The orchestra either echoes the vocal line or elaborates it by way of simple oscillations (marked *pp*) and trills (see Musical example 26: *Un re in ascolto*, Audition I, [38] bars 5—8 and [39] bars 1—2).

Musical example 26: *Un re in ascolto*, Audition I, [38] bars 5—8 and [39] bars 1—2.

3/4 4/4

pp Il tut - to *mf* di te.

3/4 4/4

ppp *p*

tutti un. (senza sord.)

pp

3/4 4/4

19
Fl. *pp*

29
Fl. *pp*

19
Ob. *pp*

29
Cl. i. *pp*

19
Cl. *pp*

29
Cl. *pp*

Il. b. *pp*

19
Fg. *pp*

29
Fg. *pp*

19
Cor. *pp*

29
Cor. *pp*

39
Cor. *pp*

Tr. 1^a *pp*

19
T. 1
- è par - zia - le, [c] + Pro - spe - ro,

Pf.

Cel.

4

3/4 **39**

fln. I solo
gli altri mettono sord.

fln. II div. *pp*

Vle. div. *pp*

Vc. div. *pp*

Cb. *pp*

Towards the end of the work, the singer that Prospero has imagined enters. Protagonista's aria develops the same fragments from Audition I. However, the tempo is faster and more varied (marked crotchet equals 104 and 72, (see Musical example 27: *Un re in ascolto*, *Aria V* [51] bars 3—9 and [52] bars 1—2), and the orchestral accompaniment draws on more complex harmonic material to that of Audition I. This includes an oscillating G4—B4 flat in the string section which anticipates these pitches in the vocal line, and the strings pursue a harmony characterised by frequent crossing of lines with upper and lower strings. In comparison to Audition I, Protagonista's aria begins with conviction on the pitch E4 (marked *f* with accent), and the vocal line in a relatively short space of time requires controlled tempi changes and concludes on the pitch F4 (marked *pp* and *sotto voce*).

Musical example 27: *Un re in ascolto*, *Aria V* [51] bars 3—9 and [52] bars 1—2.

82

2/4 3/8 2/4 rall. — — — ♩ = 104 5/8 4/4

Fl. 10^a 20^a

Ott. 19^a 20^a

Ob. 19^a 20^a

C. I.

I. piccolo

Cl. 19^a 20^a

Cl. b.

Sax. t.

Fg. 10^a 20^a

Tr. 19^a 30^a

Tbn. 19^a

tagonista

va alla Tisiens

Cel.

2/4 3/8 2/4 rall. — — — ♩ = 104 5/8 4/4

Vin. I div.

Vin. II

Vie. arco

Vc. arco

Cb. arco

2/4 3/8 2/4 rall. — — — ♩ = 104 5/8 4/4

282 Noten 4

4/4 52 ♩ = 72

Fl. 1^a *ppp*

Fl. 2^a

Ob. 1^a *ppp*

Ob. 2^a

Cl. 1^a *ppp*

Cl. 2^a

Sax. t. *pp*

Fg. 1^a *pp*

Cor. 1^a *ppp*

tagonista *pp s.v.* Pro - spe - ro. *p*

4/4 52 ♩ = 72

Vln. I *p* *ppp* solo *pp* *p*

div. *p* *ppp* solo *pp* *p*

Vln. II *p* *ppp* solo *p*

Vle. *p* *ppp* solo *pp* *p*

Vc. *p* *ppp* solo *p*

Cb. *p* *ppp* solo *p* pizz.

4/4 52 ♩ = 72

However, Prospero dies without fulfilling his dream of producing a theatre work. Calvino's text fragments for the final scene describe the 'inner thoughts of a grand old man of the theatre, as he lies dying'.¹³³ On one level *Un re in ascolto* is pessimistic: Prospero dies, beset by unassimilated delusions and unfulfilled obligations.¹³⁴ Anne Midgette suggests that this work is an 'allegory of the composer himself and the act of making art'.¹³⁵ Griffiths reserves his highest accolades for this work, praising it as one of the greatest operas, and describing the work's North American premiere of 1996 at the Lyric Opera of Chicago as 'a breathtaking occasion'.¹³⁶

6.2: Berio's *azione musicale* in the commercial opera market

A number of factors interrelate to determine the availability of a cultural product within the mainstream performing arts. These include the assumptions of academic institutions; the horizon of expectations by a person choosing to attend a particular genre of performance arts; and the national idea of culture.¹³⁷ For instance, in Australia, opera is a far newer industry and experience because, with respect to Western art forms, it is a young country with a young culture.¹³⁸ From a cultural stance, North America is much older; however, Swed explains that North American opera companies still are not willing to take on productions such as *Outis* and therefore are 'behind the times'.¹³⁹

During the 1960s, Berio was supported by academic institutions to present his works, which included both professional and student musicians. For

¹³³ Berio, Eco "Eco in ascolto," 4.

¹³⁴ Griffiths, "Heeding Perceptions of the Past While Listening for the Future," C. 12.

¹³⁵ Midgette, "Adventures Outside the Classical Canon: Pathfinding Composers," E. 1: 26.

¹³⁶ Griffiths, "Heeding Perceptions of the Past While Listening for the Future," C. 12.

¹³⁷ Susan Bennett, *Theatre Audiences: A theory of production and reception*, London and New York: Routledge, 1990, 94.

¹³⁸ Monica Attard, Interview with Simone Young, "Sunday Profile: Simone Young," Australian Broadcasting Corporation (30 July 2009). <http://www.abc.net.au/sundayprofile/stories/2641053.htm> (accessed 2 February 2014).

¹³⁹ Swed, "A Legend Turns Into a Virtual Nobody," 1.

instance, Berio's *Passaggio* premiered at the Juilliard School and Harvard University and *Traces* was to premiere at the University of Iowa, Iowa City. However, Spivake's swift withdrawal of *Traces* indicates that Berio was also constrained by North American academic institutions. On a commercial level, during the 1960s, the artistic programming at the Santa Fe Opera was an anomaly among North American opera houses in that the organisation presented contemporary and rarely performed works alongside the standard operatic repertory.¹⁴⁰ The Santa Fe Opera did present Berio's *Opera* as I discuss further in Chapter 7. However, the 'law of the market' played a significant role in the demise of this work within the commercial arena.

On a commercial level, critics are powerful and for the most part determine whether or not a piece is to be seen and by how many people and whether or not it is to be successful.¹⁴¹ Berio understands that his works do not escape the 'law of the market place'.¹⁴² This certainly was the case for Berio's early work entitled *Opera* (for ten actors, two sopranos, tenor, baritone, vocal ensemble, orchestra and tape, 1969). The critical reception of the premiere performances of *Opera*, which took place on 12 and 14 August 1970 in Santa Fe, New Mexico, was for the most, one of outright hostility. The performers included members of the Open Theater Ensemble, an avant-garde experimental theatre group from New York, conductor Denis Russell Davies and director Roberta Sklar. Even with such a distinguished cast, Berio admits that 'things did not go well'.¹⁴³ Berio singularly attributes the work's failure to the press as they 'did not appreciate and understand it'.¹⁴⁴

The horizon of expectation of the traditional opera consumer expects action that is narrated with words and music, takes place on stage, has singers in costume, an orchestra, scenery, and is advertised by a poster with an art-

¹⁴⁰ Tiffany Kuo, 'Re-contextualizing Individual Pieces in Luciano Berio's *Opera*,' Paper presented for Berio Study Day: *Azione Musicale*, Paris 8 June 2012.

¹⁴¹ Eddy, "Four Directors on Criticism," 28.

¹⁴² Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 55.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 163.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 163.

work that alludes to the operatic tradition.¹⁴⁵ For instance, Opera Australia's 2014 season presented established traditional opera including Mozart's *The Magic Flute* and *Don Giovanni*, Bizet's *Carmen*, Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, Puccini's *Madam Butterfly*, Verdi's *Rigoletto* and *Otello*, Donizetti's *The Elixir of Love* and Rogers' and Hammerstein's *The King and I*. The advertising for these operas shows, in poster form, the main character in costume from each of the stories.

In determining the programming of an opera, the financial costs and returns are a major consideration for opera producers. In an interview with Bruce Duffie of 1988, Ardis Krainik, the then General Director of the Lyric Opera, Chicago conceded that if the 'dollar-figure is too much, we must reluctantly not attempt the project'.¹⁴⁶ Likewise, New York's Metropolitan Opera continues to stage nineteenth-and early twentieth-century accessible opera rather than post-World War II experimental works. As an example, Peter Davis conceded that the loss of funding prevented the scheduled premiere of *La Vera Storia* at Carnegie Hall in 1990.¹⁴⁷ Davis further argued New York opera goers are seldom exposed to important new operas either onstage or in concert form; therefore, this cancellation was a 'major disappointment'.¹⁴⁸ *La Vera Storia* premiered in semi-staged form at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, on 14 May 1994. However, it is yet to premiere in North America and Australia.

The funding of opera is an ongoing consideration. For instance, in 2003 Simone Young's battle to sustain high performance standards and to introduce new works at Opera Australia resulted in the termination of her contract as Music Director. The then Chief Executive Adrian Collette

¹⁴⁵ Eco, "Eco in ascolto," 1.

¹⁴⁶ Bruce Duffie, "Conversation Piece: Manager Ardis Krainik (1988)," <http://www.bruceduffie.comkrainik.html> (accessed 17 July 2013).

¹⁴⁷ Peter G. Davis, "The centennial season opens: a touching homage by Berio; Wernick's new Symphony No.1; Kissin's impressive debut," *The New York Magazine* (New York: 22 October 1990). 22.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 22.

announced that Young's 'future visions for the artistic growth of the company are not sustainable by Opera Australia in its current financial position and we have reluctantly concluded that we have to seek another path'.¹⁴⁹ In defence, Young argues that she will not compromise on performing standards or artists' salaries:

It is a labour-intensive exercise performing opera. It comes down to the question of how you want to perform it. At what level, of what quality? I believe that there are certain levels of staffing of orchestra and chorus that one should never fall below irrespective of the size of the venue.¹⁵⁰

More generally, composers argue that box office success does not necessarily measure accurately the artistic merit of an opera. As Franco Donatoni concedes, contemporary opera will never appeal to the 'masses'.¹⁵¹ Berio philosophically argues that an opera audience should seek to 'evolve' and 'discover new territory' and avoid the direct influence of mass culture and mass media.¹⁵² In 2011, the artistic director of Opera Australia, Lyndon Terracini, commented that an opera production costs approximately \$1 million.¹⁵³ Production costs for an opera include sets, props, costumes, insurances, licensing or royalty costs, salaried positions that include members of the opera chorus, opera principles, the orchestra and the conductor. International opera stars such as Renée Fleming and Plácido Domingo also command exorbitant performance fees.

Berio's 2001 ending for Giacomo Puccini's unfinished opera *Turandot*, similarly to *Rendering*, also goes some way to cater for the mainstream opera market. Berio employs Puccini's motives and elaborates them with linear chromaticism.¹⁵⁴ The story typifies the melodramatic content of early eighteenth- and nineteenth-century operatic tradition. This work presents the Chinese Princess Turandot and her suitor, Calaf, who has to solve three

¹⁴⁹ Raymond Gill and Michael Shmith, "Opera Australia sacks its music director: Golden Girl Goes West," *The Age* (Melbourne, Australia: 14 September 2002), 1.

¹⁵⁰ Attard, Interview with Young.

¹⁵¹ Wignall, *Current Trends in Italian Opera*, 317.

¹⁵² Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 36.

¹⁵³ Francis Merson, Interview with Lyndon Terracini, "Terracini Unleashed," *Limelight*, September 2011, (Haymarket Media, Sydney, Australia), 22.

¹⁵⁴ Parker, *Remaking the Song: Operatic Visions and Revisions from Handel to Berio*, 93.

riddles for her hand in marriage. Calaf solves the riddles but Turandot still refuses to marry him. As a solution to this setback, Calaf offers to relinquish the proposal if Turandot can discover his name before dawn the next day, and then at daybreak he will die. The first scene of Act III stages Turandot's discovery of Calaf's blind father, Timur, and his slave girl Liù. Turandot orders that the two be tortured into revealing the suitor's name. To spare the torture of Timur, the slave girl (who secretly loves Calaf) declares that she alone knows the secret and then commits suicide.

Puccini's sketches for Liù's funeral procession are in the key of E flat minor; Calaf's reproach to Turandot for her cruelty in the following 'Principessa di morte' is characterised by a cycle of fifths and octaves in the key of A minor.¹⁵⁵ In the following excerpt, Berio's funeral procession for Liù is by way of a 15-bar transitional gesture in duple, triple and quadruple metres (marked *muovendo appena* and *agitato* —see Musical example 28: Luciano Berio: *Turandot*, Act III, bars 1—23). In the reception of this excerpt, Alex Ross recommends that the polytonal chords evoke 'a spirit gilding away'.¹⁵⁶ Berio's atonal language then gives way to Puccini's A minor sonority with the inclusion of F sharp 2 only on the first A minor chord (bar 17) to intercede the 'past' with the 'future'. This juxtaposition of musical styles is also a way to introduce newcomers to Berio's *azione musicale*.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 101.

¹⁵⁶ Alex Ross, "Puccini Remixed," *New Yorker* (New York: 27 February 2006), 84.

Musical example 28: Luciano Berio: *Turandot*, Act III, bars 1—23

Tutti sono usciti Il Principe e Turandot si avvicinano
 Muovendo appena (♩ = 60)

8 [35] Agitato (♩ = 113)

Subito moderato (♩ = 72)

12 IL PRINCIPE
p ma molto teso e cupo *mf* *accel.*
 Prin-ci-pes-sa, Prin-ci-pes-sa, Prin-ci-pes-sa.

17 [36] (♩ = 72)

P. Prin-ci-pes-sa di mor-te! Prin-ci-pes-sa di ge-lo! Dal tuo tra-gi-co

Tommasini acknowledges that not many companies are willing to take on avant-garde opera, but argues that Berio’s works will have an interested audience, as the composer challenges the traditional form ‘in a subtle and not destructive way’.¹⁵⁷ Tommasini suggests that a work like *Outis* would ‘help bridge the chasm’ between composers and opera audiences.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁷ Tommasini, “A Modernist for the Masses,” 2. 42.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 2. 42.

However, North American, British and Australian opera companies are yet to embark on the presentation of this work.

Osmond-Smith suggests that the 'searching nature' of *La Vera Storia* also has left opera managements 'nervous' of audience reaction.¹⁵⁹ Hackman remarks that Berio integrates complex musical forms with serious dramatic content to achieve 'a landmark of modern opera'.¹⁶⁰ Madelena Gonzalez holds responsible the 'hybrid poetics' as the main challenge for mainstream opera-goers.¹⁶¹ Likewise, Berio's *Cronaca del Luogo* is yet to premiere outside Europe. Arguably, one of the challenges opera managements face is to recreate both the acoustics and ambience of this site-specific commission. However, Clements argues that this work would make an 'overwhelming impression' on an audience even as a concert piece.¹⁶²

Conclusion

The critical reception of *Passaggio* and *Esposizione* demonstrates Berio's attempt to engage mainstream audiences in controversial social and political issues. At times, Berio achieved his intended effect, such as in the case of the Milanese audience reactions to *Passaggio*. However, the New York and London audiences appear to have been more conservative given their refusal to participate and express publicly their social and political stances. Berio's early experimental *azione musicali* demonstrate the composer's willingness to explore other art forms including theatre and dance, as well as, his motivation to employ progressive writers to enhance the dramatic content of his works. The very negative critical reception played a significant role in the demise of *Opera* within the commercial arena and prompted Berio to revise substantially the work in 1977. However, to date, *Opera* has not been

¹⁵⁹ Osmond-Smith, "Here Comes Nobody: A Dramaturgical Exploration of Luciano Berio's *Outis*," 167.

¹⁶⁰ Hackman, "Acclaimed *La Vera Storia* Typifies Modernism's Ambivalence to the Past," 16.

¹⁶¹ Gonzalez, "Introduction," *Minority Theatre on the Global Stage: Challenging Paradigms from the Margins*, xv.

¹⁶² Clements, "Beating heads against the wall."

restaged in North America or even premiered in the United Kingdom or Australia.

The critical reception of *La Vera Storia*, *Outis*, *Cronaca del Luogo* and *Un re in ascolto* highlights the semantic depth of these works on both intellectual and emotions levels. Hence, these works will continue to provide new interpretations and valuations for future generations of opera goers. The composer's tongue-in-cheek self-referentiality in *Un re in ascolto* and his engagement with *Turandot* demonstrates his commitment to a wide range of audiences.

Berio's *azione musicali* are at the forefront of contemporary musical development. The onus is on twenty-first century opera management and artistic directors to make available these works to opera audiences so that they can continue to be reappraised and re-evaluated.

CHAPTER 7

Critics' misunderstanding of Berio's *Opera* (1969–70)

'It was one of the biggest disasters in my life.'

—Luciano Berio¹

Opera (1969–70) was the first large scale stage work that Berio wrote for the New York Open Theater Ensemble. This work had only two performances in North America, both of which were presented by the Santa Fe Opera on 12 and 14 August 1970. Berio described these performances as 'one of the biggest disasters in my life'.² No doubt, Berio's despair was, in part, due to the harsh criticism the work received from the press. This study assesses Berio's reputation within the North American art music scene and discusses the composer's objectives for *Opera*. In determining the factors that contributed to the commercial failure of *Opera*, this chapter contextualises audience expectations of the opera genre from a historical and cultural perspective. Analysing this work within the framework of Stuart Hall's theory of reception will go some way to explaining the wide-ranging, but generally negative, critical reception of *Opera*.

Another area of investigation in this chapter concerns Berio's responses to the critical reception of *Opera*. This study focuses on Berio's amendment to the work's duration, his curtailing of antagonistic and/or offensive statements in the work, and the extent to which he modified the abstract fluctuations between the three story lines for the final 1977 version of *Opera*. The primary sources for this study include reviews from major North American newspapers and opera journals as well as Berio's own writings and published interviews with the composer. Berio did not retain the original version of *Opera*; therefore, to discuss the initial form of the work, this analysis draws

¹ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 162.

² *Ibid.*, 162.

from the program notes that Susan Oyama-Berio wrote for the two Santa Fe premiere performances.

7.1.1: *Opera* (1969–70): commissioning and objectives

Lucrative financial support as well as artistic approval from a number of North American philanthropic organisations indicate that, during the 1960s and early 1970s, Berio was a sought after composer within the country's art music scene. The production of *Opera* was encouraged by John Crosby, the then General Manager of the Santa Fe Opera. This company presents a selection of operas from Mozart to present day and has a reputation for high standard productions of established repertory. The Santa Fe Opera has premiered many new operas by other composers, including Penderecki, Steven Oliver, Aulis Sallinen, Judith Weir, John Eaton and Virgil Thomas. Not all of these works have demonstrated major artistic or commercial successes; however, the company through the 1960s and 1970s willingly committed resources to new opera. For *Opera*, the Frazer Foundation and The Francis Goelet Foundation co-funded the commission as well as the administrative costs of the production. The National Opera Institute of Washington, further, underwrote the production expense with a grant of \$25,000.³

After the success of *Sinfonia*, Berio's operatic debut with *Opera* was highly anticipated by both critics and audiences.⁴ The Santa Fe premiere of *Opera* was the most publicised art music musical event of 1970 and attracted a full audience, a substantial number of critics as well as key figures in the profession.⁵ In addition to the ten members of the Open Theater Ensemble, Berio included a chorus of eight singers and soloists Emily Tracy, Barbara Shuttleworth, Douglas Perry and Richard Lombardi. Berio recruited the

³ Jack Sitton, "Is *Opera* reason to start cussing?" *New Mexican* (Santa Fe, New Mexico: 14 August 1970) Santa Fe Opera Archives (16 May 2012), np.

⁴ Donald Dierks, "Opera Leaves Premiere Crowd Cold," *San Diego Union* (San Diego, California: 14 August 1970) Santa Fe Opera Archives (16 May 2012), np.

⁵ Robert C. Marsh, "Opera sinks at Santa Fe, but Rake makes progress," *Chicago Sun-Times* (Chicago: 23 August 1970) Santa Fe Opera Archives (16 May 2012), np.

orchestra for these performances nationally, and the conductor was Dennis Russell Davies, at that time, the assistant conductor of the Juilliard Ensemble.⁶ The directors for this production included Berio and Roberta Skalar, who had assumed the position when Joseph Chaikin fell ill and was unable to direct the premiere performances.⁷ Skalar was Chaikin's co-director of the Open Theater and had worked on the Ensemble's previous productions, which included *The Serpent* (1967) and *Terminal* (1969).

A number of factors prompted Berio to write for the Open Theater Ensemble. Most notably, it was the group's virtuosity and the reputation of Chaikin as a major exponent of new theatre.⁸ Berio and Chaikin also shared the same ideas and objectives, which were to challenge and revolutionise their respective art forms. As discussed in Chapter 6, Berio contested the constraints of traditional eighteenth and nineteenth century European/ North American operas. Likewise, Chaikin sought to break away from institutional governance, a fixed style and approach to theatre, as well as to achieve independence from critical determinations.⁹ No doubt the Open Theater's radicalism was a major drawcard for Berio. The Ensemble was aligned with a non-naturalistic approach to text, acting, staging, costumes and the manner in which the actors interacted with their audiences.¹⁰

In addition to seeking new ways to express ideas, character and narrative, Berio and Chaikin had the same philosophical stance: to question and challenge audiences about the human condition and the hierarchical powers within society. Chaikin produced *The Serpent*, which quizzes the ruling myths of our lives, and *Terminal*, in which interviews with the dead depict the institutionalisation of life.¹¹ Similarly, Berio's early musical theatre work

⁶ Kortney Michele James, "Jeanne Baxtresser: A Musical Legacy," PhD Dissertation, Arizona State University, 2008, 33.

⁷ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 163.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 162—163.

⁹ Carol Marrin, "After Paradise: The Open Theater's *The Serpent*, *Terminal* and *The Mutation Show*," *Restaging the Sixties: Radical Theaters and Their Legacies*, eds. James M. Harding and Cindy Rosenthal, Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan, 2006, 79.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 79.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 81.

entitled *Mimusique No. 2* (for four mimes and orchestra, 1955), deals with the fundamental tensions between civilisation and the individual. The complacency of human society dominates Berio's work entitled *Allez Hop* (for mezzo-soprano, eight actors, dancers and orchestra, 1952—59). In *Opera* Berio questioned human morality, death and the afterlife.

7.1.2: Synopsis

According to Berio, the work's title refers to the Latin term 'opus' meaning 'works'.¹² As discussed in Chapter 6, traditional mainstream opera includes a plot, established vocal techniques and through-composed music. The libretti are drawn from plays, novels, poems, myths or folk tales that traditionally aim for a representation of reality or historical accounts.¹³ For *Opera*, Berio discards these types of traditional librettos and opts for a non-linear narrative without a straightforward plot. Instead, the text fragments could be part of a story, but fragments which, when taken together, do not quite make a story.¹⁴ The inclusion of spoken text without instrumental accompaniment further blurs the boundary between the operatic and the theatre genres.

Berio interweaves three stories about death. The first is the story of the *Titanic*, which on her maiden voyage in 1912 crashed into an iceberg, resulting in the deaths of more than fifteen hundred people. The second story Berio bases on the theatre piece *Terminal*. Written by Susan Yankowitz in collaboration with Chaikin, this work concerns dying, death and the afterlife and is an investigation into human morality.¹⁵ In the reception of *Terminal*, its intentionally ambiguous title may imply a bus or train station on a traveller's journey, an ending, or a hospital ward reserved for terminal cases.¹⁶

¹² Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 163.

¹³ Sabine Lichtenstein, "Introduction," *Music's Obedient Daughter: The Opera Libretto from Source to Score*, ed. Sabine Lichtenstein, Amsterdam, New York, New York, Rodopi, 2014, 9.

¹⁴ Susan Oyama-Berio, Program Notes to *Opera*, Santa Fe Opera, (12 and 14 August 1970), 13.

¹⁵ Susan Yankowitz, "1969 *Terminal* 1996: An Ensemble Work," *Performing Arts Journal*, 19, 3 (September 1997), 80.

¹⁶ Oyama-Berio, Program Notes to *Opera*, 13.

Likewise, Berio's *Opera* imparts to the audience the same contemplations. The latter two of the above interpretations dominate *Opera*.

Arguably, Berio seeks to include *Terminal* for its innovative approach to extended form. *Terminal* is in the form of broad sections, which include a series of fragments, but each fragment is 'a self-contained entity which relates to the others and to the whole through juxtapositions and associations'.¹⁷ According to Yankowitz, *Terminal* is a presentational work and the text cannot be fully understood apart from production.¹⁸ The composer presented portions of this work both intact (as in the original) as well as in fragmented form.¹⁹

For the third variation on the theme of endings and death, Berio chooses the story of the Orpheus myth.²⁰ This theme of endings explores the idea of fate, the inexorable and the definitive.²¹ Berio presents three portions of the libretto by Alessandro Striggio from Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, including joyful expectation, the message of death by Eurydice and despair.²²

The following is the original form of *Opera*, which appeared on the Santa Fe Opera program notes. This version of the work is two and a half hours in duration.

¹⁷ Yankowitz, "1969 *Terminal* 1996): An Ensemble Work." 80—81.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 80.

¹⁹ Oyama-Berio, Program Notes to *Opera*, 13.

²⁰ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 163.

²¹ Oyama-Berio, Program Notes to *Opera*, 13.

²² *Ibid.*, 13.

Opera (1969–70)

Part I

Air a (soprano, piano and actors)
Reminder a (baritone)
Trio a (actors and vocal ensemble)
Game (actors)
Melodrama (tenor)
Lullaby (vocal ensemble and actors)
Trio b (vocal ensemble and actors)
Reminder b (baritone)
Traces (orchestra and vocal ensemble)

Intermission

Part II

Air b (soprano, piano and flute)
Reminder c (baritone)
Interplay (actors)
Dream I (tape)
Dream II (actors)
Agnus Dei (children)
Retrospect (actors)
Chemins (orchestra and vocal ensemble)

Intermission

Part III

Air c / *Reminder d* / *Lullaby* (soprano, piano, baritone and actors)
Event (actors)

Intermission

Part IV

Air d (soprano, piano and orchestra)
Reminder e (baritone)
Concerto (orchestra, vocal ensemble and actors)
Trio (actors)
Adieu (tape, actors and orchestra)

The following discussion focuses on critics' and audience reactions to *Opera*. The audience reactions cited in this section are as observed by critics' at the Santa Fe premiere performances.

7.2.1: Critics' and audience reactions to premiere performances

The experimental nature of *Opera* was a major factor that contributed to the mostly negative audience reactions. Berio's theme of death, morality and political commentary did not match the critics' and audience's notions of 'light entertainment'. For instance, Robert Commanday experienced the production as 'thoroughly draining'.²³ From a cultural stance, the expectation of opera as a form of 'light entertainment' stemmed from historical and social mores. In the late nineteenth century, European opera was the preferred entertainment of the North American upper class. The perception of opera as an elitist, unrealistic and irrelevant form of entertainment was the dominant viewpoint for many members of the public.²⁴ Government subsidy during this period did not extend to all of the arts, and members of the elite society sought to acquire their own theatres; for instance, in 1883 a group of wealthy patrons co-founded The Metropolitan Opera.²⁵ Later, in 1943, The New York City Opera was specifically set up to make opera accessible to a wider audience.²⁶

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, many North American composers sought to study in Europe to advance their musical training.²⁷ The momentum of the opera movement drew many American composers to the genre including Samuel Barber, Leonard Bernstein, Aaron Copland, Carlisle Floyd, Lucas Floss and Robert Ward. Most early operatic works include American themes; for instance, Foss adapts a popular story by Mark Twain for his *The Jumping Frog of Calaveras County* (1949), which tells the tale of

²³ Robert Commanday, "Berio's New *Opera*: Obsession with Despair," *San Francisco Chronicle* (San Francisco: 15 August 1970), Santa Fe Opera Archives (16 May 2012), np.

²⁴ Rachel Hutchins-Viroux, "The American Opera Boom of the 1950s and 1960s: History and Stylistic Analysis," *Revue LISA/LISA e-journal*, <http://lisa.revues.org/2966> (accessed 24 December 2012).

²⁵ Metropolitan Opera, New York, "Our Story,"

www.metoperafamily.org/metopera/about/ourstory.aspx (accessed 26 December 2012).

²⁶ Hutchins-Viroux, "The American Opera Boom of the 1950s and 1960s: History and Stylistic Analysis."

²⁷ *Ibid.*

a frog-jumping contest. Copland's opera titled *The Tender Land* (1952—54) is set in the mid-west at the time of the spring harvest and a school graduation. To demonstrate that America was not culturally inferior to Europe, The Ford Foundation of New York, in 1958, further inaugurated a yearly grant to the New York City Opera to encourage the proliferation of American operas.²⁸

The success of an opera company is dependent on its ability to find charismatic and capable leadership and to cultivate local patrons.²⁹ As discussed in Chapter 6, opera managers of larger and lucrative companies take fewer risks and favour established commercial classics to ensure financial viability. Therefore, composers who chose to adhere to traditional representations of the genre, instead of, for instance, attempting to write an opera that follows a modernist musical aesthetic, have a higher probability of instant success and ongoing performances.³⁰ Take, for example, another opera of the same era, *Of Mice and Men* (1969), which composer Carlisle Floyd based on John Steinbeck's now-classic novel. This work is set during the Depression and recounts the story of two migrant ranch workers who travel the country, in pursuit of work and their dream to own a house and a farm. *Of Mice and Men* appeals to modern audiences because of the relevant characters and social structure and the comprehensive manner in which the story is communicated to the audience.³¹

Berio objects to the notion of measuring the success of a musical work exclusively by ticket sales. The composer openly attacked the lack of innovation and the bureaucracy of the large performing arts companies,

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Jonathan Leaf, "America's Opera Boom," *The American* (July/August 2007), <http://www.american.com/archive/2007/july-august-magazine-contents/america2019s...> (accessed 24 December 2012).

³⁰ Michael Halliwell, "Modern Opera's Literary Success Story," *Quadrant* Online: <http://www.quadrant.org.au/magazine/issue/2011/10/modern-opera-s-literary-success-story> (accessed 9 September 2013).

³¹ Peter McCallum, "From the Ridiculous: the Sublime—*Of Mice and Men*," *Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney, Australia: 25 July 2011), 11.

including the Metropolitan Opera, which from 1950 to 1972 was under the management of Rudolf Bing.³² Berio's attitudes did inflame certain critics. For instance, Margie Carlin dismisses Berio's claims and states, 'It's hard to hold your hat out for a donation when you [a]re kicking the people able to give support'.³³

Berio's new mixed-media music drama indeed challenged the opera tradition of the day. It appears that critics for the most part expected action which is narrated with words and music, takes place on stage, with singers in costume, an orchestra and scenery. A contentious issue for many audience members and critics was Berio's concentration on spoken text, which implied a drama rather than an opera.³⁴ Jim Newton claims that *Opera* 'ripped a gaping hole' in the Santa Fe Opera's 'fine reputation for exciting evenings of opera—drama in which music is an essential factor'.³⁵ Donald Dierks also depicts this work as non-operatic because the Ensemble members mainly 'spoke and moved about on stage, but they did not sing'.³⁶ Robert Marsh ridicules Berio's attempt to reform traditional opera to that of a college student revolutionary, 'who wants to burn down the institutions and conventions of society and replace them with something better'.³⁷

In critical circles of the 1960s, Berio had the reputation of being a key figure in new music. For instance, Martin Bernheimer acknowledges that 'nobody expected *Opera* to be pretty, easy-to-take, amusing, mild and mellow, immediately appealing to the faceless hum-along masses—but no one

³² Luciano Berio, "A Night at the Opera, Or What's Wrong with the Met?" *New York Times* (New York: 5 July 1970), 59.

³³ Margie Carlin, "*Opera* is confusing mixture," *Tribune* (Albuquerque, New Mexico: 13 August 1970) Santa Fe Opera Archives (16 May 2012), np.

³⁴ Carl Cunningham, "Santa Fe Opera steps bravely into deep water," *Houston Post* (Houston: 14 August 1970), Santa Fe Opera Archives (16 May 2012), np.

³⁵ Jim Newton, "Santa Fe Opera Hits Titanic Iceberg with Berio Premiere," *Journal of Arts* (Albuquerque, New Mexico: 13 August 1970), Santa Fe Opera Archives (16 May 2012), np.

³⁶ Dierks, "*Opera* Leaves Premiere Crowd Cold."

³⁷ Robert C. Marsh, "*Opera* sinks at Santa Fe, but Rake makes progress," *Chicago Sun-Times* (Chicago: 23 August 1970) Santa Fe Opera Archives (16 May 2012), np.

expected *Opera* to be a bore either'.³⁸ John Rockwell describes North American opera goers of the day as the most 'lethargically reactionary audience in the country' and predicted that they would 'unlikely take to' *Opera*.³⁹ In not meeting the established operatic standards that includes a plot, the exploitation of established vocal techniques and through-composed music, not only were the audience disinclined to consider *Opera* seriously, but also, most of the press:

Harold C. Schonberg: *Opera* is a poverty of musical imagination, and it contains every cliché of the post-serial school and the environmental theatre.⁴⁰

Roger Dettmer: Berio's attempted multimedia approach was an absolute bore.⁴¹

Robert Marsh: *Opera* is pretentious, repetitious and threadbare in its efforts to confront the listener with significant ideas, it is intentionally formless, fragmentary and ambiguous in structure and meaning... *Opera* consists of intellectual rubbish, the sort of stuff that the terribly self-conscious, clever person can turn out when he is at a loss for anything genuinely fresh and illuminating.⁴²

Martin Bernheimer: *Opera* is embellished with such potential shock effects as nude actors, four-letter words, religious symbols irreverently applied, strobe-light attacks, a phony intermission, introduction of mass screaming as sonic status-quo, veiled philosophical messages about peace and humanity, and carefully calculated improvisation. It is all terribly up-to-date, terribly serious, terribly ambitious, terribly angry, and, in the not-too-long run, terribly tedious.⁴³

Margie Carlin: The major fault of *Opera* is that it is no opera.⁴⁴

Another significant factor that contributed to the miscomprehension of *Opera* was the absence of both a printed Italian text and its English translation.

³⁸ Martin Bernheimer, "Berio, Bewilderment and Bolena in Santa Fe," *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles: 23 August 1970), Santa Fe Opera Archives (16 May 2012), np.

³⁹ John Rockwell, "Reports: U.S. Santa Fe," *Opera News* (10 October 1970), 22.

⁴⁰ Harold C. Schonberg, "*Opera* by Berio is Given Premiere in Santa Fe," *New York Times* (New York: 14 August 1970), Santa Fe Opera Archives (16 May 2012), np.

⁴¹ Roger Dettmer, "Something to sing about," *Chicago Today American* (Chicago: 23 August 1970), Santa Fe Opera Archives (16 May 2012), np.

⁴² Marsh, "*Opera* sinks at Santa Fe, but Rake makes progress."

⁴³ Martin Bernheimer, "Berio's *Opera* Opera," *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles: 14 August 1970), Santa Fe Opera Archives (16 May 2012), np.

⁴⁴ Carlin, "*Opera* is confusing mixture."

Berio did not consider it necessary to provide the audience with a written text as he viewed the text not as a libretto in the traditional manner but rather as one of the musical elements of the work.⁴⁵ Berio achieves this by deconstructing the texts till the remaining fragments morph into a sonorous role in the performance realisation. Carlin, however, argues that with this approach it is 'impossible to review the story line of the work'.⁴⁶ Berio aims for an 'open work' that gives licence to the listener/viewer to draw their own meanings from the work's characters and situations. The critical reception was mixed. Audience members and critics unfamiliar with Berio's compositional strategy and the theatrical techniques of the Open Theater found the text, 'puzzling',⁴⁷ and 'obscure'.⁴⁸ Further, Newton blames the innate difficulty in deciphering meaning from the individual situations or scenes to the 'amateur' performance of the Open Theater group.⁴⁹ Newton even dismisses the Ensemble as a marginal group 'used to working in some intimate off-broadway warehouse theater'.⁵⁰

In contrast, Thomas Willis accolades the Open Theater as a group of 'ten gifted actors'.⁵¹ Willis also appears to understand the interface between Berio and his chosen performers. The critic states that the Open Theater members are 'visually to *Opera* what the Swingle Sisters were orally to Berio's earlier *Sinfonia*'.⁵² Likewise, Irving Kolodin comments that the interpolation of *Terminal* within Berio's *Opera* is 'fascinating in the extreme,' most notably for the Ensemble's virtuositic command of mime and choreographic movement in these episodes.⁵³ Cunningham also credits the group as 'superbly-trained' actors who play the role of 'anonymous protagonists' whose repeated

⁴⁵ Oyama-Berio, Program Notes to *Opera*, 16.

⁴⁶ Carlin, "*Opera* is confusing mixture."

⁴⁷ Alexander Fried, "Titanic -Inspired Opera Is a Puzzler," *San Francisco Examiner* (San Francisco: 14 August 1970), Santa Fe Opera Archives (16 May 2012), np.

⁴⁸ Bernheimer, "Berio's *Opera* Opera."

⁴⁹ Newton, "Santa Fe Opera Hits Titanic Iceberg with Berio Premiere."

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Thomas Willis, "Purposeful ambiguities," *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago: 14 August 1970), Santa Fe Opera Archives (16 May 2012), np.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Irving Koldin, "Music to My Ears," *Saturday Review* (New York: 29 August 1970), Santa Fe Opera Archives (16 May 2012), np.

litanies, loosely associated phrases and ideas, maintain a mood of 'dull inevitability or tightening it into shattering climaxes of hypertension'.⁵⁴ For Glen Giffin the Open Theater were also effective stating that the actors 'create great spoken choruses in which each person repeats a single phrase and action into a cumulative effect'.⁵⁵ Similarly, Cunningham credits the actors for successfully conveying the prevailing mood of *Opera* —one of 'frenzy' and an 'alienated psychotic state of mind'.⁵⁶

Berio composed a diverse range of musical pieces that included lyrical solos, chordal passages, parodied spoken solos, instrumental sections and jazz-like passages as well as traditional Sicilian singing. However, for most of the audience, the music had a disjunct effect in the total theatrical texture of the work and therefore lacked 'purpose and direction',⁵⁷ or served as mainly 'background accompaniment' to the actors.⁵⁸ Schonberg argues that music is an essential component of an opera and he dismisses Berio's post-serial gestures stating that they 'are fatal for vocal writing' most notably because of the 'dislocation of syllables and accent'.⁵⁹

Another point of contention was the work's two and a half hour duration. Instead of acts, Berio chose a series of lengthy episodes as in Brechtian theatre, which are intended to slide past like a film. For instance, this technique comes to the fore at the beginning of the *Agnus Dei* episode of Part II: Byron Belt describes the screaming children who are running from an 'invisible terror', which is then followed, with 'scarcely a moment to catch one's breath', by a choreographed pantomime and a concluding series of hospital death vignettes'.⁶⁰ Belt states that the cumulative effect of these fast

⁵⁴ Cunningham, "Santa Fe Opera steps bravely into deep water."

⁵⁵ Glenn Giffin, "It's Called an 'Opera' But Is It Really," *The Denver Post* (Denver: 14 August 1970) Santa Fe Opera Archives (16 May 2012), np.

⁵⁶ Cunningham, "Santa Fe Opera steps bravely into deep water."

⁵⁷ Martin Bernheimer, "Berio, Bewilderment and Bolena in Santa Fe," *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, California: 23 August 1970), Santa Fe Opera Archives (16 May 2012), np.

⁵⁸ Newton, "Santa Fe Opera Hits Titanic Iceberg with Berio Premiere."

⁵⁹ Schonberg, "*Opera* by Berio is Given Premiere in Santé Fe."

⁶⁰ Byron Belt, "Berio's Work Indescribable," *The Jersey Journal* (Jersey City, New Jersey: 20 August 1970), Santa Fe Opera Archives (16 May 2012), np.

moving episodes 'literally tore into the stomach'.⁶¹ However, this approach proved not entirely successful and many of the episodes were too long⁶² and too repetitious.⁶³ For instance, Newton comments that the *Dream I* and *II* sequences of Part 2, and the Titanic engine room scene of Part 3, in particular, continued 'well past the moment the point was made and the audience was ready for something new'.⁶⁴

On-stage nudity also offended some of the patrons. In the opening scene, which is set in a hospital palliative care ward, a male actor takes off all his clothes: the audience reaction at the premieres was of 'stunned silence'.⁶⁵ It is reported that the actor originally was to face the audience, then so as not to offend the patrons it was decided that he should turn his back; however, the actor on the night chose to stand sideways, much to the fury of Crosby.⁶⁶ For some audience members the scene was unnecessarily 'spotlighted'.⁶⁷ Additionally, a female character was presented naked on a slab in preparation for embalming.⁶⁸ Marsh comments that the nudity was 'inoffensive but also unnecessary'.⁶⁹ Berio's use of profane language and irreverent use of religious symbols further upset some members of the audience.⁷⁰

Berio's political, social and moral commentary was also scrutinised by critics. Dierks describes Berio's attack on the establishment as motivated by 'his position on the extreme far left'.⁷¹ To highlight that Berio intentionally seeks to be offensive to his audience, Dierks chooses the following line from *Opera*, 'businessmen are only licensed thieves and policemen are legalized

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Commanday, "Berio's New *Opera*: Obsession with Despair."

⁶³ Fried, "Titanic –Inspired Opera Is a Puzzler."

⁶⁴ Newton, "Santa Fe Opera Hits Titanic Iceberg with Berio Premiere."

⁶⁵ Carlin, "*Opera* is confusing mixture."

⁶⁶ Schonberg, "*Opera* by Berio is Given Premiere in Santé Fe."

⁶⁷ Newton, "Santa Fe Opera Hits Titanic Iceberg with Berio Premiere."

⁶⁸ Willis, "Purposeful ambiguities."

⁶⁹ Marsh, "*Opera* sinks at Santa Fe, but Rake makes progress."

⁷⁰ Bernheimer, "Berio's *Opera* Opera."

⁷¹ Dierks, "*Opera* Leaves Premiere Crowd Cold."

murderers'.⁷² The critic even accuses Berio of attacking the North American military, which at the time, was involved in the Vietnam War (as well as the governments' participation in the Cold War).⁷³ Another contentious issue was Berio's implication that the wealthy classes enslave both the poor and the American Indians.⁷⁴ Carlin also, took offence to Berio's insinuations that North Americans suffer from 'greed', 'cowardice' and live a life of 'monotony and trivia'.⁷⁵ An audience member even shouted 'I have never been so insulted in my life'.⁷⁶

As discussed in Chapter 6, Berio had experienced a similar type of reception to his earlier work *Traces* (1963). For this work, Berio took on the topic of racism, in particular, the unjust segregation of African-Americans. Arguably, many white Americans of the time would have disagreed with Spivake's views, as evidenced by the number of professionals, including doctors, lawyers, educationalists and university students, who joined the civil rights movement. Nevertheless, Berio withdrew *Traces* and incorporated components of this work into Part I, episode nine of *Opera*.

The opening night of *Opera* attracted a range of audience responses. They ran the gamut from polite indifference to hostility (displayed by boos, yelps and thrown programs) to enthusiasm (emphasised by the rhythmic clapping of a select number of audience members).⁷⁷ As Dierks observed, many audience members appeared to look 'bored', 'disappointed' or in 'disbelief'.⁷⁸ Other older patrons made an early exodus.⁷⁹ Those who waited till the end of

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid. (North America's controversial involvement in the Vietnam War was from 1955 to 1975 and the Cold War from 1947 to 1991).

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Carlin, "Opera is confusing mixture."

⁷⁶ Alexander Fried, "A Bad Opera, But A Good Effort," *San Francisco Examiner* (San Francisco: 23 August 1970), Santa Fe Opera Archives (16 May 2012), np.

⁷⁷ Rockwell, "Reports: U.S. Santa Fe," 22.

⁷⁸ Dierks, "Opera Leaves Premiere Crowd Cold."

⁷⁹ Bernheimer, "Berio's Opera Opera."

the performance walked out 'hastily'.⁸⁰ A number of people even left the theatre muttering 'fiasco, disaster and failure'.⁸¹

In contrast, the repeat performance on 14 August, as recounted by Belt reveals a mostly fervent audience response:

It was perhaps the very vituperative nature of the attacks, and their seeming unwillingness to separate the wheat from the chaff that caused Friday's repeat performance to experience an almost total success. Barring a few boos and hooters, *Opera* received a lengthy ovation, and the composer was roundly cheered when he finally came out to end the lively reception.⁸²

The above described reception implies that these audience members were open to Berio's new theatrical approaches and did not take offence at the composer's political and social commentary. A key factor to understanding a work is familiarity with that particular genre and/or a propensity to keep an open mind. Rockwell concedes that audiences attuned to modern theatre, dance and music should find *Opera* 'no problem at all'.⁸³ Likewise, in describing *Opera* as an 'event of urgent theatricality which should be seen and written about often', Belt emphasises the importance of Berio's innovations.⁸⁴

Despite Berio's controversial opinions of North American culture and government policies of the day, the composer did not intentionally seek to insult or alienate his audiences:

America obviously provokes rather visceral reactions in me, perhaps because it is a country that I really do love very much, and which at the same time taxes me with rather complicated conflicts. I get bound up in its affairs as much as I do in Italy's. It's not for nothing that I spent many years of my life there.⁸⁵

To identify the factors that contributed to the success or breakdown of the communicative function in *Opera*, the following discussion contextualises the

⁸⁰ Schonberg, "Opera by Berio is Given Premiere in Santa Fe."

⁸¹ Willis, "Purposeful ambiguities."

⁸² Belt, "Berio's Work Indescribable."

⁸³ Rockwell, "Reports: U.S. Santa Fe," 22.

⁸⁴ Belt, "Berio's Work Indescribable."

⁸⁵ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 56—57.

critical reception of this work within the parameters of reception theory as outlined by Stuart Hall.

7.2.2: Theory of representation in *Opera* (1969–70)

The critical reception of *Opera* is wide-ranging due to the varying degrees of comprehension of Berio's text, symbolism and images. According to Hall, representation is an essential part of the process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of a culture and involves the use of language, signs and images that refer to both objects and concepts.⁸⁶

The theory of representation includes three different approaches: the reflective or mimetic approach, which is the direct and transparent relationship of imitation or reflection between words (signs) and objects; the intentional approach, whereby the meaning of a work is imposed by the author or the subject; and the constructivist or constructionist approach, in which meaning is generated by the interconnection of objects, concepts and language that, in turn, are governed by cultural and linguistic codes.⁸⁷

Objects, people and events are correlated with a set of concepts or mental representations.⁸⁸ The system of representation consists of different ways in organising, clustering, arranging and classifying concepts in order to establish complex relations between them.⁸⁹ For instance, applying the principles of similarity and difference then facilitates the establishment of the relationship between concepts or the distinction of one concept from another.⁹⁰ Hall chooses the example of birds and planes; in certain ways birds are like planes in the sky, based on the fact that they both fly— in other respects they differ, because one is natural and the other is man-made.⁹¹ This type of mixing and matching the relations between concepts to form complex ideas and thoughts is possible because our concepts are arranged

⁸⁶ Stuart Hall, "Representation, Meaning and Language," *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, 1997, 15.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 17.

into different classifying systems. In the above example, the first classification is based on a distinction between flying/not flying and the second is based on the distinction between natural/man-made.

In belonging to the same culture, we share the same language and conceptual 'maps' and thus may interpret meanings in comparable ways.⁹² The combination of the three stories—*Titanic*, *Terminal* and *Orfeo*—interweave simultaneously, as well as consecutively throughout this work in the manner of montage procedures in film. This technique appears to have perplexed some critics. Language is a social system; therefore, the personal thoughts of the composer within the public sphere have to negotiate with all the other meanings for words or images that already are stored in language.⁹³ In not keeping strictly to the rules, codes and conventions of language, Berio jeopardised coherent meaning for a number of critics. Berio even admits in a recorded announcement late in the evening of the opening performance that *Opera* 'is confusing and that one might blame his subconscious mind for the obscurities' within the work.⁹⁴

Hall defines the 'meaning process' in culture as two related systems of representation:

The first enables us to give meaning to the world by constructing a set of correspondences or a chain of equivalences between things —people, objects, events, abstract ideas etc. —and our system of concepts, our conceptual maps. The second depends on constructing a set of correspondences between our conceptual map and a set of signs, arranged or organised into various languages which stand for or represent those concepts. The relation between 'things', concepts and signs lies at the heart of the production of meaning in language. The process which links these three elements together is what we call 'representation'.⁹⁵

⁹² Ibid., 18.

⁹³ Ibid., 25.

⁹⁴ Newton, "Santa Fe Opera Hits Titanic Iceberg with Berio Premiere."

⁹⁵ Hall, "Representation, Meaning and Language," *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, 37.

To construe meaning, *Opera* does require multi-level concentration on the part of the listener/viewer. Berio generates meaning collectively via the text, music, the actors' choreographic patterns and formations and gestures. Berio opts for Brecht's epic theatre approach: the stage is without props, and therefore the actors and the singers suggest to the audience 'what is not there'.⁹⁶ Conceptual 'maps', however, differ from person to person and therefore generate a wide range of interpretations of the same work. Take, for example, the opening episode of *Opera* in which Berio's representation of the three thematic layers occurs simultaneously: *Terminal* and the *Titanic* stories as spoken texts and visual representations; Monteverdi's *Orfeo* as a sung text. This presentation does not give us a linear narrative in the way of a collective story line. According to Berio, the viewer/listener needs to grasp the crossing and the interference of each character as an independent progression with only an illusion of communication.⁹⁷ In this way, each character is a prisoner of their situation without acknowledging the nature of *other* situations.⁹⁸

In his representation of the *Titanic* disaster, actors portray the survivors via text fragments that recount what happened after the ship hit the iceberg. Willis perceives this motive as conveying 'false security born of over-confidence in technological and authoritarian safety systems'.⁹⁹ Fried also interprets the symbolism as humanity that at the height of its technical powers of the day 'plunged into catastrophe'.¹⁰⁰ Along the same lines, Schonberg decodes Berio's message as: 'Mankind is going to hell on a bobsled. Man's sense of direction has been lost; he is an automaton; his machinery, as presented by the sinking of the *Titanic*, operates independently of him. He is on late watch in the death ward'.¹⁰¹ Commanday also deciphers Berio's theme of the *Titanic* disaster as a 'moral fable'.¹⁰²

⁹⁶ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 163.

⁹⁷ Oyama-Berio, Program Notes to *Opera*, 13.

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, 13.

⁹⁹ Willis, "Purposeful ambiguities."

¹⁰⁰ Fried, "Titanic –Inspired Opera Is a Puzzler."

¹⁰¹ Schonberg, "*Opera* by Berio is Given Premiere in Santa Fe."

¹⁰² Commanday, "Berio's New *Opera*: Obsession with Despair."

In addition to the actors on the stage, the soprano and pianist are only in the rehearsal phase of presenting the *Orfeo* theme entitled *Air a*. The piano accompanies the singer exclusively without any musical reference to the other actors and their stories. In choosing to reconnect with this ancient text, Berio did not use it as a foil for a dramatic story but rather as a means of an allusive auto-reflexive function.¹⁰³ However, with this approach to the *Orpheus* representation, Bernheimer admits that he could not explain ‘where Eurydice’s widower and his self-saving sorrow appeared’ within the work.¹⁰⁴ Commanday even dismisses the effect of this ‘interpolation’ as ‘minor’.¹⁰⁵ In fact, it is a major structural element of the work, as the soprano reappears at the beginning of each episode, progressively singing a more accomplished version of the aria that is finally ‘resolved’ at the beginning of Part IV with piano and orchestra. Arguably, this is difficult to conceptualise on a first hearing or/viewing of the work. But, clearly, Berio juxtaposes death with the idea of growth and learning. The soprano symbolises this idea that, according to Berio, first makes a ‘sketchy appearance and then, assumes greater and greater significance’.¹⁰⁶ Rockwell acknowledges that through these complicated sets of overlapping, recurrent motifs that are verbal, musical and choreographic, Berio aims for a cohesive, large-scale form.¹⁰⁷

The constructionist approach also takes into account semiotics; therefore, not only words and images but also objects and clothing can function as a signifier in the production of meaning.¹⁰⁸ For instance, in the context of Western culture, an evening dress may signify ‘elegance’, and bow tie and tails suggests ‘formality’.¹⁰⁹ For the opening scene, Berio opts for these types

¹⁰³ Claudia di Luzio, “Opera on Opera: Luciano Berio’s *Opera*,” *Music’s Obedient Daughter: The Opera Libretto from Source to Score*, ed. Sabine Lichenstein, Amsterdam, New York, New York: Rodopi, 2014, 467.

¹⁰⁴ Bernheimer, “Berio’s *Opera Opera*.”

¹⁰⁵ Commanday, “Berio’s New *Opera*: Obsession with Despair.”

¹⁰⁶ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 164.

¹⁰⁷ Rockwell, “Reports: U.S. Santa Fe,” 22.

¹⁰⁸ Hall, “Representation, Meaning and Language,” *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, 17.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 17.

of signifiers to create the illusion of a hospital ward and morgue. The viewer/listen also may interpret the actors as representative of survivors of the *Titanic* or, alternatively, as patients of *Terminal's* hospital ward. In the premiere performances, the actors attired in all-white long johns and asylum garb rushed on stage to prepare living candidates for death while explaining the techniques of embalming.¹¹⁰ Further, the actors waited in a queue and displayed expressions of violence to represent to the viewer the idea of both order and violence.¹¹¹ Fried perceives the symbolism as a grotesque and 'grisly' terminal cancer ward, suggestive of man's inherent 'rendezvous with death'.¹¹²

Likewise, the lack of certain items of clothing or footwear as well as light and scenery, function as absent signifiers in the production of meaning; for instance, the premiere performances culminated in the empty stage, engulfed by hard, white lights, with the actors cavorting in bare feet, which, for Carlin, had the effect of 'watching the antics of inmates of a schizophrenic ward'.¹¹³

In the episode entitled *Melodrama*, Berio references the traditional opera genre via a slapstick mockery of an egotistical tenor. Berio's inspiration for this idea was born from his experience of sailing in the 1950s with Berberian from Genova to New York. Berio recounts that the captain would often request the pair to perform for the passengers on board.¹¹⁴ Again, the tenor's on-stage audience is ambiguous; they could be hospital patients or they could be first class passengers on board the *Titanic*. The text is a series of alliterations that Berio presents as a parody of nineteenth-century melodrama: the music itself is harmonically static but fast and virtuosic. The tenor, accompanied by percussion, an electric organ and a piano, begins to sing Heinrich Heine's alliterative words 'Den Westwind frage' ('Ask the west

¹¹⁰ Commanday, "Berio's New *Opera*: Obsession with Despair."

¹¹¹ Berio, *Opera* (Author's notes).

¹¹² Fried, "A Bad Opera, But A Good Effort."

¹¹³ Carlin, "*Opera* is confusing mixture."

¹¹⁴ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 165.

wind'), then 'was er wimmert und weht' ('what is it whimpering and blowing'). He repeatedly misses the perfect fourth interval D—G and, as a diversionary tactic, breaks into exaggerated and extensive speech-like commentary. Arguably, Berio's representation is a commentary on the lacklustre nature of traditional opera. For instance, Bernheimer realises the tenor's functions as a 'parody' of traditional opera.¹¹⁵ In contrast, Fried perceives this scene as a satirical representation of the 'decay in the general process of life'.¹¹⁶ Giffin, further comments that in the overall scheme of *Opera*, this scene functions as a brief and humourous interlude to the 'horrifying' images of the hospital ward and the morgue.¹¹⁷

Nostalgia for the traditional form of opera appears to be the basis for the critics' commentary of Berio's *Dream I* and *Dream II* (Part II). Berio chooses familiar characters from Mozart's *Magic Flute*, Puccini's *Turandot* as well as Menotti's *Help, Help, The Globolinks*, who intermingle and float slowly through a haze of thick smoke. Newton claims that these episodes were the only 'redeeming moment in the evening'.¹¹⁸ In describing these episodes as 'gorgeous dream sequence',¹¹⁹ 'pure spectacle' and 'poignantly surrealistic',¹²⁰ Giffin and Cunningham respectively draw attention only to the aesthetic component. Metaphorically, Berio ushers out the old familiar characters and presents the operatic stage as if 'dreaming its own past'.¹²¹ Belt explicates this episode in terms of a grand opera parading through a 'nightmare kind of total-recall'.¹²² In the overall structure of *Opera*, Rockwell suggests that these episodes enhance the retrospective of the opera genre as well as provide a retrospective of 'a wide variety of trends in the avant-garde since the turn of the century'.¹²³

¹¹⁵ Bernheimer, "Berio, Bewilderment and Bolena in Santa Fe."

¹¹⁶ Fried, "Titanic—Inspired Opera Is a Puzzler."

¹¹⁷ Giffin, "It's Called 'Opera' But Is It Really?"

¹¹⁸ Newton, "Santa Fe Opera Hits Titanic Iceberg with Berio Premiere."

¹¹⁹ Giffin, "It's Called 'Opera' But Is It Really?"

¹²⁰ Cunningham, "Santa Fe Opera steps bravely into deep water."

¹²¹ Berio, Program Notes to *Opera*, Santa Fe Opera, (12 and 14 August 1970), 14.

¹²² Belt, "Berio's Work Indescribable."

¹²³ Rockwell, "Reports: U.S. Santa Fe," 22.

Signs inclusive of words, sounds or images convey meaning only if we possess codes that allow the translation of concepts into language and vice versa. Visual images produced mechanically, electronically or digitally, or by hands, facial expressions, gestures and clothing also, are a form of language when they are used to express meaning.¹²⁴ In the episode entitled *Agnus Dei*, instead of musical representation, Berio's visual presentation and electronically produced sounds unequivocally evoke terror. Twenty children with expressions of terror and fear run back and forth across the stage, screaming and shrieking to a deafening *crescendo*.¹²⁵ Berio's choice of spotlights, flashing strobes, amplified sounds of screams and machine guns further call to mind the concept of war. On another level, the mechanical voice of a flight attendant and the sound of an airliner crashing activate a metal representation of the *Titanic* disaster.¹²⁶ Even though Berio chooses a stage devoid of scenery and props, Willis implies that the vivid visual, verbal and aural stimuli unequivocally induce terror.¹²⁷ Marsh states that this one of the most 'extremely effective moments in the work'.¹²⁸

The above types of signs and codes are derived from social conventions. From a cultural perspective, these shared 'maps' of meaning are learnt and subconsciously internalised as we become members of a culture.¹²⁹ Take, for example, the image of a cross; within the context of Christianity it symbolises the suffering and crucifixion of Christ. In the same way, looking upward is a gesture that we have internalised to represent God and Heaven. Therefore, the interplay of two theoretical approaches to representation enhances the meaning of the concluding episode entitled *Adieu*. Firstly, by word representation: the title *Adieu* (Goodbye) here represents the finality of death. Secondly, symbolism: Berio conveys the religious symbolism of God and the

¹²⁴ Hall, "Representation, Meaning and Language," *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, 18.

¹²⁵ Carlin, "Opera is confusing mixture."

¹²⁶ Commanday, "Berio's New *Opera*: Obsession with Despair."

¹²⁷ Willis, "Purposeful ambiguities."

¹²⁸ Marsh, "Opera sinks at Santa Fe, but Rake makes progress."

¹²⁹ Hall, "Representation, Meaning and Language," *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, 19.

Judgement Day by placing the actor high on a ladder who proclaims repetitively through a bullhorn: 'The judgment of your life is your life itself.'¹³⁰ Cunningham perceives this reference as the 'meaningless frustrations of life, man's curious fears about life after death'.¹³¹ The induced hypnotic effect via the actor's repetitive statement Berio further augments through the culmination of the orchestra, chamber chorus, tape, singers and actors that produced sustained sonorous sounds.¹³² For Rockwell, Berio's orchestration references a clichéd notion from Western musical theatre tradition that typically rises to a climax and then 'softly echoes itself in a short, quiet, consoling coda'.¹³³ Berio also undertook a Brechtian approach for the conclusion of this work: *Opera* ends with a bare, bright silent stage so as to distance the audience members from the characters and, hence, bring into focus Berio's moral, political and social messages. Belt appropriately suggests Berio's brings to the fore his 'continuing thoughts on life, death, nihilism and (somehow) even hope'.¹³⁴

The overriding hostility to the premiere performances of *Opera* had a devastating effect on Berio. The composer admits that the initial six month time period to complete *Opera* was 'too short' and he planned to dedicate a further six months to revise the work.¹³⁵ Berio also concedes: 'I worked at the piece in a very difficult period in my life and perhaps I could not realize it on the level I had meant to'.¹³⁶ In summary, the criticisms of *Opera* appear to be threefold: the first is that the work was too long to sustain audience interest; the second is that Berio dwells on moralistic politicising; and the third is that the work is 'too complex'.

¹³⁰ Fried, "A Bad Opera, But A Good Effort."

¹³¹ Cunningham, "Santa Fe Opera steps bravely into deep water."

¹³² Rockwell, "Reports: U.S. Santa Fe," 22.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 22.

¹³⁴ Belt, "Berio's Work Indescribable."

¹³⁵ Fried, "A Bad Opera, But A Good Effort."

¹³⁶ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 163.

7.3.1: Revised form of *Opera* (1977)

Musicologist Claudia di Luzio, in her chapter titled ‘Opera on *Opera*: Luciano Berio’s *Opera*,’ published in *Music’s Obedient Daughter: The Opera Libretto from Source to Score*,¹³⁷ provides an in-depth analysis of the work’s music and text origins. My analysis is therefore confined to Berio’s changes to the work’s duration, his curtailing of moralistic and potentially offensive statements, and the measures he took to address perceived issues of the work’s complexity.

Berio chose a select number of changes for the revised version of 1977.¹³⁸ In response to the dominantly negative critical reception that the original duration of *Opera* (two hours and thirty minutes) was too long to sustain audience interest, Berio reduces the work to ninety minutes. For the listener/viewer, this assists the retention of the fluctuating themes and the structural elements of the work. Berio also chooses to label this version with acts instead of episodes. The following is the new form of *Opera*.

Atto I (Book I)

Air I
Concerto I
Memoria
Scena
Melodrama
Tracce.

Atto II (Book 2)

Air II
Memoria
Scena
Scherzo
Addio
Documentario
Intervallo

¹³⁷ di Luzio, “Opera on Opera: Luciano Berio’s *Opera*,” *Music’s Obedient Daughter: The Opera Libretto from Source to Score*, 463—482

¹³⁸ Luciano Berio, *Opera*, (Authors Notes), Centro Studio Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 7 August 2011).

Atto III
Air III
Memoria
Concerto II
Documentario
Agnus
*E Vó*¹³⁹

This version of the work shows that Berio eliminated six episodes from the original. He again structures the opening of each act with *Air* (I-III). As the curtain rises, the audience is confronted with a ‘concert’ within a theatre work that has the effect of alienation or divergence. The ‘fake’ interval entitled *Intervallo* (Act III), functions as a similar stimulus for the audience. The actors walk casually around the stage to mimic the traditional concert format. Berio retains his idea of ‘growth’ and ‘accomplishment’ that culminates in *Air III*, for which the soprano appears on the stage in formal concert dress accompanied by a complete orchestra. *Memoria* functions as another structural element of the work; the messenger appears in the three acts to reiterate the Eurydice myth: ‘I come with an unhappy message —your loved one is dead’. This word representation here is unambiguous and immediately evokes the theme of death.

Dierks describes Berio’s portrayal of the embalmer’s art and technique ‘as tasteless pantomimed illustrations’.¹⁴⁰ Berio, however, chooses to keep the grotesque images of preparing the body for embalming and the after-life (Act II *Scena*). A significant change in the new version of the work is the conclusion. The original *Agnus Dei* episode, in particular, appears to have had a profound impact of horror on Santa Fe audiences. In the later version, instead of the *Adieu*, Berio chooses to end the work with the death of the children. Voices from the orchestra pit sing the *Agnus Dei*; the mezzo-soprano then enters the stage and sings a traditional Sicilian lullaby titled, *E Vó* (Act III).

¹³⁹ Luciano Berio, Score to *Opera Music Theatre, Three Acts* (Universal Edition: 16655, 1977).

¹⁴⁰ Dierks, “Opera Leaves Premiere Crowd Cold.”

7.3.2: Revision of moralistic and political commentary; and issues of complexity

Berio was unwilling to compromise his moral and political viewpoints for the work. In response to critics' and audiences' outrage with some 'four letter words'¹⁴¹ and a 'certain four letter word for copulation'¹⁴² in the original form of *Opera*, Berio omits some strong and inflammatory language, but not all; for example, in the following excerpt (see Musical example 29: *Opera* (1977), Act I, page 33),¹⁴³ Berio still opts to describe an angel as an 'idiota', for failing to steer the *Titanic* away from the iceberg.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Newton, "Santa Fe Opera Hits Titanic Iceberg with Berio Premiere."

¹⁴³ Luciano Berio, *Opera* (1977), Universal Edition: 16655.

Musical example 29: *Opera* (1977), Act I, page 33

Fl
Pic
Ob
Cl
Cb
Sax
Fag
Hr
Tr
Tbn
BT
Nac
Kgl
Per I
Per II
Per III
Cym

7
 (in un'aria)
 Anche se tu stavi sperando e una figlia i piedi calzanti e la corrente del
 sole. Lei con la tua macchina motore. E tu donni' parola prima
 cento nella cabina.

Indicando con il pollice
 a lei con la bocca spaziosa
 (risate)
 Ha visto quello? Ha
 le gambe grandi e
 piedi acuti

33

Another point of contention for the audience was the perception that Berio ridicules North American society and the notion of capitalism. Arguably, Berio's commentary continues to be applicable; for instance, post the 2007 global financial crisis, a crisis manufactured by the corrupt acts of a select group of investment bankers, many investors would no longer find the first part of Berio's line inflammatory. Likewise, the controversial shooting of an unarmed African-American teenager, Michael Brown, by a white-American

Ferguson police officer Darren Wilson, on 9 August 2014 in Ferguson, Missouri, resulted in protests and civil unrest. This event— and events like it—continue to trigger debates in North America about the relationship between African-Americans and the police.

Berio still addresses the injustices experienced by the less affluent and more vulnerable members of society. This version of the work, again, begins with images of injured passengers of the *Titanic* and the hospital patients of *Terminal*. For this scene, to convey the moral messages in an explicit and direct manner, Berio still opts to keep a measure of detachment, in a Brechtian sense.¹⁴⁴ Giffin suggests that Berio's use of sustained string sounds, in particular, evokes a sense of detachment and 'timelessness'.¹⁴⁵ In the following excerpt (see Musical example 30: *Opera* (1977), Act I, page 19), the character named Helene Richard explains in straightforward language, 'there were not enough lifeboats for passengers travelling third class'.

¹⁴⁴ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 163.

¹⁴⁵ Giffin, "It's Called 'Opera' But Is It Really."

Musical example 30: *Opera* (1977), Act I, page 19

- 19 -

In the following excerpt (see Musical example 31: *Opera* (1977), Act I, page 27), another passenger, named Jessica Smith, also reiterates that aboard there were ‘so many people and not enough lifeboats’ but further explains that she had to save herself as she possessed ‘very important documents’.

Musical example 31: *Opera* (1977), Act I, page 27

27

Fl. I
Fl. II
Ob.
Cl.
Fag.
Hr.
Tr.
Tbn.
Perc.
Vcl. I
Vcl. II
Cb.
Cb.

Sopr. I
Sopr. II
Alto

Alto
 6. Non ti muoverai: tremasti, non ripeto con decisione.
 Sono andato fin - l'ultima tappa di quel mondo.
 giù, nel prete di tua classe. Vedevi prima
 tutti, alla scuffia di balneazione, da lontano
 Paul!

1. Dov'è l'ultimo: A questo me domandi
 in quel momento: chi sei, sei paleontologo
 in quel delitto, o come del capitano.

-27-

The children that first appear in *Documentario*, Act III, Scene 4, Berio portrays as the most vulnerable members of our society. The children move across the stage in a playful manner then reappear holding hands and express fear, fright and anxiety. In the following excerpt (see, Musical example 32: *Opera* (1977), Act III, pages 113—14) titled *Agnus* the children lie motionless on the stage. Berio again includes religious symbolism to enhance the reception of cleansing sin and salvation. Two sopranos and two

altos sing the prayer, 'Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us'.

Musical example 32: *Opera* (1977), Act III, pages 113–14

We still hear in *Documentario* (Act II, pages 29–41) Berio's commentary on opportunistic aspects of capitalism and the failure of technology, which presents in the form of a 'flashback' on board the *Titanic*. This scene implies the self-interest of highly paid bureaucrats. For instance, in the following excerpt (see Musical example 33: *Opera* (1977), Act II, page 29), an actor announces that 'the time has come when men would have powerful machines to carry out their businesses'. Another actor states that men 'would have splendid buildings for the administrative councils and directors'. While the actors talk, we hear long sustained intervals of tritones and minor seconds in the winds and electric organ. Arguably, Berio's music functions as a parody of the long winded self gratifying conversations of the bureaucrats.

Musical example 33: *Opera* (1977), Act II, page 29

DOCUMENTARIO (Atto II)

-29-

To

To enhance the reception of this scene, Berio instructs the actors to talk in an incoherent manner, and to ignore or detach themselves from each other to convey the notion of self-interest (see Musical example 34: *Opera* (1977), Act II, page 30).

Musical example 34: *Opera* (1977), Act II, page 30

Handwritten '2' above the Flute staff.

Flute: *Fl.*

Piccolo: *Picc.*

Oboe: *O.*

Clarinet: *Cl.*

Bassoon: *cb.*

Trumpet: *Tr.*

Trombone: *Tbn.*

Percussion: *Per.*

Bass Drum: *B.D.*

Cymbal: *Cym.*

Horn II: *H. II*

Horn I: *H. I*

Vocal line: *V.*

Violin: *vi.*

Violoncello: *vi.*

Double Bass: *cb.*

Vocal text: *È venuta la notte e tutti si sono addormentati o ubriacati, o spaventati, o storditi. E poi tutti si ritrovano gli uni degli altri.*

Handwritten 'A' in a box in the vocal line.

Page number: *- 30 -*

The constant fluctuation between the three myths contributed to the innate complexity of *Opera*,¹⁴⁶ however, Berio, for the most part, was unwilling to compromise on this issue. The text of *Opera* again offers only virtual

¹⁴⁶ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 163.

characters.¹⁴⁷ Berio still chooses to intertwine the separate stories to suggest a human condition, which again foreshadows the common subject of the three myths: death. Berio further intertwines these images with a soprano who sings the following text fragments of Monteverdi's *Orfeo* that allude to death and sadness.

Now as the tunes change
Now gay now sad behold the trav'ler
From whom only a short time ago
Sighs were food and tears were drink
Rose of the sky life of the world
When did you see a more joyful lover
Do you remember....

In the later version, Berio again opts for minimal stage props and no literal reference to the *Titanic*; the actors evoke being on board the ship through vocals sounds and body movements that are either semi-mechanistic or balletic. In the following excerpt (see Musical example 35: *Opera* (1977), Act II, page 32), the actors who allude to the first class passengers of the *Titanic* gather to mimic the sounds of machinery in the engine room, and then (in a sarcastic tone) thank the Captain for the opportunity to view 'a great monument to efficiency'. The actors' voices predominate in this section, while the piccolo, vibraphone, percussion and strings in a sparing way contribute to the sounds of the engine room.

¹⁴⁷ Berio, *Opera* (Author's notes).

Musical example 35: *Opera* (1977), Act II, page 32

Fl.
Cl.
Cb.
Sax.
Tr.
Tbn.
Perc.
Vln I
Vln II
Vla.
Ccl.
Cb.

Non finì. Vi ricordate? Vi ricordate?
[In questo momento, dirigete: "anch'ora", comincia, mi spira - e finisce a nuovo affanno]

Tutti

B

- 32 -

In the following excerpt (see Musical example 36: *Opera* (1977), Act II, page 38), the passengers discuss nautical maps and the probability of striking an iceberg in the area; however, the Captain reassures them about their safety.

Musical example 36: *Opera* (1977), Act II, page 38

The musical score is handwritten and includes the following elements:

- Vocal Lines:** Soprano (Sopr.), Tenor II (Ten. II), and other parts with lyrics in Italian.
- Instrumental Parts:** Flute II (Fl. II), Clarinet II (Cl. II), Bassoon II (Fag. II), Trumpet II (Tr. II), Trombone II (Tbn. II), and Percussion (Perc.).
- Tempo and Dynamics:** A tempo marking of 160 and a dynamic marking of *mf* are present.
- Lyrics:**

Sopr.: Sì, sì le arti agli arti
 Ten. II: Sì, sì le arti agli arti
 Fl. II: Sì, sì le arti agli arti
 Cl. II: Sì, sì le arti agli arti
 Fag. II: Sì, sì le arti agli arti
 Tr. II: Sì, sì le arti agli arti
 Tbn. II: Sì, sì le arti agli arti
 Perc.: Sì, sì le arti agli arti

In the following excerpt (see Musical example 37: *Opera* (1977), Act II, page 41), this scene concludes with imagery of the ship striking the iceberg. To enhance the tragedy of this event, the actors rush around the stage and, among the confusion, some of the actors go down on their knees to pray.

Musical example 37 *Opera* (1977), Act II, page 41

7-10 (Confusion fra i passeggeri alcuni vedono un pirata (altri))

Alcun diavolo
E Signore,
Fidato,
Dio che mi dai
Pace e respiro,
Piacere del nostro
Mondo del mare,
Signori dei vivi
e dei morti ---

Dad... Bellapur... Aitarok... Hoborym...
Improvvisamente... Canaphas... Grahel...
Allez...

To alleviate some of the earlier parody and the grotesque elements of earlier scenes, Berio chooses the death of children as the uttermost tragedy:

Only at the end is there a change of tone: suddenly everything darkens into tragedy as a new form of ending appears: the death of children. That is how I stop the alternation of the three myths and show a different ending where there is no longer room for parody, grotesquerie and

metaphor. There is no question of detachment any more, no indifference towards death.¹⁴⁸

A woman appears on the stage moving slowly among the bodies and finds a doll, which she takes in her arms, and sings the newly added song *E Vó*: 'Come sleep, your distant path and make him sleep'.¹⁴⁹ The word 'sleep' here refers to the dead children. This folk song also functions as a lament—the song of the people. In the following excerpt (see Musical example 38: *Opera* (1977), Act II, page 129), Berio enhances our perception of a lullaby through the non-operatic voice of the mezzo-soprano, who sings with a nasal and very slight *vibrato* tone. The arch-like melodic structure of this song, the limited pitch range, the long note durations and the sparse musical texture further enhance the lulling effect.

¹⁴⁸ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 163—64.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 164.

Musical example 38: *Opera* (1977), Act II, page 129

Fl.
Cl.
V.
Vla.
C.
Cb.
T.
S.
A.

*Ma non si può (che) si vorrà di più, perché è un momento così bello (che non si può) - canta
una vita sana (che) si vorrà di più, perché è un momento così bello (che non si può) - canta*

-129- 7900

In contrast to the stark white empty stage of the original version, *Opera* now concludes with the audience focused on the singer (perhaps a mother of one of the dead children). Berio further enhances the plight of the mother figure via a beam of white light, while the rest of the stage is in darkness.

Conclusion

Opera is an 'open' work and presents no clear linear narrative and for the most part lacks synchronisation of the music with the actions on the stage. In 1970, the experimental nature of *Opera* was a significant factor that contributed to the demise of this work among the more conservative critics and Santa Fe audience members. However, the critical reception suggests that not all attendees of the day rejected Berio's confronting and ambiguously layered subject matter, or his inclusion of nudity and swearing. Similarly, the reviews suggest that a select number of critics were not averse to Berio's subject matter and demonstrated their understanding of avant-garde theatre, in particular, their familiarity with the Open Theater's production of *Terminal*.

Nevertheless, Berio did struggle to overcome the negative reactions to the work, but conceded only to a select number of changes, most notably reducing the work's duration, and omitting some offensive words. However, Berio declined to curtail his moral and political stance on issues regarding democracy and justice that are still relevant to modern audiences. Through its aesthetic radicalism, *Opera* is important for extending the boundaries of traditional opera and also deserves the attention of current opera manager and promoters.

CHAPTER 8

Cathy Berberian's role in enhancing the reception of Berio's works in partnership with the vocalist

'The moment Berberian walked into a room, or onto a stage her charisma shone like a beacon'.

—Jennifer Paull.¹

The study of the critical reception of Berio's music also needs to include a study of the critical reception of the composer's works in collaboration with Cathy Berberian (1925—1983). The following is a list of works that Berio composed during his professional partnership with Berberian. I argue that Berberian was a significant contributor in the final realisation of these works either via her direct input in the compositional process or by her influences on Berio's compositional processes.

Table 2: Berio's works for Berberian

Year	Work	Instrumentation
1952	<i>El mar la mar</i>	for soprano, mezzo-soprano, piccolo, two clarinets, accordion, harp, cello and double bass
1953	<i>Chamber Music</i>	voice, cello, clarinet and harp
1958	<i>Thema (Omaggio a Joyce)</i>	electro-acoustic
1960	<i>Circles</i>	voice, harp and percussion
1961	<i>Visage</i>	electro-acoustic
1959—61	<i>Epifanie</i>	voice and orchestra
1964 / 1973	<i>Folk Songs</i>	voice, flute, piccolo, clarinet, two percussions, harp, viola and cello / chamber orchestra
1965-66	<i>Sequenza III</i>	voice
1972	<i>Recital I (for Cathy)</i>	voice and seventeen instruments

¹ Jennifer Paull, "A musical enchantress," Music Vision Daily, <http://www.mvdaily.com/articles/2002/03/cathy1.htm> (accessed 23 December 2012).

Berio/Berberian collectively also decided to explore cabaret and pop music. As a result, Berio transcribed songs for Berberian including Kurt Weill's *Song of Sexual Slavery* (1967), *Le grand Lustucru* (1972) and *Surabaya Johnny* (1972) as well as Beatles songs of 1967 including *Michelle*, *Yesterday* and *Ticket to Ride*.

The first area of examination is the importance of collaborative projects and the extent of the symbiotic relationship between Berio and Berberian. The case studies I use to explore the importance of this collaboration examine Berberian's contribution to *Visage* and *Sequenza III*. I argue that Berberian was integral in the compositional processes and hence, an equal contributor to the subsequent success of these works.

The second area of investigation concerns Berberian's performance charisma and considers her role in enhancing the reception of the Berio/Berberian works. I argue that the critical acclaim of Berberian's premiere performances was seminal to the initial, as well as the ongoing success of these works within the commercial music market. To demonstrate the impact of Berberian's performances of Berio's works, this chapter appraises the critical reception of selected works as executed by other singers, including Dawn Upshaw, Karen Cargill, Elissa Johnston, Luisa Castellani, Charlotte Hellekant, Lauren Flanigan and Rinat Shaham.

8.1.1: The Berio/Berberian professional partnership

During the 1960s and 1970s, Berio and other composers actively pursued virtuoso performers to form professional partnerships. Composer Lukas Foss concedes that this initiative stemmed from composers' fascination with the possibility of new tasks with their 'new-found partner and confidant'.² These composer/performer teams in new music were a joint enterprise and they worked toward a common goal.³ In addition to Berio and Berberian, such

² Lukas Foss, "The Changing Composer-Performer Relationships: A Monologue and a Dialogue," *Perspectives of New Music* 1, 2 (Spring 1963), 46.

³ *Ibid.*, 46.

teams included John Cage and David Tudor, Milton Babbitt and Bethany Beardslee as well as Foss and his own Improvisation Chamber Ensemble. Performers not only inspired these composers, but also gave advice on techniques.⁴ For instance, Joan La Barbara explained to Philip Glass techniques including how to avoid vocal fatigue and the length of time a vocalist could stay within a limited tessitura.⁵ In turn, these established partnerships elevated the reputations of both the composer and their respective performer.

Composer/performer relationships also help the performer to better transmit the music to the audience.⁶ Berio's work for Berberian of 1953 entitled *Chamber Music* established the team's reputation within avant garde circles.⁷ Their popularity as a new music team helped to promote their experimental works, including *Circles* and *Epifanie, Thema (Omaggio a Joyce)*, *Visage* and *Sequenza III*. Accessible works such as *Folk Songs* and Berio's transcriptions of songs by Kurt Weill and the Beatles further forged their reputations with mainstream audiences. It is notable that in 1975, pianist Roger Woodward and Kim Williams sought both Berio and Berberian to present a series of concerts and lectures in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide for the contemporary music festival entitled Rostrum '75.

Nina Perlove describes the symbiotic relationship between a composer and a performer:

Composers stretch the expressive and technical possibilities of the performers, musicians challenge composers to communicate their ideas clearly, composers and performers challenge technology to meet their changing needs, and technology in turn, challenges composers and musicians to create and master new methods of performance.⁸

⁴ Barrie Webb, "Partners in Creation," *Contemporary Music Review* 26: 2 (April 2007), 255.

⁵ Joan La Barbara, "Voice is the original instrument," *Contemporary Music Review* 22, 1 (2002), 37.

⁶ Perlove and Cherrier, "Transmission, Interpretation, Collaboration —A Performer's Perspective on the language of Contemporary Music: An Interview with Sophie Cherrier," 52.

⁷ Warnaby, "Obituary: Luciano Berio," 5.

⁸ Perlove and Cherrier, "Transmission, Interpretation, Collaboration—A Performer's Perspective on the language of Contemporary Music: An Interview with Sophie Cherrier," 54.

Berio was fascinated by Berberian's innate ability to utilise different vocal techniques as well as to evoke many differing aspects of the voice.⁹ The mezzo-soprano had a three-and-a-half octave vocal span and a wide-ranging technique that included traditional classical singing and extended vocal techniques. The extension of musical material by way of inclusion of everyday life noises appeared in the music of the avant-garde music from the beginning of the twentieth century.¹⁰ Berberian executes with ease and precision the onomatopoeic sounds of animal noises, guttural sounds, grunts, growls, squeals, squeaks, squawks, clicks, clucks, shrieks, screeches, hisses, hoots and hollers.¹¹ These extended techniques inspired and influenced Berio's vocal works in partnership with Berberian, which included *Thema (Omaggio a Joyce)* and in particular, *Visage* and *Sequenza III*. Unlike the screams in, for instance, Alban Berg's *Lulu*, which serve a dramatic rather than a musical function, Berio seeks these types of everyday vocal sounds as a new way in which to analyse the text and discover implicit or new meaning from it.¹²

Another aspect of virtuosic appeal was Berberian's rapid-reflex technique, which allows seamless movement between disparate musical styles.¹³ Berberian's ability to sing in one vocal style then switch abruptly mid-phrase to another style is particularly evident in Cage's *Aria*, which requires ten different vocal styles that Berberian sang in five different languages. Berio also exploited this aspect of Berberian's talent in *Recital I (for Cathy)*. The composer drew his 'collage' of musical quotations from Berberian's recital repertoire. *Recital I* moves rapidly within two to three notes from a Monteverdi aria, to a Baroque style aria as well as a selection of over forty phrases from Bernstein, Bizet, J.S. Bach, de Falla, Donizetti, Hollaender,

⁹ Moore and MacLennan, Interview with Berio.

¹⁰ Beate Kutschke, "The Scream in Avant-Garde Music: The New Left and the Rediscovery of the Body," *The Modernist Legacy: Essays on New Music*, 61.

¹¹ Paull, *Cathy Berberian and Music's Muses*, 34.

¹² Theo Muller, "Music Is Not a Solitary Act: Conversation with Luciano Berio," *Tempo* 199 (January 1997), 17.

¹³ Cathy Berberian, Official Website, "Biography," <http://cathyberberian.com> (accessed 23 December 2012).

Jules Massenet, Milhaud, Meyerbeer, Mahler, Prokofiev, Purcell, Poulenc, Ravel, Rossini, Schubert, Stravinsky, Schoenberg, Verdi and Wolf. Louis Andriessen claims that Berberian's virtuosity lay within the parameters of crossing over with ease through a broad range of singing styles.¹⁴ Steve Schwartz is of the same opinion:

Cathy Berberian rose to eminence as one of the greatest exponents of tough, contemporary music....She has both the musical intelligence and solid vocal technique to sing advanced work superbly, but, really, she could sing just about anything. She shone in early music, Lieder, Rossini, and could also do convincing pop—in short, a super-singer.¹⁵

As a partnership, Berio and Berberian made a number of mutual decisions in the pre-compositional process. For instance, Berberian preferred chamber music settings to operatic settings, conceding that she could not 'fight a big orchestra'.¹⁶ Therefore, Berio cast Berberian mainly within smaller instrumental groups. Take, for example, *El mar la mar* for which Berio included a popular folk instrument—an accordion—with a piccolo, two clarinets, harp, cello and double bass. Similarly, *Chamber Music* Berio scored for an even more intimate setting that includes a cello, clarinet and harp. Berberian also participated in the decision as to which of the James Joyce poems of the same title to incorporate in *Chamber Music*.¹⁷

Similarly for *Folk Songs*, Berio opts for a smaller instrumental group rather than a full-size orchestra. The composer arranges two versions of this work: one for voice and flute, piccolo, clarinet, two percussions, harp, viola and cello of 1964 and the other for voice and chamber orchestra that the composer reorchestrated in 1973. The rhythmic and harmonic construction of

¹⁴ Louis Andriessen, "Letter from Cathy (2003), Composer's Notes," http://www.boosey.com/pages/teaching/catalogue/cat_detail.asp?musicid=45162 (accessed 24 December 2012).

¹⁵ Schwartz, "Compact Disc Review: Recitals for Cathy."

¹⁶ Charles Amirkhanian, "Ode to Gravity: Cathy Berberian," Part 1 (1 November 1972), <http://www.radiom.org> (accessed 3 February 2013).

¹⁷ Frans van Rossum "Special Transcript: Cathy's Solo Talk Show," in *Cathy Berberian: Pioneer of Contemporary Vocality*, eds. Pamela Karantonis et al., Farnham, UK and Burlington, USA: Ashgate Press, 2014, 38.

the eleven songs, are intentionally popular and accessible to the listener.¹⁸ Berio's compositional approach here is for the instrumental parts to underline and to comment on the expressive and cultural roots of each song.¹⁹

Berio's *Epifanie* is the only orchestral composition for Berberian. This work is a collection of seven short orchestral pieces and five vocal pieces that are in a modernist idiom and include a wide range of vocal expressions and techniques. Berio also suggested nine optional sequences for the performance realisation.²⁰ The text Berio drew from the writings of Bertolt Brecht, James Joyce, Antonio Machado, Marcel Proust, Edoardo Sanguineti and Claude Simon. So as not to 'fight' the orchestra, Berio substantially reduces the instrumental accompaniment for Berberian's vocal parts. However, after the work's premiere at the Salzburg Festival on 19 August 1974, Berio decided to withdraw this version of the work. For the revised edition of 1991, Berio opts for the title *Epiphanies*, as well as a fixed order for the texts.

The electronic media also befitted Berberian's vocals as Berio could manipulate the sonic output of the vocal parts. Berio seeks to convey the voice as 'not merely an instrument, but a large field of possibilities'.²¹ Take, for example, *Thema (Omaggio a Joyce)*, which includes English, Italian and French words. Other early electro-acoustic music compositions that similarly use the voice as a primary sound source include Schaeffer and Henry's collaboration *Symphonie pour un home seul* (1949–50), Stockhausen's *Gesang der Jünglinge* (1956), Bruno Maderna's *Dimensioni II* (1960), Luigi Nono's *La Fabbrica Illuminata* (1964), and Steve Reich's *It's Gonna Rain* (1965) and *Come Out* (1966).

Thema (Omaggio a Joyce) begins with Berberian reading a passage from the eleventh chapter of *Ulysses* by James Joyce entitled *Sirens*. Then, two

¹⁸ Berio, *Folk Songs*, Work Introduction.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 27.

²¹ Moore and MacLennan, Interview with Berio.

minutes into the work, Berio begins to deconstruct the voice through a variety of electronic manipulations. These effects include distortions, echoes, stuttering, speeding up, slowing down of the tape, multi-tracking, and splicing the voice. Berio seeks to create for the listener a blur between the poetic words and the music.²² In the reception of this work, Raymond Tuttle explains the stereophonic effects of Berberian's vocals, as coming 'up from the ether, inserting themselves into one another, causing one another to erupt with new meaning and sonic resonances as they collide, combine, and resist their electronic counterparts'.²³

At that time, the directors of Radiotelevisione Italiana deemed this challenging new work incomprehensible and therefore inappropriate for a general audience.²⁴ The directors decided not to broadcast *Thema (Omaggio a Joyce)*, but a first version of Berio's conclusion for this work was heard in Naples on 14 June 1958.²⁵ The following critical reception of 2003 suggests that this work is an important contribution within the electronic media.

Ivan Hewett: *Thema (Omaggio a Joyce)* is a 'classic of electronic music'.²⁶

John Warnaby: despite the outdated technology, 'the piece remains, together with Stockhausen's *Gesang der Jünglinge*, one of the supreme achievements in the medium'.²⁷

Michael Berkeley: *Thema (Omaggio a Joyce)* is one of the 'finest essays in electronic music'.²⁸

In not focusing exclusively on avant-garde music, the Berio/Berberian team challenged the art music culture of the 1960s and early 1970s by diversifying

²² Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 141.

²³ Raymond Tuttle, "Compact Disc Review; *Luciano Berio: Many More Voices*," Classical Net Review, <http://www.classical.net/music/recs/reviews/r/rca68302a.php> (accessed 23 December 2012).

²⁴ Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 61.

²⁵ Osmond-Smith. "The Tenth Oscillator: The Work of Cathy Berberian 1958-1966," 4.

²⁶ Ivan Hewett, "Luciano Berio: Composer whose highly personal modernism embraced theatre, language and new sonorities," *Guardian* (London, United Kingdom: 28 May 2003), 23.

²⁷ John Warnaby, "Obituary: Luciano Berio," *Musical Opinion* 126, 1435 (July 2003), 4.

²⁸ Berkeley, "He knocked me out: Luciano Berio, groundbreaking, endlessly energetic composer, died this week. Michael Berkeley pays tribute," 8.

their musical output to include popular songs. In performing transcriptions of *Michelle*, *Yesterday* and *Ticket to Ride*, Berberian vindicates to conservative audiences the integrity of the harmony in these Beatles songs.²⁹ Berio arranged these pieces in a Baroque style; for instance, one version of *Michelle* includes two flutes and harpsichord and another mixed winds and strings.³⁰ Similarly, Berio's transcriptions of Weill's *Song of Sexual Slavery* (for voice, clarinet, bass clarinet, accordion and vibraphone), *Le grand Lustucru* (for voice, percussion and string quartet) and *Surabaya Johnny* (for voice, clarinet, percussion, guitar and string quartet) further demonstrated Berio's and Berberian's appreciation of the cabaret musical style.

As a joint enterprise, Berio/Berberian explored new ways to present the human voice within electro-acoustic media and traditional instrumental composition. The impact of the Berio/Berberian partnership not only transformed vocal technique but also its future compositional possibilities.³¹ However, musicologist Janet Halfyard comments that with the public's fixation on composers, audiences at times 'lose sight of the creative contributions made to compositional processes by performers'.³² Berberian's important contribution to the Berio/Berberian collaborations is somewhat overshadowed by the celebrity status of Berio.³³ Most notably, during the couple's marriage (1950—1964), the public perceived Berberian as 'the wife of a great musician'.³⁴ Berberian's role was marginalised to the status of a conventional opera soloist rather than as an integral part of the compositional process.³⁵

²⁹ Amirkhanian, "Ode to Gravity: Cathy Berberian."

³⁰ Kate Meehan, "Beatles Arias: Cathy Berberian Sings the Beatles," in *Cathy Berberian: Pioneer of Contemporary Vocality*, eds. Pamela Karantonis et al., Farnham, UK and Burlington, USA: Ashgate Press, 2014, 176.

³¹ Paull, *Cathy Berberian and Music's Muses*, 8.

³² Halfyard, "A few words for a woman to sing: the extended vocal technique of Cathy Berberian."

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Wignall, "Current Trends in Italian Opera," 324.

³⁵ Francesca Placanica, "La nuova vocalità nell'opera contemporanea (1966): Cathy Berberian's Legacy," in *Cathy Berberian: Pioneer of Contemporary Vocality*, eds. Pamela Karantonis et al., Farnham, UK and Burlington, USA: Ashgate Press, 2014, 53.

This point of contention is not exclusive to Berberian's collaborative works with Berio. The vocalist's communicative and performing skills were tangible practices widely adapted and embedded in the works by a number of composers who also failed to acknowledge the relevance of her contribution once their work had achieved its final format.³⁶ Other works for Berberian include John Cage's *Aria* (1958), Bruno Maderna's *Dimensioni II: Invenzione su una voce* (1960), Roman Haubenstock-Ramati's *Credentials or Think, Think Lucky* (1961), Igor Stravinsky's *Elegy for J.F.K* (1964), Darius Milhaud's *Adieu* (1964), Sylvano Bussotti's *La Passion Selon Sade* (1965), Henrie Pousseur's *Phonemes pour Cathy* (1966) and William Walton's *Façade II* (1977).³⁷ For this generation of composers, Berberian was the avant-garde vocalist of choice in a similar way that David Tudor was the avant-garde pianist of choice.³⁸

The impact of the Berio/Berberian collaboration is further explored in the following discussion of *Visage*.

8.1.2: *Visage* (1961): the collaborative process and reception

Berberian's vocal improvisations were a substantial contribution to the performance realisation of *Visage*. Yet, in the following 'author's notes' Berio validates his use of electronics within a composition and credited himself as the sole composer of this work. Berio acknowledges Berberian as 'the voice' rather than a co-collaborator:

When I was composing *Visage* what attracted me, as always, was research intended as a way to expand the chances of bringing nearer musical and acoustic processes, and as a means to find musical equivalents of logistic articulation. This is why the experience of electronic music is so important: it enables the composer to assimilate

³⁶ Ibid., 53.

³⁷ *Façade II* (dedicated to Berberian) stems from *Façade-Entertainment* that are William Walton's accompaniments to a collection of early twentieth century poems by Edith Sitwell. These poems are a study in word-rhythm and onomatopoeia that are recited over the instrumental accompaniment. Sitwell's poems in *Façade II* include *Came the great popinjay*, *Aubade*, *March*, *Madam mouse trots*, *The octogenarian*, *Gardener Janus catches a naiad*, *Water Party* and *Said King Pompey*.

³⁸ Halfyard, "A few words for a woman to sing: the extended vocal technique of Cathy Berberian."

into the musical process a vast area of sound phenomena that do not fit pre-established musical codes....The voice is Cathy Berberian's.³⁹

Nevertheless, in depicting Berberian's voice as 'a second Studio di Fonologia' Berio credits the vocalist's virtuosity and artistic capabilities for both *Thema (Omaggio a Joyce)* and *Visage*.⁴⁰ Even the principal technician of the Studio di Fonologica di Milano della Radiotelevisione Italiana, Mario Zuccheri describes Berberian as the Studio's 'tenth oscillator'.⁴¹ Berberian is an integral contributor from the onset of the compositional process of *Visage*. This course initially involved a series of two to three hour recording sessions at the Studio di Fonologia.⁴²

Berberian first improvised on a series of phonetic repertoire in English, Hebrew and Neapolitan dialect.⁴³ Berio aspires to work within the parabola from the failure of communication, through to trivial conversation, to serious emotion, and then to song.⁴⁴ Berberian explains the manner in which Berio guided her improvisations during the recording process:

He gave me certain ideas that I was going to create [in] *the moment* — improvising—under his guidance. I was either inventing a language or I was exploiting a vocal gesture. For example he'd say 'alright now you start out with a total inability to communicate and then you work into a situation where you acquire phonemes, and you acquire several phonemes at a time and then you can make a comprehensible phrase and then you become social'... At one point he said – 'now give me what you remember of the *muro del pianto*,' which was *The Wailing Wall*. He said 'start at an agonized [point]—with agony and desperation quietly and build it up and build it up and get to such a high tension that the sound you've arrived at will naturally melt into singing'.⁴⁵

In addition to the improvised sections on an invented language or vocal gestures, Berberian devoted one of these sessions exclusively to different

³⁹ Luciano Berio, *Visage* (Author's notes), Centro Studi Luciano Berio: <http://www.lucianoberio> (accessed 7 August 2013).

⁴⁰ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 94.

⁴¹ Halfyard, "Text and authority: issues of gender and ownership in the work of Cathy Berberian."

⁴² Osmond-Smith, "The tenth oscillator: The work of Cathy Berberian 1958—1966," 8.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁴⁵ van Rossum "Special Transcript: Cathy's Solo Talk Show," 41.

types of laughter.⁴⁶ The final recorded vocal material for *Visage* was six hours in duration, from which Berio then extracted components to counterpoint against the electronic sounds.⁴⁷ Berio's 'decomposition' of the voice into articulatory elements or gestures neutralises the voice, which then resonates through a range of electronic sounds.⁴⁸ Berio edits, filters, distorts and remixes Berberian's vocal part, including laughter, moans, groans, snorts, wheezes, sighs, sobs and cries with electronic sounds.

George Flynn's analysis of the final format of *Visage*, which is twenty-one minutes in duration, defines the work in three parts, and describes Berberian's vocal input within Berio's electronic sounds (see Table 3).⁴⁹

Table 3: *Visage* (1961)

Part 1	Beginning to 7 minutes	Berio presents the introduction of materials and vocal-electronic relationships. Berberian's vocals dominate this section.
Part 2	approximately 7 minutes to 13 minutes 30 seconds	Disintegration of Berberian's vocal predominance and continuity.
Part 3	approximately 13 minutes 30 seconds to 21 minutes	Berio resorts to song, a final speech and then Berberian's vocals disappear as a separate entity.

Berio's objective for *Visage* was that of a radio drama, 'almost a sound track for a play'.⁵⁰ The listener may also perceive this work as a vocal composition, an experimental poem or a study in sound.⁵¹ The emphasis on emotions is

⁴⁶ Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 63.

⁴⁷ Osmond-Smith, "The tenth oscillator: The work of Cathy Berberian 1958-1966," 8.

⁴⁸ Conner, "The Decomposing Voice of Postmodern Music," 471.

⁴⁹ Flynn, "Listening to Berio's Music," 390.

⁵⁰ Berio, *Visage* (Author's notes).

⁵¹ Hewett, "Luciano Berio: Composer whose highly personal modernism embraced theatre, language and new sonorities," 23.

the foundation of the acoustical expression in *Visage*. The reception of music is subject to meanings imposed by the culture in which it sounds.⁵² To enhance the reception of different mental states including fear, desperation, provocation and pleasure, Berio/Berberian chose conventional symbols of representation that include, for instance, crying, whining and laughter. *Visage* therefore is based on a symbolic and representative charge that is carried by vocal gestures and inflections in a manner that only resembles a language.⁵³

Berberian's verbal discourse includes phonemes, vowels consonances, gibberish and babbling on an invented language; the Italian word *parole* (words) appears only twice in the final version of the work. Richard Causton suggests that 'the invocation of, on the one hand, electronic sounds which carry no specific connotations, and, on the other, the most meaningful sound of all— the human voice— makes possible the establishment and dissolution of innumerable different interrelationships, and allows Berio freely to exploit the potential for referential ambiguity inherent in the electro-acoustic medium'.⁵⁴

Berberian evokes for the listener a wide range of emotional states that move in a rapid and seamless successive manner. In the reception of this work, Martin Butler explains that Berberian is capable of sounding 'hilarious and touching—and often these two things simultaneously'.⁵⁵ Mark Swed purports that Berberian's instantaneous shifts from laughter—to outrage—to terror—to sexual gratification the listener is never uncertain of singer's intent.⁵⁶ However, Causton perceives the work as without specific intentions:

⁵² Dusman, "Unheard-of: Music as Performance and the Reception of the New," 144.

⁵³ Berio, *Visage* (Author's notes).

⁵⁴ Richard Causton, "Berio's *Visage* and the Theatre of Electro-acoustic Music," *Tempo* 194 (October 1995), 20.

⁵⁵ Butler, "Luciano Berio: The Godfather," 15.

⁵⁶ Mark Swed, "Culture Monster; One of a kind; the legend of the envelope-pushing mezzo-soprano Cathy Berberian, a uniquely complete talent, lives on," *Los Angeles Times Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, California: 19 June 2013), D. 3.

The extreme and carefully calculated tension between the great accuracy of semantic specificity and the lack of semantic specificity forces the mind of the listener into creative activity.⁵⁷

The intentionality of *Visage* is therefore as interpreted by the listener. Hence, Causton advocates that the listener is the protagonist and the theatrical experience is the virtual space of 'the mind'.⁵⁸ The reception of musical sounds also is, often unconsciously, placed within the personal experience of the listener.⁵⁹ Berio/Berberian stimulate for the listener, a quasi-narrative. Take, for example, the initial 3 minutes and 30 seconds of this work, Berberian articulates a repertory of consonances, vowels and syllables including: sst, k, g (uh), d (ih), k (rrr), ksh, d (ah), ah. The combination of syllables, vowels and consonants with a variety of vocal gestures stimulates for the listener an imaginary monologue without being an actual verbal or programmatic image.⁶⁰ Priscilla McLean suggests that 'the effect of these vocal gestures is quite provocative: the non-words expressed with such strong inflections first stimulate the listener into imagining an intelligible dramatic monologue, and later into perceiving the sounds for what they are: an art of interweaving complex vocal abstractions'.⁶¹

In the reception of sentiments with the music, expressions of extreme emotions have a propensity to fuse together: ambiguous behaviour modes such as 'crying' may be perceived either as crying for joy, sadness or pain. Similarly, screams cannot be readily identified with specific causes such as joy, fear, help or aggression.⁶² However, Berberian's *mélange* of laughter in combination with cries, sobs and various other vocal effects calls to mind particular psychological states. For instance, in the recording of the work

⁵⁷ Causton, "Berio's *Visage* and the Theatre of Electro-acoustic Music," 20.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁵⁹ Leigh Landy, "The 'something to hold on to factor' in timbral composition," *Contemporary Music Review* 10, 2 (1994), 55.

⁶⁰ Priscilla McLean, "Fire and Ice: A Query," *Perspectives of New Music* 16, 1 (Autumn-Winter 1977), 207.

⁶¹ McLean, "Fire and Ice: A Query," 207.

⁶² Kutschke, "The Scream in Avant-Garde Music: The New Left and the Rediscovery of the Body," 66.

from approximately 2 minutes 40 seconds to 3 minutes 19 seconds, Berberian's laughter gives way to sobs then into hysterical babbling and shrieking that climaxes and resolves in a yell and wail. Causton describes the amalgamation of these vocal effects as an unstable state of mind.⁶³

Berberian's voice also evokes for the listener sexual connotations. Similarly, these connotations also are not specific within the work but perceived in the mind of the listener.⁶⁴ The experience of sexual assault can be heard at approximately 6 minutes 39 seconds to 7 minutes 13 seconds of the recorded work. The interaction of Berberian's high pitched screams and the sharp, incisive electronic sounds validate the terror and physical pain to evoke for the listener the disturbing perception of a woman being violently assaulted. Butler perceives Berberian's vocal effects as 'shocking and extreme'.⁶⁵

The violence of the first section gives way to sobbing and laughter in the second section. At the beginning of this segment, Berberian moves from stuttering to breathy sounds, sighs and frantic whines to evoke the sensation of sexual gratification. Berberian generates meaning, also, through the intonation of the voice. For instance, the struggle to speak and the erratic electronic sounds give way to a conversational type of ease that also includes exaggerated inflections of the voice that Berio matched with light, high, continuous, clustered electronic sounds. Osmond-Smith likens the intermingling of sounds to that of 'eavesdropping upon intimate conversation in an unfamiliar language'.⁶⁶

⁶³ Causton, "Berio's *Visage* and the Theatre of Electro-acoustic Music," 19.

⁶⁴ Andrew Ford, "Kim Williams discusses the music of the late Luciano Berio," *The Music Show*, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 31 May 2003 <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/musicshow/kim-williams/3542922> (accessed 28 December 2012).

⁶⁵ Butler, "Luciano Berio: The Godfather," 15.

⁶⁶ Osmond-Smith, "The tenth oscillator: The work of Cathy Berberian 1958—1966," 8.

The hysteria at the end of the second section leads into the wails and song that begin the third section. The final speech-like vocals dissipate to give way to the electronic sounds that present the illusion of the voice as trapped and buried in sounds.⁶⁷ In Raymond Tuttle's reception of this work, Berberian attempts to narrate a disaster that has befallen the vocalist as typified in an operatic *scena*.⁶⁸

Visage received harsh criticism from the directors of Radiotelevisione Italiana. At the time, the work was not broadcast and dismissed as 'obscene'.⁶⁹ This reaction by the authorities appears to be a general view of the times as substantiated by Aurelio de la Vega in his article of 1965 on electronic music: 'the public at large usually remains cold, confused or merely dazed when faced with any new aesthetic experience'.⁷⁰ At the time, in being dismissed only as 'obscene' demonstrates that Berberian's gestures were highly evocative. Berberian's vocals in conjunction with Berio's electronic additions successfully presented the listener a myriad of emotions and psychological associations. Due to the multi-dimensional complexity of these works, they continue to generate meanings anew and the interpretative decisions are intentionally subject to the experiences and perceptions of the listener. Francesco Giomi regards both *Visage* and *Thema (Omaggio a Joyce)* as seminal to the development of electronic music.⁷¹ Likewise, Osmond-Smith credits *Visage* as one of the 'most resiliently fascinating electronic works'.⁷²

Berberian's contribution is an essential part of the final composition; therefore, *Visage* is a collaborative work even though it has never been

⁶⁷ Flynn, "Listening to Berio's Music."

⁶⁸ Tuttle, "Compact Disc Review; *Luciano Berio: Many More Voices*."

⁶⁹ Osmond-Smith, "The Tenth Oscillator: The Work of Cathy Berberian 1958—1966," 8.

⁷⁰ Aurelio de la Vega, "Regarding Electronic Music," *Tempo*, New Series, 75 (Winter 1965—1966), 2.

⁷¹ Francesco Giomi, "In memoriam, Luciano Berio: a testimony," *Organized Sound* 8, 2 (August 2003), 231.

⁷² David Osmond-Smith, "*Thema (Omaggio a Joyce)/Momenti/Visage*," Program Notes to *Omaggio: A Celebration of Luciano Berio 15—30 April 2004*, South Bank Centre, London, 32.

officially acknowledged as such.⁷³ The symbiotic relationship depends on Berberian's improvised vocal repertory, which is the base for Berio's electronic insertions. In a similar way, Berberian is instrumental in illustrating to Berio new vocal possibilities to achieve for the listener a plethora of emotional states in *Sequenza III*.

In the following case study, the symbiotic relationship depends on Berio's vocal ideas and, equally, Berberian's exemplary vocal technique and theatrical virtuosity.

8.1.3: *Sequenza III* (1965): the collaborative process and reception

In contrast to Berberian's improvisations for the text of *Visage*, Berio chooses a modular text by Markus Kutter. Again, the following is the text of *Sequenza III*, which consists of fragmentary phrases that are intentionally ambiguous to allow for syntactic and semantic mobility.⁷⁴

give me	a few words	for a woman
to sing	a truth	allowing us
to build a house	without worrying	before night comes ⁷⁵

To aid the reception of this work, the vocabulary is intentionally elementary so that the listener can immediately grasp and remember these universal words.⁷⁶ Berio seeks to create theatre within the work by using phonetic and semantic associations so that even a non-specialist listener could grasp and derive meaning from the performance.⁷⁷ Berio presents the listener with a succession of words in a series of two, three, or five groupings that do not form significant phrases; similarly, he also presents a succession of syllables that does not produce words. Osmond-Smith describes Berio's treatment of

⁷³ Halfyard, "Text and authority: issues of gender and ownership in the work of Cathy Berberian."

⁷⁴ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 94—95.

⁷⁵ Markus Kutter, *Sequenza III* (for voice, 1965), Universal Edition: 13723.

⁷⁶ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 95.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 95.

text as essentially a 'quarry for phonetic materials'.⁷⁸ Berio's phonetic analysis allows the voice to retain its excessiveness, by resisting the process of musical articulation.⁷⁹ The phonetic elements of this work Berio repeats many times in different orders to create for the listener a kaleidoscopic view of the text, rather than the actual form of the text.⁸⁰

The text segmentations combine in a mobile fashion and rotate continuously to create their own context and to produce a 'continuous passage between maximum and minimum levels of recognizability'.⁸¹ According to Halfyard, a significant clue to Berio's treatment of the text and its narrative function is in the phrase 'without worrying' as these words do not appear in full or by phoneme, implying that the performer fails to achieve this notion.⁸²

Berio employs the sung words also with other everyday vocal behaviour, including muttering, whispering and laughter, for reasons that Berio explains in an interview with musicologist Bálint András Varga:

I am not interested in sound by itself – and even less in sound effects, whether of vocal or instrumental origin. I work with words because I find new meaning in them by analyzing them acoustically and musically. I rediscover the word. As far as breathing and sighing are concerned, these are not effects but vocal gestures, which also carry a meaning: they must be considered and perceived in their proper context.⁸³

Similarly to *Visage*, Berberian here conveys with ease many different and complex psychological states of the mind. For instance, to convey a tense character, Berberian articulates quickly in an urgent, nervous and intense manner. The state of anxiety the vocalist depicts by bewildered, whimpering, whining and gasping intonations. A witty character we hear by the giddy, ecstatic, coy and excited articulations. A dreamy character Berberian portrays by sounding distant, impassive, wistful and languorous. Alternatively sounds of joy, serenity and tenderness convey a noble character.

⁷⁸ Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 65.

⁷⁹ Conner, "The Decomposing Voice of Postmodern Music," 478.

⁸⁰ Muller, "Music Is Not a Solitary Act: Conversation with Luciano Berio," 17.

⁸¹ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 95–96.

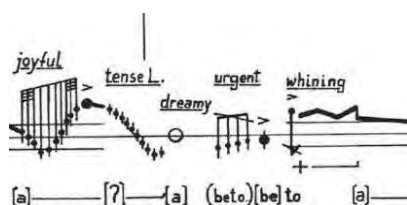
⁸² Halfyard, "Provoking Acts: The Theatre of Berio's *Sequenzas*," *Berio's Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis*, 105.

⁸³ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 141.

Berio's treatment of the text was tailored to exploit Berberian's broad-ranging talents. For instance, the multiplicity of vocal elements and the speed with which these elements move from one to another in *Sequenza III* is one aspect of Berberian's virtuosic capabilities. Take, for example, the rapid tempi required for the extensive range of emotions and different vocal articulations in the following excerpt (see Musical example 39: *Sequenza III*, page 2, line 4). The singer needs to evoke a 'joyful' expression on the vowel 'a' (marked as fast as possible and with different speeds of periodically articulated sung sounds); laugh in a 'tense' manner; whisper in an unpitched sound (marked \circ) to depict a 'dreamy' state; create a sense of 'urgency' for the spoken text fragments 'be—to' (marked as fast grace notes); a whining intonation that requires the with a closed mouth (marked +) (vocal actions written on three lines indicates relative register positions).

Berio's desired effect of these rapid alternations between the sung and spoken words is to create the illusion of 'simultaneous speech and song'.⁸⁴ Also, the simultaneous and parallel development of the text segments with the vocal gesture and the expression of the work form a three-part invention, which, in part, are foreign to one another, but 'interfere, inter-modulate and combine into a unity'.⁸⁵

Musical example 39: *Sequenza III*, page 2, line 4



⁸⁴ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 96.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 96.

Berio's vocal ideas stem from Berberian's vocal capabilities. In validating the communicative function of everyday vocal behavior including sobs, sighs, tongue snaps, screams, groans and laughter, the Berberian/Berio team helped to transform conventional vocal practices of the day. The use of these everyday vocal sounds in combination with the simple text fragments further improve the reading of the multiple emotional states in *Sequenza III*.

Berio readily engages with musicologists, musicians and critics to explain his inspirations and aspirations for his vocal works. Berberian asserts her contribution to avant-garde vocal composition via her manifesto of 1966 entitled 'La nuova vocalità nell'opera contemporanea' (The New Vocality in Contemporary music). The following discussion is on Berberian's undertakings to enhance the reception of vocal works and the ways in which to 'entertain' the audience.

8.2.1: Berberian's performance skills and audience rapport

Performance is a vital part of Berberian's identity as the vocalist explains:

Music is the air I breathe and the planet I inhabit. The only way I can pay my debt to music is by bringing it to others, with all my love.⁸⁶

The success of a performance relies on the singer's commitment to storytelling and characterisations.⁸⁷ The text of a vocal work identifies the character and describes their narrative, then the performer, by assuming that voice, represents that character.⁸⁸ To enhance the reception of new music, Berberian worked in close association with contemporary composers of the day. No doubt, the first-hand experience of working with Berio aided Berberian to better communicate to the audience the objectives of the work

⁸⁶ Cathy Berberian, "Creed: I Fell Down the Long Rabbit Hole into the Wonderland of Music," in *Cathy Berberian: Pioneer of Contemporary Vocality*, eds. Pamela Karantonis et al., Farnham, UK and Burlington, USA: Ashgate Press, 2014, 1.

⁸⁷ McCaldin, "Swinging on the squeaky gate: The joys of singing modern music."

⁸⁸ Halfyard, "Provoking Acts: The Theatre of Berio's *Sequenzas*," *Berio's Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis*, 104.

at hand. Alternatively, for a bona fide performance of Claudio Monteverdi's *Ofeo*, Berberian resorted to reading *The Book of the Courtier* (1507) by Baldassare Castiglione.⁸⁹ To better identify with the life and psyche of the Italian Renaissance, Berberian drew from the series of fictional conversations between the courtiers of the Duke of Urbino, who debate the nature of nobility, humour, women and love. In the following review of 2015, William Braun comments on Berberian's conviction in portraying different characters within the operatic arias:

As the Messenger in *L'Orfeo*, she bleaches more and more color from her tone as the ghastly tale is unfolded, while a few ornaments maintain the vitality of address. She is cunningly tough-but fair as La Speranza. Her Penelope in *Ulisse* is absolutely stunned with grief, the expression so pinpoint that we cannot help but be drawn in, but she then shows heartbreaking compassion to the beggar she has not yet recognized as long-absent husband. Her Ottavia in *Poppea*, with beautiful Italian diction, is devastating as she is unable to stammer past the first syllable of 'addio'.⁹⁰

The theatrical skill of the performer is another important factor that contributes to the success of a recital. The theatrical aspect of a live performance is where the music creates meanings through physical action that the audience comprehend via the visual sense as well as through the musical sounds.⁹¹ To enhance the reception of a particular work, Berberian prescribes that a singer should be able to act, dance, mime, and improvise so as to 'affect the eyes as well as the ears' of the audience member.⁹² To develop these skills, Berberian early in her career pursued studies in stagecraft and pantomime.⁹³

⁸⁹ van Rossum, "Special Transcript Cathy's Solo Talk Show," 38.

⁹⁰ William R. Braun, "Monteverdi: *L'Orfeo*; *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*; *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria*," *Opera News* 79, 8 (February 2015), 55.

⁹¹ Halfyard, "Provoking Acts: The Theatre of Berio's *Sequenzas*," *Berio's Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis*, 116.

⁹² Cathy Berberian, "The New Vocality in Contemporary Music," in *Cathy Berberian: Pioneer of Contemporary Vocality*, eds. Pamela Karantonis et al., Farnham, UK and Burlington, USA: Ashgate Press, 2014, 49.

⁹³ Berberian, Official Website, "Biography."

Sequenza III relies on three different modes of theatricality that are interlinked. They include the use of a dramatic scenario or linear narrative; the presence of specific characters within the text of the composition; and the inclusion of stage actions beyond exclusively singing.⁹⁴ The dramatic scenario and narrative is that of a female character, 'Cathy', and her personality and psyche. The stage actions and antics further enhance the reception of 'her' character. For instance, in the opening of *Sequenza III* Berio/Berberian disband the protocol of a recital for which the singer walks onto the stage platform; the audience applauds; the singer smiles and bows and then commences the performance. Instead, the singer enters the stage already muttering as though pursuing an off-stage thought.⁹⁵ The singer ceases to mutter just before the subsiding of the applause of the public and then 'resumes' the work after a short silence.⁹⁶

These stage actions and antics create a disconcerting effect for the audience member. The conventional process of walking on stage, the applause, and the silence that then follows creates a transitional space between the reality of the concert hall and the manifest presence of the singer, and the partial time-place-character matrix that the singer then enters as she performs the piece.⁹⁷ *Sequenza III* disrupts this audience expectation and removes the transitional space as the singer enters already performing, and then the applause subsides at this realisation. On the part of the singer, the lack of audience acknowledgment and obliviousness to the conventions of a recital suggest that this might be 'real' rather than performance: as Halfyard suggests 'perhaps the singer has gone mad'.⁹⁸

Similarly, *Recital I (for Cathy)* relies on three different modes of theatricality. However, here Berio/Berberian, present the audience with a comic scenario.

⁹⁴ Halfyard, "Provoking Acts: The Theatre of Berio's *Sequenzas*," *Berio's Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis*, 104.

⁹⁵ Luciano Berio, Preface to score of *Sequenza III*.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Halfyard, "Provoking Acts: The Theatre of Berio's *Sequenzas*," *Berio's Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis*, 110.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 110.

This work engages and entertains the listener/viewer by way of a ‘tongue-in-cheek’ exposé of a conventional singer’s recital. The stage actions and antics call for the singer to enter the stage and find that the accompanist, a pianist, has not arrived. The recital starts with an off-stage harpsichordist who accompanies the singer for two songs by Monteverdi including *Lettera amorosa* and *Lamento della ninfa*. The singer then stops to look for the pianist and starts a spoken monologue. As the recital progresses, the singer descends into madness, quoting texts from Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, Schoenberg’s *Pierrot lunaire* and the mad scenes from Gaetano Donizetti’s *Lucia Di Lammermoor* and Giacomo Meyerbeer’s *Dinorah*. The singer ends the recital with a prayer for liberation, and Berio reduces her vocal range to a semitone.

The theatrical element is also an integral element of Berio’s *Circles* (with text based on three poems by modernist poet e. e. cummings); the composer groups the instruments around the text to reflect the phonetic components so that the sound is at times short-circuited and creates the effect of an explosion.⁹⁹ For this piece, the singer walks from one instrumental group to another to form a closer contact with the instrumental sonorities. In performance, at the beginning of the work, the singer stands in front of the instruments so that they create the effect of background accompaniment. Then the vocal part merges with the instrumental material, which Berio reflects also at an acoustical level. At the end of the work, the instrumentalists also sing to create the effect of a single sonority.¹⁰⁰

Indeed, Berberian gained notoriety for her dramatic and theatrical flair. The following critical reception suggests that Berberian successfully captures the mood of different characters by changing vocal styles to suit the music and the text. Swed comments that Berberian had an innate ability to transform

⁹⁹ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 144.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 145.

instantaneously from a 'comedian' into a 'dangerous seductress'.¹⁰¹ Paull likens these characteristics to that of a 'chameleon'.¹⁰² Schwartz further explains Berberian's theatrical flair in *Folk Songs*:

As Berberian begins *Black is the colour of my true love's hair* and moves into *I wonder as I wander...* Berberian brilliantly catches their flavour by turning herself into a concert version of the 'mountain soprano', Jean Richie, thinning out the tonal heft while remaining sweet and true... Throughout, Berberian virtuosically changes her vocal colors to suit the music and the text. In the French *Rossignolet du bois* she becomes a young girl on the edge of first love. In the Italian *A la Feminisca*, she becomes possessed by Spanish *duende*. In the second song...*Malurous qu'o uno fenno* (Women! Ya can't live with 'em, ya can't live without 'em), Berberian manages to dance through sass, cynicism, and merriment. One of the finest performances by a singer who routinely turned out great ones.¹⁰³

Audience rapport is another influential factor that determines the success of a performer. Berberian's recital scenarios were *ad lib* and tailor-made to fit the audience reactions on the night.¹⁰⁴

You always have to manipulate an audience. That's what an audience is for. It should be like putty in your hands. You should be able to play on an audience like you play on an instrument and they like being played with, if you know how to play. You have to tickle them, you have to squeeze them, you have to scratch them a little and sometimes you have to give [th]em a punch in the jaw. But you also have to make them enjoy.¹⁰⁵

Berberian was well aware that audiences of the 1960s and 1970s showed a preference for the traditional classical and popular styles of vocal repertoire.¹⁰⁶ To further entice a broad spectrum of audience members, Berberian programs included known classical and popular songs alongside a contemporary new work. Berberian's recitals commenced frequently with a Monteverdi aria, then several Debussy pieces before the presentation of a contemporary new work, followed then by a collection of popular songs by

¹⁰¹ Swed, "One of a kind; the legend of the envelope-pushing mezzo-soprano Cathy Berberian, a uniquely complete talent, lives on," D. 3.

¹⁰² Paull, *Cathy Berberian and Music's Muses*, 7.

¹⁰³ Schwartz, "Compact Disc Review: Recitals for Cathy."

¹⁰⁴ Paull, *Cathy Berberian and Music's Muses*, 5.

¹⁰⁵ van Rossum, "Special Transcript Cathy's Solo Talk Show," 41.

¹⁰⁶ Amirkhanian, "Ode to Gravity: Cathy Berberian."

Weill, Gershwin and the Beatles.¹⁰⁷ In combining these songs with avant-garde repertoire Berberian created multifaceted, themed recitals that showcased an array of different musical styles.¹⁰⁸ Further, through the juxtaposition of a modern classic with a new work, the audience can better judge the less familiar item.¹⁰⁹ In this way, Berberian developed a symbiotic relationship with her audience:

For me singing is ... the opportunity to communicate not only information — that is to say the contents of a piece or a group of pieces to an audience — but give them... joy in the hearing of it and entertainment in the presentation of it and to receive from them what I need, which is approval and the kind of affection that an audience can give a performer who is respected and admired.¹¹⁰

The following critical reception acknowledges Berberian audience rapport.

Tim Page [1983]: credits the positive audience reactions to Berberian's 'expertise in both traditional classical repertoires and in new music.'¹¹¹

David Burge [1993]: Berberian's recitals were 'exciting and successful'.¹¹²

Sylvano Bussotti [2002]: Berberian 'exclusively (re)invent[ed] extraordinary recitals of nineteenth-century salon music'.¹¹³

John Warnaby [2003]: Berberian was a 'flamboyant public persona' who communicated to the audience with 'enormous panache'.¹¹⁴

Paull [2007]: Berberian was a 'drawcard' for international audiences and her concerts attracted 'numerous' and 'faithful patrons'.¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁷ Eugene Chadbourne, "Magnificathy: The Many Voices of Cathy Berberian by Cathy Berberian on AllMusic," <http://www.allmusic.com/album/magnificathy-the-many-voices-of-cathy-berberian> (accessed 16 January 2013).

¹⁰⁸ Meehan, "*Beatles Arias: Cathy Berberian Sings the Beatles*," 170.

¹⁰⁹ Warnaby, "Contemporary Music Proms," 29.

¹¹⁰ van Rossum, Berberian, "Special Transcript: Cathy's Solo Talk Show," 43.

¹¹¹ Tim Page, "Cathy Berberian, Mezzo Soprano: Obituary," *New York Times* (New York: 8 March 1983), A. 28.

¹¹² Marilyn Nonken "A style to fit the purpose," Interview with David Burge, *Contemporary Music Review*, 21: 1 (Online publication date 27 November 2009), 27.

¹¹³ Sylvano Bussotti, "Allegory Actually. Cathy Berberian..." in *Cathy Berberian: Pioneer of Contemporary of Contemporary Vocality*, eds. Pamela Karantonis et al., Farnham, UK and Burlington, USA: Ashgate Press, 2014, 223.

¹¹⁴ Warnaby, "Obituary: Luciano Berio," 5.

¹¹⁵ Paull, *Cathy Berberian and Music's Muses*, 60.

The following discussion compares the critical reception of Berberian's performances of Berio's vocal works to that of other contemporary singers.

8.2.2: Performing 'in the shadow' of Cathy Berberian

Cults of personality around musicians suggest that such individuals are 'not like us', and they process superior wisdom, gifts and perceptions.¹¹⁶

Berberian's virtuosic skills even extended to her ability to memorise and to internalise complex music in a short space of time.¹¹⁷ The vocalist also rehearsed for a relatively short time in preparation for public recitals. For instance, Burge claims that when he accompanied Berberian, the singer demanded to rehearse only once the first line of each piece, claiming that anymore was 'bad for the voice'.¹¹⁸ Nevertheless Paull recounts that from 'the moment Berberian walked into a room, or onto a stage her charisma shone like a beacon'.¹¹⁹ Williams describes Berberian as one of the 'great personality performers of the post-war'.¹²⁰

In remembering Berberian's histrionic talents, the critical reception of Berio's vocal works as performed by other singers frequently resorts to a comparative discourse. Singer Carol Plantamura attributes this phenomena to Berberian's ability 'to make a piece her own; she knew how to have a piece become a signature piece on stage; to sing it so it becomes you'.¹²¹ For this reason, critic for the *American Record Guide* Ira Byelick comments that as a performer, it is difficult to follow in Berberian's footsteps:

She had a seemingly unerring sense of 'arc', a way of bringing even a piece composed of the most disparate elements to a structural unity, a moment of epiphany that sets the entire work to rights. This is an often nearly supernatural occurrence where one wanders until the very end

¹¹⁶ Pace, "Verbal Discourse as Aesthetic Arbitrator in Contemporary Music," 98.

¹¹⁷ Burge, "A style to fit the purpose," 27.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 27.

¹¹⁹ Jennifer Paull, "A musical enchantress," Music Vision Daily, <http://www.mvdaily.com/articles/2002/03/cathy1.htm> (accessed 23 December 2012).

¹²⁰ Ford, "Kim Williams discusses the music of the late Luciano Berio."

¹²¹ Juliana Snapper, "All with Her Voice: A Conversation with Carol Plantamura," in *Cathy Berberian: Pioneer of Contemporary Vocality*, eds. Pamela Karantonis et al., Farnham, UK and Burlington, USA: Ashgate Press, 2014, 211.

whether she can pull it off. [Berberian] always, as far as I've heard, did just that—and that thrill of the 'save' is part of her greatness, part of her charm.¹²²

Arguably the level of rapport and understanding between Berio/Berberian for the performance realisation of their collaborative works have been unparalleled by other performers. This is in large part due to the level of intimacy between the couple—Berio's tailoring of musical material to Berberian's personality and virtuosic abilities and hence, Berberian's successful execution of the works. For instance, in *Visage*, Berio dissects the psyche of Berberian.¹²³ Berio even concedes that *Folk Songs*, is a 'tribute to the artistry and vocal intelligence' of Berberian.¹²⁴ For *Sequenza III* the composer admits that this work is 'about Cathy'.¹²⁵

Berio was well aware that some audiences have difficulty in accepting certain types of music, 'unless there is the help of a great performer with a great name that sells'.¹²⁶ This phenomenon is evident even for earlier composers' works. Berio explains, by way of example, that Maurizio Pollini's exemplary piano performances of Beethoven's later works were seminal to attracting an audience to this repertoire.¹²⁷ From a marketing perspective, a concert that includes well-known musicians and composers is likely to appeal to more consumers. Mike Patton's reputation no doubt drew a full house for his performance of Berio's *Laborintus II* on 16 January 2014 at Angel Place, Sydney. Critic Donn  Restom explains that it takes the talent of Patton to draw an audience to include even rock fans and to lift *Laborintus II* 'from the dusty shelves of academia', and 'passionately' into the public domain.¹²⁸

¹²² Ira Byelick, "Stories," *American Record Guide* (Washington) 74, 6 (November/December 2011), 239.

¹²³ Butler, "Luciano Berio: The Godfather," 15.

¹²⁴ Berio, *Folk Songs* (Author's notes).

¹²⁵ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 94.

¹²⁶ Duffie, A Conversation with Berio.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Donn  Restom, "Lee Ranaldo, Mike Patton, Ensemble Offspring – City Recital Hall, Sydney," Music Feeds: <http://musicfeeds.com.au/gig/lee-ranaldo-mike-patton-ensemble-offspring-city-recital> (accessed 17 January 2014).

Indeed, Cathy Berberian is a name that still ‘sells.’ Berberian’s talent and commitment to performing new music helped preserve not only the Berio/Berberian collaborative repertoires but works of many composers of the European and North American avant-garde school, ‘making them known to a wide range of audiences’.¹²⁹ Donal Henahan, who wrote several disparaging critiques of Berio’s *Laborintus II* and *Voci*, claims in his review of 1986 that no subsequent interpreter has worked such ‘witty wonders’ with Berio’s works for the singer than did Berberian.¹³⁰ Likewise, Arved Ashby describes Berberian as ‘incomparable’ to other singers.¹³¹ For instance, Mark Swed in his review of Linda Hirst’s recording of *Folk Songs* of 1989 (Virgin Classics: 790704—1, *Songs Cathy Sang*), comments that the mezzo-soprano offers a ‘gorgeous rendition’ of this work but ‘lacks the ‘extravagant theatrical flair of her model’.¹³² Clements attributes this to the fact that Berio tailored the vocal lines to Berberian’s personality; therefore, critics and audiences familiar with Berberian’s performances find it ‘impossible to hear a single phrase without recalling how indelibly she coloured it’.¹³³

In turn, there is evidence that some contemporary singers are somewhat overshadowed by Berberian’s performances; for instance, Allan Ulrich in a review of 2001 for the *San Francisco Chronicle* writes that Lauren Flanigan’s interpretation of Berio’s *Epiphanies* ‘missed’ some of Berberian’s ‘improvisatory charisma’.¹³⁴ Similarly, Swed explains that Kiera Duffy’s performance of *Recital I (for Cathy)* of 2012 at the Waltz Disney Concert Hall, Los Angeles, lacked Berberian’s ‘great expressive range’.¹³⁵ In Ashby’s review of Luisa Castellani’s recording of *Sequenza III* the critic explains that

¹²⁹ Placanica, “La nuova vocalità nell’opera contemporanea (1966): Cathy Berberian’ Legacy,” 52.

¹³⁰ Donal Henahan, “Isn’t it time that composer Luciano Berio produced an enduring masterpiece?” *Houston Chronicle* (Houston, Texas, 14 December 1986), 10.

¹³¹ Ashby, “Berio: *Sequenzas*, All,” 75.

¹³² Mark Swed, “Records: New Team on Classical Scene,” *Wall Street Journal* (New York: 17 January 1989), 1.

¹³³ Clements, “Enchanting Berio the London premiere of Luciano Berio’s glistening *Epiphanies*.”

¹³⁴ Allan Ulrich, “Symphony rises to challenge of Berio’s episodic *Epiphanies*,” *San Francisco Chronicle* (San Francisco: 7 December 2001) <http://www.sfgate.com/music/article/Symphony-rises-to-challenge-of-Berio-s-episodic-2844176.php> (accessed 13 January 2015).

¹³⁵ Mark Swed, “Music Review: Green Umbrella a shade off from vision,” *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, California: 10 May 2012), D. 7.

Berberian was more at 'ease with the work's cabaret style and ribald humour'.¹³⁶ Berio even concedes that on a number of occasions when Berberian was not performing, the composer was tempted to transcribe *Sequenza III* for two or three voices.¹³⁷

This type of critical reception prevailed throughout the latter part of the twentieth and early twenty-first century. Take for example in reviewing Castellani's recording of *Folk Songs*, on the Arts label (47376) of 1997, Paul Griffiths explains that with the exception of only Berberian, Castellani 'can hold her own with the best interpreters of the cycle'.¹³⁸ Griffiths claims Castellani is 'occasionally breathy, and her English is not quite certain in the two American numbers that open the set'.¹³⁹ Timothy Lovelace comments that Berberian has a 'stronger voice and brings more character to the concluding song, Azerbaijan' and Castellani's rhythms are 'not as precise' giving her interpretations 'more freedom'.¹⁴⁰

In reviewing Elissa Johnston's performance of *Folk Songs* at Descanso Gardens, California, in 2007, Swed draws our attention to this singer's mismatched sexuality and drama.¹⁴¹ Paull, however, recounts that Berberian's own stage sensuality was never 'physically blatant'.¹⁴² Rather, the singer's play on words was 'audaciously sexy'.¹⁴³

Again, for a later performance in 2009 of *Folk Songs* by Dawn Upshaw at the Walt Disney Concert Hall, Los Angeles, Swed comments that this was an emotionally intense interpretation but radically different to that of

¹³⁶ Ashby, "Berio: *Sequenzas*, All," 75.

¹³⁷ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 96.

¹³⁸ Griffiths, "Critic's Choice/Classical Compact Discs; The Latest Interpretations of Berio," E. 5.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, E. 5.

¹⁴⁰ Timothy Lovelace, "Berio: *Folk-Songs*, *Sequenza IV*; Boulez: *Derive*," *American Record Guide* 60, 6 (November–December 1997), 102.

¹⁴¹ Mark Swed, "Savoring the upside as Southwest goes outside," *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, California: 23 July 2007), E. 1.

¹⁴² Paull, *Cathy Berberian and Music's Muses*, 44.

¹⁴³ Swed, "Savoring the upside as Southwest goes outside," E. 1.

Berberian.¹⁴⁴ Swed explains that, where ‘Berberian externalized, Upshaw internalized. Where Berberian strut [ted] her stuff, Upshaw communed with Berio’s wondrous instrumental sounds’.¹⁴⁵ Along the same lines, Schwartz comments that Upshaw’s recording of *Folk Songs* is fine but ‘Berberian makes her seem bland’.¹⁴⁶

Tuttle suggests that Berberian’s recording of *Folk Songs* ‘remains essential for anyone interested in this work, but Upshaw runs a close second in her willingness to approximate singing styles from places as different as Azerbaijan, Armenia and Sicily’.¹⁴⁷ Likewise, referring to Karen Cargill’s performance of *Folk Songs* in 2011 with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra at the Younger Hall, St Andrews, Garry Fraser of the *Dundee Courier*, claims that some might have considered the presentation as ‘understated’.¹⁴⁸ These reactions from the press were not exclusive to the Berio/Berberian collaborative works: also, works by other composers for the vocalist proved ‘un-performable by anyone else’.¹⁴⁹

The continued performances as well as the scholarly/critical reviews of *Folk Songs* suggest that Berio and Berberian had an equal input for the subsequent success of this work. As discussed above, Berberian’s successful performances *Folk Songs* set a substantial benchmark for future singers. Equally the commentary on Berio’s accompaniments is also of high regard among musicologists and critics. Take for example Robert Henderson’s article of 1964, in which he praised the composer’s ‘sensitivity to word and mood, to the finest shades of instrumental sound, as well as a skill in craftsmanship that makes it possible for him to create a whole world of

¹⁴⁴ Swed, “Music Review: Dudamel conducts Schubert and Berio,” D. 1.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., D. 1.

¹⁴⁶ Schwartz, “Compact Disc Review: Recitals for Cathy.”

¹⁴⁷ Raymond Tuttle, “Compact Disc Review: Osvaldo Golijov: *Ayre*, Luciano Berio: *Folk Songs*, Dawn Upshaw, soprano, The Andalucian Dogs, Deutsche Grammophon 477541—4 DDD 62:02,” Classical Net <http://www.classical.net/music/recs/reviews/d/dgg775414a.php> (accessed 28 September 2012).

¹⁴⁸ Fraser, “*Dundee Courier* review of New Romantics IV.”

¹⁴⁹ Erik Eriksson, “Cathy Berberian —Music Biography, Credits and Discography,” AllMusic <http://www.allmusic.com/artist/cathy-berberian-mn0002286691> (accessed 16 January 2013).

association through the sparing use of short, telling motifs'.¹⁵⁰ In the same year, Misha Donat described Berio's accompaniments as 'creative acts' rather than 'simply arrangements'.¹⁵¹ Later, Swed's review of 2007 still continues to credit this collection of songs:

The songs are often battle of the sexes; Berio wrote them for the phenomenal Cathy Berberian... There is, under the friendly surface, anger and fire—and biting humor. The settings are masterpieces. The combination made the accessible pieces, Berio's most popular, even today, cutting edge and mysterious...and timeless'.¹⁵²

Berberian's theatrical flair at times is a factor that dominates the critical reception of Berio's compositions for the singer. For instance, Clements regards Berberian as the 'most inspiring interpreter of contemporary music, bringing to life the most unpromising material'.¹⁵³ Henahan acknowledges Berberian as an 'indispensable active ingredient' for Berio's early works of the 1950s and 1960s for the singer.¹⁵⁴ With respect to *Recital I*, Berio's collage technique, for Warnaby lacks 'overall unity'.¹⁵⁵ Schwartz suggests this technique could 'easily become pointless', but the dramatic situation of Berberian waiting for her accompanist to arrive and in the process 'becomes unhinged, skitting from one item in her repertoire to another' is a modern equivalent of the operatic 'mad scene'.¹⁵⁶ For Schwartz the work seems 'too easy' and the 'main attraction' is Berberian, who 'gives it class'.¹⁵⁷

Novel effects within a composition also appear to be the basis for disregarding certain works. For instance, in Henderson's review article of 1964 of Berio's *Circles*, he remarks that the composer initially creates an

¹⁵⁰ Henderson, "London Music: Berio."

¹⁵¹ Misha Donat, "Review," *Tempo* New Series 101 (1972), 59.

¹⁵² Swed, "Savoring the upside as Southwest goes outside," E.1.

¹⁵³ Andrew Clements, "Berio: *Recital I*, *Folksongs*, Weill Songs, Berberian/Julliard Ensemble/London Sinfonietta/ Berio (RCA)," *Guardian* (London, United Kingdom: 7 April 1995), T.014.

¹⁵⁴ Donal Henahan, "Music View: Listening to Berio, Thinking Bartók," *New York Times* (New York: 19 October 1986), A. 23.

¹⁵⁵ Warnaby, "Obituary: Luciano Berio," 5.

¹⁵⁶ Schwart, "Compact Disc Review: Recitals for Cathy."

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

impact of surprise on vocal, instrumental and theatrical levels; however, after several hearings, he found the work 'wearing rather thin'.¹⁵⁸ Similar to the critical reception, Henderson argues that Berberian's theatrical antics were the striking factor rather than the 'musical composition'.¹⁵⁹ Later, in 1970, composer Roger Smalley, similarly, argues that Berberian's theatrics and virtuosity in *Sequenza III* make for entertaining listening, but musically it is 'far the least interesting of the series'.¹⁶⁰

The perceived importance of particular partnerships also diminishes with time; music frequently loses its association with the original performer/collaborator, and these circumstances become part of history.¹⁶¹ A select number of critics have overcome the inclination to compare performances of today to those of Berberian. Clements, in not making comparisons to Berberian, reports that Charlotte Hellekant's premiere of *Epiphanies* at the Royal Festival Hall, London in 1994, was one of 'assurance and formidable musicality'.¹⁶² Similarly, Rohan Shotton, in reviewing Cargill's performance of *Folk Songs*, with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, at the St Andrews Younger Hall, 2011, claims that the singer tackled the songs with 'a superb range of moods'.¹⁶³ Likewise, in reviewing Rinat Shaham's performance of *Folk Songs* with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra in 2013, at the Melbourne Recital Centre, Martin Duffy reports that the singer 'stamped her own musical personality on this challenging song cycle, negotiating its demands of language, vocal colour and cultural nuance'.¹⁶⁴

Indeed, Berberian's virtuosity was a considerable attraction to Berio, and the vocalist's personality as well as her approach to music 'permeated all' of his

¹⁵⁸ Robert Henderson, "London Music: Berio," *Musical Times* 105, 1454 (April 1964), 728.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 728.

¹⁶⁰ Roger Smalley, "New Sounds," *Musical Times* 111, 1532 (October 1970), 1026.

¹⁶¹ Webb, "Partners in Creation," 255.

¹⁶² Clements, "Enchanting Berio the London premiere of Luciano Berio's glistening *Epiphanies*," A. 4.

¹⁶³ Rohan Shotton, "Words and Music with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra," <http://www.bachtrack.com/review-sco-karen-cargill> (accessed 12 August 2013).

¹⁶⁴ Martin Duffy, "Music review: Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra," *Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney: 5 August 2013), 41.

compositions.¹⁶⁵ However, tailoring a piece too specifically to a certain performer's abilities could risk the piece having no future performances in that person's absence.¹⁶⁶ Berio and Berberian are well aware of these facts and understand that each performer has unique vocal qualities and differing abilities. To address these issues for subsequent singers of *Recital I*, Berio specifies in the performance instructions of the published edition that the singer is free to insert musical excerpts that belong to her own repertory.¹⁶⁷

When presenting to an audience a new work for the first time, the performer is unencumbered by the past.¹⁶⁸ Berberian's argues that for already established repertoire, it is not important to imitate past performances precisely but, instead, to keep the spirit of the music.¹⁶⁹ For contemporary singers, Berberian's performances of Berio's works act as a springboard for further analyses and interpretations. Subsequent singers therefore need to study Berberian's performances to gain insight to these works but then bring to the fore their own interpretations in the performance realisation.

Berberian's death had a significant effect on Berio. As a final tribute to his muse, Berio composed *Requies* (In Memoriam Cathy Berberian, 1984), for chamber orchestra. For Robert Everett-Green (*The Globe and Mail*), this work provokes an 'elusive' and 'hypnotic' effect.¹⁷⁰ Further, Berio's treatment of the free variations and the implied melody conveys the 'illusion of a ghost soprano lurking between the lines, as though Berberian were singing an *obligato* from beyond the grave'.¹⁷¹ The evocation of 'anguish and loss', Griffiths' discerns by the manner in which the music 'floated, drifted and trembled, like a shimmering garment'.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁵ Ford, "Kim Williams discusses the music of the late Luciano Berio."

¹⁶⁶ Barry Truax, "The Inner and Outer Complexity of Music," *Perspectives of New Music* 32 (Winter 1994), 184.

¹⁶⁷ Luciano Berio, Performance Indications: *Recital I*, Vienna: Universal Edition, 1972/reprint 2002.

¹⁶⁸ McCaldin, "Swinging on the squeaky gate: The joys of singing modern music."

¹⁶⁹ Amirkhanian, "Ode to Gravity: Cathy Berberian."

¹⁷⁰ Everett-Green, "Recordings of Note Classical, Luciano Berio: *Requies*, Luciano Berio, London Sinfonietta," C. 4.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, C. 4.

¹⁷² Paul Griffiths, "Funeral march fit for a queen and a leap across time," *New York Times* (New York: 10 April 2001), E. 5.

Conclusion

The critical reception demonstrates that Berberian was a major influence in the success of Berio's works for the singer. Berio/Berberian had a symbiotic partnership: through her virtuosity Berberian introduced Berio to vocal possibilities, and Berio's inventiveness led Berberian to a performance space that was new and original. They shared a mutual interest in a wide-range of musical styles that extends to accessible and popular musical styles.

The critical reception suggests that both artists stretched each other's musical capabilities to limits and into terrain they may not have discovered on their own. As I have argued, the compositional processes were a joint enterprise with varying degrees of creative and interpretive input from Berberian. In turn, Berberian's interpretative skills in select works then became to some extent prescriptive to subsequent performers. The Berio/Berberian partnership justly defines their individual reputations as major exponents of the avant-garde and the post-modern periods within Western art music.

CHAPTER 9

Reception of Berio's *Sequenzas* amongst performers

'New music is impotent without new performers and new audiences.'

—Hilary Finch (The *Times*, London, 2000)¹

Berio composed his fourteen *Sequenzas* for specific players. The following table shows the *Sequenza* series and its original performers. All the soloists have reputations for being virtuosos on their respective instruments and for being major exponents of modernist music.

Table 4: *Sequenza* series and original performers

Work	Year	Instrument	Original Performer
<i>Sequenza I</i>	1958	Flute	Severino Gazzelloni
<i>Sequenza II</i>	1963	Harp	Francis Pierre
<i>Sequenza III</i>	1965	Voice	Cathy Berberian
<i>Sequenza VI</i>	1966	Piano	Dedicated to Jocy de Oliveira
<i>Sequenza V</i>	1965	Trombone	Stuart Dempster
<i>Sequenza VI</i>	1967	Viola	Serge Collot
<i>Sequenza VII</i>	1969	Oboe	Heinz Holliger
<i>Sequenza VIII</i>	1976	Violin	Carlo Chiarappa
<i>Sequenza IX</i>	1980	Clarinet	Michel Arrigon
<i>Sequenza X</i>	1984	Trumpet in C and Piano resonance	Thomas Stevens
<i>Sequenza XI</i>	1988	Guitar	Eliot Fisk
<i>Sequenza XII</i>	1995	Bassoon	Pascal Gallois
<i>Sequenza XIII</i>	1995	Accordion	Teodoro Anzellotti
<i>Sequenza XI XIV</i>	2002	Cello	Roham de Saram

For the above virtuosos, Berio exploits the physical, technical and intellectual boundaries of each player. A significant component to the survival of these

¹ Hilary Finch, "The Proms: a sublime time will be had by all," *Times* (London, United Kingdom: 18 May 2000), 2, 4.

works within the public arena and hence, the continuing critical reception is on players' willingness to continue performing and recording these works. Therefore, performers are an essential part of the production/consumption paradigm. As discussed in Chapter 3, the critical reception of the *Sequenzas* demonstrates that virtuosity remains an aspect of music that is equally understood by composers and listeners. Further, this chapter argues that players too, understand the virtuosic aspect of music and, in fact, such virtuosity is a drawcard to perform challenging works such as the *Sequenzas*. The first area of examination in this study relates to the lure of virtuosic music to current musicians and the challenges these subsequent players face in tackling Berio's *Sequenzas*.

The second area of investigation concerns communicative mechanisms in the *Sequenzas*. Musical gestures exemplify human expressivity and represent an implied level of communication.² The focus of my analysis is on the manner in which the players tackle the musical gestures and the theatrical elements of the *Sequenzas* to enhance the audience reception. The theoretical framework for this analysis is within the context and parameters of 'semiotic gesture' as defined by musicologist Ole Hüle.

9.1.1: Musicians' attraction to virtuosic music

Solo musicians' aesthetic tastes and preferences shape their choice of music to pursue and perform professionally. A number of exemplary musicians perform the *Sequenzas* and have an ongoing engagement within contemporary music. For instance, violist Kim Kashkashian who has performed and recorded Berio's *Voci* and *Naturale* enthusiastically commits herself to the wide-ranging challenges of new music.³ Flautist Sophie Cherrier's interest in contemporary repertoire stemmed from her position as

² Ole Kühl, "The Semiotic Gesture," in *New Perspectives on Music and Gesture*, eds. Anthony Gritten and Elaine King, Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2011, 123.

³ Bruce Duffie, "Violist, Kim Kashkashian: A Conversation with Bruce Duffie," (Chicago: 16 July 1993) <http://www.bruceduffie.com/kashkashian.html> (accessed 27 May 2013).

principal flautist in the Ensemble Intercontemporain from 1979.⁴ Harpist Alice Giles was ‘especially attracted to the colours that contemporary music calls for and how these are particularly suited to the voice of the harp’.⁵ Giles first performed *Sequenza II* in the mid-1980s for the Adelaide Festival but concedes that it was not until ‘I started to perform it that I realized how expressive and alive, in fact what a masterpiece it is’.⁶

These types of musicians willingly commit to the learning process and strive to penetrate to the roots of a style, and to focus in on the mental development of the composer during the act of composing, and then counterpoint this against their own personal learning and reproduction dynamic.⁷ For instance, Gabriele Cassone took a year to learn the *Sequenza X*, for trumpet and piano resonance.⁸ Cassone’s approach first was to study the score one line at a time and strive for immediate clarity, rather than glossing over the difficult sections and end up with a ‘distant sense of the piece’.⁹ Two years later, Cassone contacted Berio and arranged to play the piece for him at the composer’s studio in Florence.¹⁰ Berio was so impressed with the trumpeter’s performance that this encounter led to Cassone recording the work for the box set of the *Sequenzas* that Deutsche Grammophon released in 1998.¹¹

Fred Sherry also willingly commits to learning complex music. For the cello *Sequenza XIV*, Sherry’s approach was first to leaf through the piece and to note the important features in the music.¹² The cellist then examined in detail

⁴ Perlove and Cherrier, “Transmission, Interpretation, Collaboration—A Performer’s Perspective on the language of Contemporary Music: An Interview with Sophie Cherrier,” 44.

⁵ Personal correspondence with Giles (31 January 2014).

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ferneyhough, “Shattering the Vessels of Received Wisdom,” 7.

⁸ Tom Dambly, “*Sequenza X* comes full circle: Report on Gabriele Cassone’s concert and masterclass in Los Angeles,” *International Trumpet Guild Journal*, <http://www.trumpetguild.org/news/08/0813cassoneberio.html> (accessed 6 June 2013).

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Sherry, “Never standing still,” 91—92.

smaller sections to create a mental picture of the sound of the music.¹³ Once Sherry grasped the work's form, character and harmony, he then added fingerings and bowing indications to the score.¹⁴ Sherry regularly alternated between the study of the score and practice with specific attention to the 'tricky' sections.¹⁵

Likewise, oboist Jacqueline Leclair claims that *Sequenza VII* took her years 'to get a handle on'.¹⁶ Similarly, Giles initially took several intense months to learn the harp *Sequenza II* but many years to internalise it:

I would spend a day working on small segments and the next day it would be as though starting again. Almost each note has a different dynamic, colour or effect and I would repeat one bar many times to get this automatically in my fingers, and to get the feel of the proportional notation and what that meant to the phrasing. The first time I played it was from the music. After that performance, and before I played it in a New York recital at the 92nd Street Y, I spent a lot of time visually memorizing the piece. I would have to revisit it like this before each performance for many years. Now it is part of me and I can pull it up for performance from memory with the same kind of effort and no greater stress than other solo repertoire, but this has taken many performances and years to achieve.¹⁷

To negate the feeling of a pulse Berio chooses proportional notation¹⁸ in selected *Sequenzas* which is a considerable challenge and has attracted much discussion among players. In *Sequenza I* Berio uses time-space

¹³ Ibid., 92.

¹⁴ Ibid., 92.

¹⁵ Ibid., 92.

¹⁶ Jacqueline Leclair, "Explanation of the New Supplementary Edition *Sequenza VII*," Jacqueline Leclair, Oboe and English horn: Berio Oboe *Sequenza VIIa* <http://www.nuoboe.com/berio/> (accessed 25 May 2013).

¹⁷ Personal correspondence with Giles (31 January 2014).

¹⁸ Proportional notation is a graphic method of indicating rhythmic duration with horizontal spacing of symbols which represent the intended length of duration. Berio uses proportional notation for *Sequenza I* (flute) and subsequent players of this work include Cynthia Folio, Robert Dick, Robert Langevin, Kathleen Nester, Diane Grubb, Robert Aitken, Paula Robison, Sophie Cherrier, Anna Garzuly, Aurele Nicolet, Emily Beynon, Janet Webb and Nora Shulman. Players of *Sequenza II* (harp) include Alice Giles, Marshall Maguire, Erica Goodman, Kirsty Whatley, Susan Jolles and Frederique Cambreling. Players of *Sequenza V* (trombone) include Christian Lindberg, Barry Webb, Michele Lomuto, Toyoji Tomita, Shachar Israel, Jean-Michel Malouf, Benny Sluchin, Byron Fulcher and Alain Trudel. Players of *Sequenza VII* (oboe) include Jacqueline Leclair, Melinda Maxwell, Christopher Redgate, Matej Sarc, Matt Sullivan, Keith Atkinson, Diana Doherty, Linda Walsh and Laszlo Haday.

notation; that is, the horizontal distance between the events on the page that represent a direct relation to duration. Berio's objective is to attain the 'impression if not of polyphony, at least of simultaneous events' via the *tempo* requirements.¹⁹ The composer allows the player a margin of flexibility in the note durations, but concedes that his intentions are 'psychological rather than musical'.²⁰ Berio claims that certain subsequent players' adaptations of the 1958 version (published by Edizioni Suvini Zerboni), were 'little short of piratical'.²¹ Later, in 1992, to reconcile this problem, Berio chose to rewrite the rhythmic notation.²² Universal Edition published this version of the work. Flautist Robert Dick suggests that the player initially learn *Sequenza I* by using the second version.²³ However, to understand the style of this work, the player then should consult the original version to grasp Berio's conceptualisation for the rhythm and phrasing.²⁴

Cynthia Folio and Alexander R. Brinkmann's collaborative essay entitled 'Rhythm and Timing in the Two Versions of Berio's *Sequenza I* for Flute Solo: Psychological and Musical Differences in Performance' provides a detailed analysis of the rhythmic notation of both scores and further addresses issues concerning duration, tempi and phrasing.²⁵ Folio recommends that the player first approach this work by practising one page at a time or even one line at a time.²⁶ The player then needs to decide on the phrasing and then group the smaller gestures and motives within the phrases.²⁷ In negating the

¹⁹ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 99.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 99.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 99.

²² *Ibid.*, 99.

²³ Robert Dick, "Learning Berio's *Sequenza*,"

http://johnranck.net/studio/clinic/practice_corner/berio.html (accessed 5 June 2013).

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Cynthia Folio and Alexander R. Brinkman, "Rhythm and Timing in Two versions of Berio's *Sequenza I* for flute solo: Psychological and Musical Differences in Performance," in *Berio's Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis*, ed. Janet K. Halfyard, Hampshire, England and Burlington, USA: Ashgate Publishing, 2007, 11—37.

²⁶ Folio, "Luciano Berio's *Sequenza* for Flute: A Performance Analysis," 19.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 19.

composer's intention of a pulse, the flautist recommends not to practise this *Sequenza* with a metronome.²⁸

Similarly, Barrie Webb explains that the proportional notation of Section A in the trombone *Sequenza V* also challenges players.²⁹ The proportional notation is further complicated by the changing time value relative to space and the technical demands, which require the player to use the trombone's range from F5 to A1.³⁰ Likewise, Giles concedes that initially the proportional notation of *Sequenza II* is difficult, but this notation 'allows one to enter into the musical feeling of breath and sense of phrase of the composer—it is like exquisitely notated *rubato*'.³¹

Oboist Jacqueline Leclair also found the proportional notation of *Sequenza VII* 'overly elusive'.³² In the summer of 1993, Leclair began to study the score in an attempt to find a solution.³³ Three years later, in 1996, Leclair drafted a metered version of this work and presented it to Berio to obtain the composer's permission to have this version published as a supplementary edition.³⁴ In 2000, Universal Edition published this version of the work as a supplementary addition to the original, titled *Sequenza VIIa*. Webb suggests that in this way, the performer can help give works greater permanence by assisting in the preparation of definitive scores.³⁵ Leclair further recorded this version of the work for the Mode Label, titled *The Complete Sequenzas and Works for Solo Instruments* (mode 161—163). Not only does the rhythm of *Sequenza VII* present a challenge to the player, the physical demands

²⁸ Ibid., 19.

²⁹ Barrie Webb, "Performing Berio's *Sequenza V*," *Contemporary Music Review* 26, 2 (2007), 207.

³⁰ Ibid., 207.

³¹ Personal correspondence with Giles (31 January 2014).

³² Jacqueline Leclair, "Explanation of the New Supplementary Edition *Sequenza VII*," Jacqueline Leclair, Oboe and English horn: Berio Oboe *Sequenza VIIa* <http://www.nuoboe.com/berio/> (accessed 25 May 2013).

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Patricia Alessandrini, "A Dress or a Straightjacket? Facing the Problems of Structure and Periodicity Posed by the Notation of Berio's *Sequenza* for Oboe," in *Berio's Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis*, ed. Janet K. Halfyard, Hampshire, England and Burlington, USA: Ashgate Publishing, 2007, 67.

³⁵ Webb, "Partners in Creation," 255.

include optimum finger dexterity, as well as extreme breath and embouchure control.³⁶ Claude Delange further tackled these issues in his arrangement of this work for soprano saxophone, titled *Sequenza VIIb* (1993).

Berio did seek out musicians not only for their technical prowess but also for their interpretative skills. For instance, Berio contacted Andrea Lucchesini after hearing the pianist's recording of Beethoven's *Hammerklavier* sonata on the EMI label of the late 1980s.³⁷ Then in 1991 Berio chose Lucchesini to perform his *Concerto II 'Echoing Curves'* at the Proms in London. Since then, Lucchesini has recorded all of Berio's music that requires the piano. No doubt, the appeal to Berio of the pianist lay in his ability to perform a broad range of music, as Berio prefers a musician who was 'capable of moving within a broad historical perspective and of resolving the tension between the creativity of yesterday and today'.³⁸ These characteristics are intrinsic to a number of pianists who regularly perform *Sequenza IV*.³⁹ For instance, David Burge was a major exponent of contemporary music as well as the music of Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann and Debussy. Likewise, Steven Beck—in addition to the contemporary repertoire he regularly performs the works of Bach, Beethoven, Brahms and Debussy.

Berio also engaged with a select number of players who sought help for the performance realisation of his works: take, for example, Lucchesini who learnt much of Berio's music under the composer's guidance.⁴⁰ On the contrary, Giles recounts that during her many encounters with Berio for performances of *Sequenza II*, the composer 'was not at all forthcoming with suggestions or discussions about the piece'.⁴¹ Giles suggests that in her case Berio 'liked that I had made the piece a musical expression rather than

³⁶ Christopher Redgate, "Performing *Sequenza VII*," *Contemporary Music Review* 26, 2 (2007), 227.

³⁷ Andrea Lucchesini, Liner notes to recording *Piano Music, Luciano Berio*, AVIF (AV2104), 2007.

³⁸ Dalmonte and Varga, *Two Interviews*, 91.

³⁹ Players of *Sequenza IV* include Steve Beck, Zoe Browder Doll, Aldo Orvieto, Aki Takahashi, David Burge, Philip Thomas, Adam Sherkin, Florent Boffard, Amy Briggs Dissanayake, Rolf Hind, Michael Harvey and Boris Berman.

⁴⁰ Leonard, "Luciano Berio: Piano Music by Andrea Lucchesini on *All Music*."

⁴¹ Personal correspondence with Giles (31 January 2014).

academic, and was able to bring out all the colours. This seemed to be the most important thing for him than any particular interpretation. He was less interested in a performer being able to analyse the work than their ability to tell the story intuitively'.⁴²

The dialogue between Berio and his initial players, as well as a select number of subsequent performers, undoubtedly provided these musicians with additional input into the expressive dimension of the performance realisation. However, this interpretative and expressive licence signals a possibly unintended shift away from performers and towards the composer.⁴³ It appears that a select number of composers insist that their conceptualisations and interpretations of the work come to the fore in the performance realisation. For instance, Elliott Carter explains that the role of the player is to be 'faithful' in communicating to an audience the 'composer's intentions' for a work.⁴⁴ Steve Reich also stresses the importance of the player communicating the composer's ideas to an audience so that they 'hear what you really have in mind'.⁴⁵

In turn, many performers, too, prefer where possible to have the composers' input into the expressive elements of their compositions. Redgate admits that for the oboe *Sequenza VII*, deciphering Berio's intentions for the work is difficult, most notably because the score does not indicate instructions for the execution of certain passages.⁴⁶ The player, therefore, needs to consider the colours, characters and the moods of the piece.⁴⁷ Clare McCaulin recommends that the performer needs to understand 'intimately' the composer's ideas for the work so as to 'lift the music off the page'.⁴⁸ For this

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Eric Clarke and Mark Doffman, "Expressive Performance in Contemporary Concert Music," in *Expressiveness in Music Performance: Empirical Approaches Across Styles and Culture*, eds., Dorothy Fabian, Renee Timmers and Emery Schubert, Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press 2014, 102.

⁴⁴ Duffie, A Conversation with Carter.

⁴⁵ Reich, "Texture-Space-Survival," 279—280.

⁴⁶ Redgate, "Performing *Sequenza VII*," 227.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 227.

⁴⁸ McCaldin, "Swinging on the squeaky gate: The joys of singing modern music."

reason, Cherrier also prefers to consult directly with composers to help translate their scores.⁴⁹ Burge has argued that especially when premiering new works it is most important to make the composer's intentions 'as clear as possible'.⁵⁰ The onus is on the performer to 'defend the piece well'.⁵¹ In part, this may be due to performers seeking approval from the living composers. Berio even disclosed his dissatisfaction with certain performers' interpretations of his works, stating that: 'Sometimes they send me recordings, and when I listen to them I get a little depressed'.⁵²

Inherent to new music is the fragmentation of stylistic continuity; therefore, the interpretative conventions of a work develop slowly over time.⁵³ For instance, pianist Philip Thomas explains that the ambiguity of *Sequenza IV* presents a problem in providing a definitive interpretation of the work.⁵⁴ However, a pianist performing a Beethoven sonata is not interpreting the notes on the page, but interpreting many generations of interpretation.⁵⁵ The *Sequenzas* now are regularly performed and recorded. Therefore, the study of these recordings aids performers not only by helping them to hear how the music should sound but also by stimulating alternative interpretations of the work at hand.

However, Redgate concedes that listening to recordings does not readily solve all the technical problems associated with a particular work, 'as it is not always easy to tell exactly what a performer is doing simply by listening'.⁵⁶ For example, in the oboe *Sequenza*, the player produces a range of tone

⁴⁹ Perlove and Cherrier, "Transmission, Interpretation, Collaboration—A Performer's Perspective on the language of Contemporary Music: An Interview with Sophie Cherrier," 48.

⁵⁰ Nonken, "A Style to Fit the Purpose," 23.

⁵¹ Perlove and Cherrier, "Transmission, Interpretation, Collaboration —A Performer's Perspective on the language of Contemporary Music: An Interview with Sophie Cherrier," 52—53.

⁵² Duffie, A Conversation with Berio.

⁵³ Ferneyhough, "Shattering the Vessels of Received Wisdom," 14.

⁵⁴ Philip Thomas, "Berio's *Sequenza IV*: Approaches to Performance and Interpretation," *Contemporary Music Review*, 26: 2 (April 2007), 190.

⁵⁵ Ferneyhough, "Shattering the Vessels of Received Wisdom," 14.

⁵⁶ Redgate, "Performing *Sequenza VII*," 219.

colours by using different fingerings of the same pitch.⁵⁷ In this work, six different fingering options are required for B4.⁵⁸ For the player, these different fingerings might be visible on an audiovisual recording but are not apparent on a standard/traditional audio recording.

The measure of a performer's success lies in the distinction between merely executing the notes and internalising them.⁵⁹ For this reason, Burge memorised all the music that he performed, no matter how complex, as the internalisation process of each note is critical to shape the phrases.⁶⁰ Further, to draw audiences to new music and retain them the player needs to portray convincingly their enjoyment in the performance.⁶¹ Composer Bruno Maderna comments that when performing complex modernist works:

One must be confident that one can perform it well, otherwise the public does not understand it and immediately judges it negatively; one bad performance of contemporary music leaves behind a deeper trace than four good performances.⁶²

To engage the audience, repeat performances require the player to take risks and project anew phrases and instrumental colours to make for 'thrilling music-making'.⁶³ A player's choice of dynamics, *vibrato*, rhythmic inflections and *rubato* play a fundamental part in the reception of a work. These aspects of a performance do attract critical commentary. For instance, Miller described Lucchesini's performance of the piano *Sequenza IV* as a display of 'enthraling colours' and 'subtle pedalling'.⁶⁴ Tom Dambly also writes that

⁵⁷ Martin Schuring, *Oboe Art and Method*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2009, 95.

⁵⁸ Redgate, "Performing *Sequenza VII*," 222.

⁵⁹ Anne Midgette, "A Set of Defiant Works, Both Difficult," *New York Times* (New York: 25 June 2006), 2. 23.

⁶⁰ Nonken, "A Style to Fit the Purpose," 23.

⁶¹ McCaldin, "Swinging on the squeaky gate: The joys of singing modern music."

⁶² Fern, "An Extract from Bruno Maderna by Raymond Fern," A Conversation with Bruno Maderna by George Stone and Alan Stout: WEFM, Chicago, 28 January 1970, 158.

⁶³ Martin Anderson, "Oblivious to his musical talent," *Independent* (London, United Kingdom: 3 February 2000), <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/reviews/oblivious-to-his-mus> (accessed 16 April 2009).

⁶⁴ Miller, "London, South Bank and Royal Academy of Music: *Omaggio*: A Celebration of Luciano Berio," 43. [Performance of piano *Sequenza IV*: Duke's Hall, London, on 26 April 2004].

Cassone's performance of *Sequenza X* conveyed a 'full range of moods and colours' as well as a 'deft navigation of the various articulations, dynamics, and gestures'.⁶⁵

Exemplary musicians do generate the interest of the public.⁶⁶ Trombonist Christian Lindberg recounts that during the 1980s, at the onset of his career, works such as Berio's *Sequenza* for trombone were almost 'forbidden on the classical music scene'.⁶⁷ Lindberg claims that he had to 'fight hard' to convince organisers to program modernist music.⁶⁸ Lindberg now regularly includes works by Berio, Sandstrom, Takemitsu and Xenakis in his concert performances.

Not only did Stuart Dempster popularise *Sequenza V*, but subsequent performances by Vinko Globokar also played a significant role in attracting an audience to the work.⁶⁹ The virtuosic talents of Burge drew audiences to Berio's *Sequenza IV*, and also to the music of other composers including George Crumb, Schoenberg, Berio, Vincent Persichetti, Coriun Aharonian, David Chaitkin, Kamran Ince, Akira Miyoshi, Graciela Paraskevaidis and Ann Sildbee.⁷⁰ The critical reception also reflects the allure of these types of performers within contemporary music concerts. For instance, Margalit Fox described Burge's recitals as a showcase of his 'immense technical facility; prodigious memory for the work's myriad rhythmic, tonal and stylistic complexities; acute musical intelligence; and rich command of aural colour'.⁷¹ Along the same lines, Allan Kozinn comments that Beck's performance of *Sequenza IV* made this piece accessible to the audience through his

⁶⁵ Tom Dambly, "Sequenza X comes full circle: Report on Gabriele Cassone's concert and masterclass in Los Angeles," Performance of trumpet *Sequenza X*: Concrete Frequency Series of 2008.

⁶⁶ Duffie, A Conversation with Carter.

⁶⁷ Chris Thomas, "Four Bars Rest's Chris Thomas talks to the total musician that is Christian Lindberg," http://www.4barsrest.com/articles/2008/art851.asp#.UFQkQ6kge_c (Accessed 15 September 2012).

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Webb, "Performing Berio's *Sequenza V*," 207.

⁷⁰ Nonken, "A Style to Fit the Purpose," 23.

⁷¹ Margalit Fox, "David Burge, Pianist, Is Dead at 83," *New York Times* (New York: 14 April 2013), B. 9.

'interpretative acuity'.⁷² Musicians also have played a part in enhancing the reception of the *Sequenzas* to their audiences. For instance, in 2004, a public panel discussion at the Royal Academy of Music London of Berio's *Sequenzas* for the *Omaggio: a Celebration of Luciano Berio* included a number of performers to give insight to the virtuosic and conceptual challenges of these solo works.⁷³

9.1.2: Players' willingness to mentally 'step outside the box'

To some degree, society projects an imagery of both a musical instrument and the type of person who plays it.⁷⁴ For instance, Berio chooses to 'project' the harp *Sequenza II* away from its French impressionistic associations of 'loosely robed girls with long blonde tresses, capable of drawing from it nothing than seductive *glissandi*'.⁷⁵ Berio does incorporate *glissandi* but combines them with rapid melodic *ostinati*, seven-note tone clusters, vertical chords (marked *fff*) and aggressive percussive thuds on the wood of the harp to present the instrument in a modernist light. Take, for example, the immense physicality required of the harpist in the performance realisation of the following gesture (see Musical example 40: *Sequenza II*, page 1, staff 6, bars 5—10), Berio discards both the 'wistful impressionist' image of the harp and the 'graceful' image of the harpist. These *tremolando*-style gestures Berio combined with a rapid deployment of the harp's pedal levers that requires both hands and both feet to move simultaneously. Thus, the vision of a 'gracefully poised harpist' is transformed into a picture of 'violent' and 'aggressive' playing and reveals the 'hidden' physicality of the instrument.⁷⁶

⁷² Kozinn, "Notes Hover a Moment, Speed-Land the Next," C.6. [Performance at the Bargemusics *Here and Now Series*, New York, 2012].

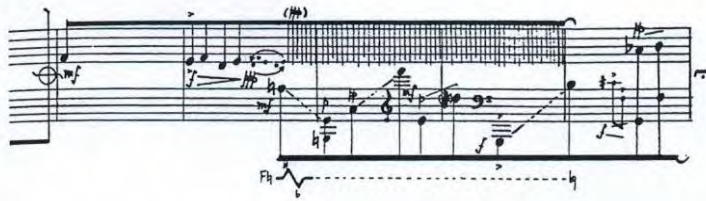
⁷³ Nena Beretin, "Notes to Roundtable discussion of the challenges and rewards of performing Berio's *Sequenzas* (David Josefowitz Recital Hall, Royal Academy of Music, London, 23 April 2004).

⁷⁴ Kirsty Whatley, "Rough Romance: *Sequenza II* for Harp as Study and Statement," in *Berio's Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis*, ed. Janet K. Halfyard, Hampshire, England and Burlington, USA: Ashgate Publishing, 2007, 43.

⁷⁵ Berio, *Sequenza II*, Liner notes to recording of *Berio's Sequenzas*, 11.

⁷⁶ Whatley, "Rough Romance: *Sequenza II* for Harp as Study and Statement," 47.

Musical example 40: *Sequenza II*, page 1, staff 6, bars 5–10



In turn, this manifests as a conflict and a tension between the musical idea and the harp. On another level, the theatrical potential of this *Sequenza II* lies in the tension between the harpist and the harp as they engage in a confrontation both mental and physical that is counter to traditional notions of this instrument's musical identity.⁷⁷ Therefore, players of *Sequenza II* mentally have to 'step outside the box'.⁷⁸ In this way, the harpist has the opportunity not only to reassess her/his technique and instrument but also to explore and to reimagine his/her own musical identity.⁷⁹ These factors have consolidated the position of the harp as a major instrument of expression.⁸⁰ In describing Giles's performance of *Sequenza II* (City Recital Hall, Sydney, 2003) as 'superbly projected' Peter McCallum implies that she successfully cast off the stereotypical image of a 'graceful' harpist.⁸¹

Players in choosing to learn a particular instrument identify with and then reinforce, relearn and react to a character role determined by their instrument's established associations.⁸² Take, for example, guitarist Andrés Segovia (1893—1979) who chose to perform exclusively the traditional Romantic and folk-inspired repertoire. This was due to the guitarist's perception of the guitar as a 'Spanish' instrument and that this style of music

⁷⁷ Ibid., 43

⁷⁸ Ibid., 43.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 43.

⁸⁰ Personal correspondence with Giles (31 January 2014).

⁸¹ Peter McCallum, "Solo man's thirst-quencher," *Sydney Morning Herald* (Australia: 12 May 2003), 14.

⁸² Whatley, "Rough Romance: *Sequenza II* for Harp as Study and Statement," 43.

especially draws an audience.⁸³ Berio's reinvention of the guitar within an atonal harmonic language goes some way to eradicate public perception of the instrument's roots within the folk and popular genres.⁸⁴ In describing Michael Nicoletta's performance of this *Sequenza* as 'solid', 'robust', with 'confident commanding technique',⁸⁵ and 'flair'⁸⁶ the critical reception implies that the player successfully discarded the image of the guitar as exclusively 'romantic' or as an instrument for simple accompaniment to folk songs.

Along the same lines, the accordion also has its origins within folk and popular idioms. As in the guitar *Sequenza XI*, Berio opts for the accordion's idiomatic mechanics and techniques to showcase his atonal language. By incorporating the accordion's standard second manual, which has a range from E2 and D sharp 4 and produces a soft timbre, Berio, however, does not disregard the expressiveness of the instrument's inherent 'light' character. Thomas Gartmann explains that Berio still depicts this stereotypical world but 'sets it against a sensitive, distinct, *lontano*, consciously set in a traditional sound world, in a beautifully flowing *legato*'.⁸⁷ Accordionist Joseph Petric implies that the challenge for the player here is mentally—to engage with the instrument via Berio's 'new harmonic language'.⁸⁸

Likewise, vocalists have to step 'outside the box' for *Sequenza III*. This work goes beyond traditional operatic singing and requires the assimilation of many aspects of everyday vocal sounds so that in the performance realisation, the psyche and personality of each different player is apparent to

⁸³ Brian Hodal, "Twentieth Century Music and the Guitar: Part I, 1900—1945," *Guitar Review* 117 (Summer 1999), 13.

⁸⁴ Players of the guitar *Sequenza XI* include Michael Nicoletta, Andrea Monardo, Magnus Andersson, Harold Gretton, Karim Samah, Seth Josel, Diangelo Cicilia, Giulio Tampalini, Jens Wagner, Franz Halasz, Pablo Sáinz Villagas, Eduardo Fernández, Todd Seelye, Peter Yates and Nico Couck.

⁸⁵ Stephen Griesgraber, "Push: Michael Nicoletta," *Guitar Review* (2001), 36—37.

⁸⁶ Tom Strini, "Some impressive classical sounds have musical links to Milwaukee," *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* (7 January 2001), O4. E.

⁸⁷ Thomas Gartmann, "... and so a chord consoles us: Berio's *Sequenza XIII* (*Chanson*) for Accordion," *Berio's Sequenzas*, 288.

⁸⁸ Joseph Petric, Interview with Paula Citron, "Berio's *Sequenza* Back to Back," *The Whole Note* <http://www.thewholenote.com/index.php/newsroom/feature-stories/20895-berios-sequenza-back-back> (Published: 30 November 2012, accessed 8 June 2013).

the listener. This personalised approach to performance, Berio stipulates in the preface of the score:

The performer must not try to represent or pantomime tension, urgency, distance or dreaminess but must let these cues act as a spontaneous conditioning factor to her vocal action (mainly the colour, stress and intonation aspects) and body attitudes. The processes involved in this conditioning are not assumed to be conventionalized; they must be experimented with by the performer herself according to her own emotional code, her vocal flexibility and her 'dramaturgy'.⁸⁹

Therefore, the mental challenge is for each vocalist to focus and bring to the fore *their* personality —her unique cough, laugh, mouth clicks, breathy tones, muttering, gestures and facial nuances. Given the importance of the performer's embodiment of this work and attitude to it, as one of the more 'staged' *Sequenzas*, it really needs to be seen as well as heard.

Berio not only seeks to disband stereotypical representations of the instrument but also its players. For instance, in arranging the clarinet *Sequenza IX*, for alto saxophone entitled *Sequenza IXb* (1980), Berio extends this instrument's reputation beyond the jazz and popular musical styles. Likewise, for the trombone *Sequenza V* (as well as the instrument's feature in Berio's *Solo*) help eradicate it from traditional association with military or colliery bands. Similarly, for the viola *Sequenza VI*, the composer exploits and maximises the instrument's dynamic range to do away with its inherent mellow sound association.

The following critical reception aptly acknowledges Berio's concept of 'the past as future'. The composer encapsulates the notion of a slow transformation of an instrument, and engages the player with a 'new' dialogue, image and relationship with her/his instrument:

Bernard Holland: If the trumpet or the clarinet is a repository—a gathering place for what the instrument has learnt during its years of formation—Mr. Berio finds in this repository new seeds. And therein lies the beauty of these pieces: the freshly conceived leaps, stabs, flurries and undulations that emanate so naturally from an instrument handed

⁸⁹ Berio, *Sequenza III* (1966), Universal Edition: 13723, 4—5.

down by history. *Sequenza II*, for example, forgets what others have written for the harp but remembers the basic gestures that make the harp what it has become.⁹⁰

Edward Rothstein: While each instrument is given a distinctive soundworld—as if it occupied its own room in Mr. Berio’s historical library—it is also being markedly transformed by the composition; the walls are dismantled and technical limits dissolved to create unexpected regions of sound.⁹¹

Paul Griffiths: Berio’s virtuosic *Sequenzas* each consider ‘the history, performance style and aura of an instrument’.⁹²

Tom Service: ‘Each *Sequenza* is a compositional love-letter from Berio to the repertoires and possibilities of each instrument...Berio pushes an instrument and a performer, to their limits, and beyond’.⁹³

As discussed in Chapter 3, critics focus mainly on the virtuosic physical attributes of the players and forego explicating the features in the music that determine the expressiveness of the *Sequenzas*. The following discussion is on selected gestures of the *Sequenzas*, to demonstrate the ways in which Berio tailors the musical material to optimise expressiveness and effect for the listener.

9.2.1: Berio’s use of gesture to enhance the reception of the *Sequenza* series

As discussed in Chapter 3, music is viewed as a form of ‘entertainment’ and critics reviews intentionally do not challenge or provoke the reader.⁹⁴ In turn, even a scholarly study of newspaper/magazine criticism, results in a limited perspective of a work.⁹⁵ Berio’s music is highly gestural and the *Sequenzas* are no exception. Musical gesture exemplifies human expressivity and represents an implied level of communication, in which a musical phrase signifies a gesture. Gestures in this way become the key to the

⁹⁰ Bernard Holland, “Music Review; Monologues In Sound That Subvert,” *New York Times* (New York: 18 November 1995).

⁹¹ Edward Rothstein, “Classical Review; The Oracle Has Spoken. Come Again,” *New York Times* (New York: 7 November 1993).

⁹² Griffiths, “Luciano Berio Is Dead at 77; Composer of Mind and Heart,” A. 21.

⁹³ Service, “A guide to Luciano Berio’s music.”

⁹⁴ Pace, “Verbal Discourse as Aesthetic Arbitrator in Contemporary Music,” 92—93.

⁹⁵ Everist, “Reception Theories, Canonic Discourses and Musical Value,” 381.

understanding of musical meaning. I argue that to provoke thought within the conceptual parameter of the *Sequenzas*, critics need to expound on the gestural aspects of these pieces. A critic's evaluation of the *Sequenzas* along these lines, broadens the reader's perspective of these works and the review functions as a frame of reference, from which the reader further, can extrapolate musical meaning. For the newcomer, an explanation of the gestural aspects within the *Sequenzas*, offers a listening strategy to these complex works.

The common feature in the following critical reception is that critics tend to accolade the *Sequenzas* as a series, rather than engage the reader with a musical commentary.

Steve Smith: the *Sequenzas* sound like little that came before them; when they are heard together, a sort of continuity emerges. Without rejecting all that had previously been written for a given instrument, Berio treated each one, including the voice, as raw material for imaginative reinvention through unconventional techniques and theatrical gestures. Experimental in detail, the works are thoroughly engaging in effect.⁹⁶

Bernard Holland: the music of the *Sequenzas* is 'so concrete, so preoccupied with its performer-instrument dialogue, that metaphysics bounces off it'.⁹⁷

Anne Midgette: the *Sequenzas* are 'quintessential Berio' and 'theatrical works that explore every facet of music, from the writing of it to the realities of its performance'.⁹⁸ The *Sequenza* series are 'heading toward the status of Beethoven's piano sonatas and Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*'.⁹⁹

Miller: collectively the *Sequenzas* illustrate 'the extremes of virtuosity Berio strove for'.¹⁰⁰

Arved Ashby: describes the collection of works as 'snapshots' that are 'candid and surprising'.¹⁰¹

⁹⁶ Smith, "In Single File, Berio's Menagerie on Parade," E. 5.

⁹⁷ Holland, "Music Review; Monologues In Sound That Subvert."

⁹⁸ Midgette, "Adventures Outside the Classical Canon: Pathfinding Composers," E. 1: 26.

⁹⁹ Midgette, "A Set of Defiant Works, Two Ways, Both difficult," 2. 23.

¹⁰⁰ Miller, "London, South Bank and RAM: *Omaggio*: A Celebration of Luciano Berio," 43.

¹⁰¹ Arved Ashby, "Berio: *Sequenzas*, All," *American Record Guide* (New York: July—August 1999), 75.

Berio is well aware that for the listener/viewer, the culmination of musical material with physical virtuosity heightens the expressive dimension of the gestures in the *Sequenzas*. The physical component of virtuosity is inextricably linked to contemporary music as Eric Clarke and Mark Doffman explain:

Virtuosity may be regarded as a musically superficial quality, but there is no denying the powerful expressive effect that this kind of display can have, and much contemporary concert music has explored and extended the limits of what instruments and players can do.¹⁰²

The musical gesture is a cognitive phenomenon that emerges in the mind in response to musical priming.¹⁰³ In listening to music, we hear an auditory stream, which is subsequently being processed by our auditory perception. To economically and effectively process this sonic stream of information, our cognitive apparatus requires the organisation of the input into 'chunks' of a certain size that are represented amodally in the mind as *gestalts*.¹⁰⁴ Musicologist Ole K hl defines musical gesture as stemming from the generic level of our perception and being joined to *gestalt* perception, motor movement and mental imagery:

Gestures accordingly are rich *gestalts* that combine auditory information (hearing the movement) with implied visual information (imagining the movement) somatosensory information (feeling the movement) and emotional information (interpreting the movement). At the highest level of cognition, gestures are organised in groups and sequences, leading to musical form and narrative.¹⁰⁵

In analysing the following *Sequenzas* within the parameters of K hl's criteria, the expressiveness and meaning of these works becomes apparent. Berio aims for a multilayered character within a work that includes not only the process of composition but also of listening:

¹⁰² Clarke and Doffman, "Expressive Performance in Contemporary Concert Music," 106.

¹⁰³ K hl, "The Semiotic Gesture," *New Perspectives on Music and Gesture*, 123.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 123.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 123.

The combination of layers, which are present in different degrees without obliterating each other, can create a very interesting magma. If these layers have real functions —harmonically, time-wise, in terms of their density— their coexistence creates an implicit ‘drama’ that can be very meaningful.¹⁰⁶

This analysis draws on Berio’s choice of harmony, rhythm and harmonic density, dynamics, articulations and tempi to create expressiveness in the performance realisation. Andrew Schultz explains that the *Sequenza* series is characteristic of ‘specific textures, rhythms, pitches and idiomatic sonorities [that] are combined in various consistent ways to create distinctive musical actions which, at times, interact with extramusical factors’.¹⁰⁷ According to Claudia Anderson, tension within the music arises when performers ‘strain’ to maintain fast tempi while simultaneously coping with notes, dynamics and articulations.¹⁰⁸ This very ‘tension’ is a significant factor that makes for successful performances.¹⁰⁹ Take, for example, the first gesture of *Sequenza I* (see Musical example 41: *Sequenza I* (1992 edition), page 1, staff 1) where the auditory information is the work’s twelve tone row.

The ‘darting’ quality of the gesture we imagine by the wide leaps within the pitch structure. The sense of urgency and tension, Berio creates via the tritone interval, extremely fast tempi of grace notes, short *fermatas*, *staccato* notes and the loud dynamics (marked *ff sempre—mf—ff >—mf*). The sense of ‘urgency’, however, is subjective and each listener draws on their own experiences of this sensation.

¹⁰⁶ Theo Muller, “Music is not a solitary act,” *Tempo* 199 (1997), 18.

¹⁰⁷ Schultz, “*Sequenze I—VII* by Luciano Berio: Compositional Idea and Musical Action,” 244.

¹⁰⁸ Claudia Anderson, “An Operatic View of *Sequenza I*,” *Flute Talk Magazine*, 24, 2 (2004), 12.

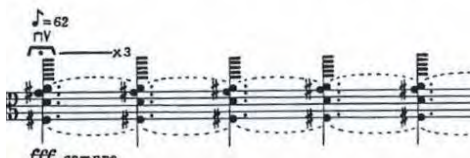
¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 12.

Musical example 41: *Sequenza I* (1992 edition), page 1, staff 1



The listener/viewer experiences even higher levels of tension in the opening gestures of the viola *Sequenza VI* (see Musical example 42: *Sequenza VI*, page 1, staff 1).¹¹⁰ These four-note, tritone based *tremolo* chord gestures (marked *sempre fff* and ‘as fast as possible, toward the frog’) continue in a relenting manner for the first eight minutes of this work. To sustain the required dynamic levels and tempi demands sheer physical stamina. Players even adopt unconventional bowing techniques so as to avoid cramping of the bowing hand. For instance, Walter Trampler places his thumb under the frog of the bow.¹¹¹ Sol Greitzer alternates the fist bow hold with the normal grip.¹¹² These highly charged gestures not only give the audience the sensation of being ‘on the edge’ but players too. Trampler admits that in the performance realisation of this work, executing the extreme tempi and the dynamics is all ‘very much up to chance’.¹¹³

Musical example 42: *Sequenza VI*, page 1, staff 1



¹¹⁰ Luciano Berio, *Sequenza VI* (for viola, 1967), Universal Edition: 13726. Players of *Sequenza VI* include Walter Trampler, Sol Greitzer, Diane Leung, Garth Knox, Steven Dann, Paul McMillan, Gérard Caussé, Dejan Mladjenovic and Christophe Desjardins.

¹¹¹ Nancy Uscher, “Luciano Berio, *Sequenza VI* for Solo Viola: Performance Practices,” *Perspectives of New Music*, 21, 1 / 2 (Autumn 1982—Summer 1983), 287.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 287.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 287.

The impression of being ‘on the edge’ is also prevalent in the bassoon *Sequenza XII*. This work commands circular breathing to create a continuous sound without rest or interruption for breaths for the work’s duration of approximately nineteen minutes. The gesture begins (see Musical example 43: *Sequenza XII*, page 8, staff 3)¹¹⁴ with pitches B2—E4, D sharp 2—C4 (marked *ff*, *decrescendo*), then G sharp—E4 (marked *p*, *crescendo*) followed by D2—C4 (marked *fff*). The extreme tempi of the *glissandi* gestures that traverse between the outermost registers of *Sequenza XII* in combination with the contrasting dynamic levels create the feeling of ‘lightening’ speed.

Musical example 43: *Sequenza XII*, page 8, staff 3



In the following gestures of the guitar *Sequenza XI* Berio also chose extremely fast tempi and dynamic contrasts through the pitch density as an expressive means (see Musical example 44: *Sequenza XI* page 5, staff 6). The auditory information includes a number of gestural components—a grace note flourish (G sharp 3—C sharp 4, marked *accelerando*), then a *tremolo* gesture (marked *crescendo*) followed by tritone based *rasgueado* strums (marked *fortissimo*). The ‘shimmering’ grace note flourishes and the *tremolo* gesture, juxtaposed with the ‘violent’ chords may conjure the associations of a ‘lighthearted spirit’ in confrontation with an ‘aloof and extroverted’ character. From the perspective of the player, the sense of being ‘on the edge’ culminates with the extremely rapid tempi and the rapid changes in the right-hand articulations as well as the left-hand chord formations.

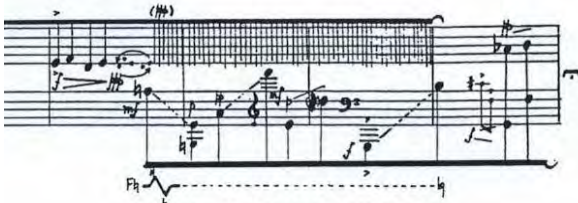
¹¹⁴ Luciano Berio, *Sequenza XII* (for bassoon, 1995), Universal Edition: 30264.

Musical example 44: *Sequenza XI*, page 5, staff 6



Again, extremely rapid tempi and wide-ranging dynamics feature in the harp *Sequenza II* (see Musical example 45: *Sequenza II*, page 1 staff 6, bars 6—10). The auditory information is a gesture that begins on the pitches F4— (marked *mf*) E4— F4— D4—E4 (marked *f* and *decrescendo*) followed by a five-note cluster D4— F4—E4—D4—E4 (marked *ppp*), then an extremely rapid *glissandi* (marked *ppp*) that is set against quaver movement which also requires a dynamic change on every note. For the listener, the quaver movement of the right-hand gestures set simultaneously with the left-hand *glissandi* may evoke the imagery of ‘murmuring and mumbling’ and ‘wind in the trees’. The multiple of sudden dynamics and colour changes, Giles describes as a ‘virtuosity of touch’.¹¹⁵ In the performance realisation, the player needs to integrate these dynamics to such an automatic state so as to keep the flow of the piece.¹¹⁶

Musical example 45: *Sequenza II*, page 1, staff 6, bars 6—10



The fast tempo and contrasting dynamics for the following gesture in the clarinet *Sequenza IX* (see Musical example 46: *Sequenza IX*, page 7, staff 1),¹¹⁷ create an ‘airy’ and ‘delicate’ character. The auditory information is a first a demisemiquaver note D4 (marked *ff*), then a quaver note G sharp 2

¹¹⁵ Personal correspondence with Giles (31 January 2014).

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Luciano Berio, *Sequenza IX* (for clarinet, 1980), Universal Edition: 15993.

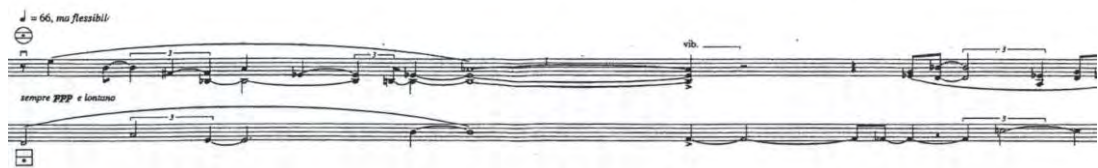
followed by a trill on E4 (marked *decrescendo—p*) then a seven note pitch cell C sharp 5—D4—D sharp 4—F sharp 5—E4—D4—A3 (marked *accelerando, ff*) with a tied on note A3 (marked *decrescendo—mf*). The warm timbre of the clarinet in combination with these soft, fast trills and wide melodic leaps evoke an ethereal mood.

Musical example 46: *Sequenza IX*, page 7, staff 1



An arched *legato* gesture that opens the accordion *Sequenza XIII*, for the listener alludes to a song-like quality (see Musical example 47: *Sequenza XIII [Chanson]*, page 1, staff 1).¹¹⁸ The gesture opens on the pitches F2 and E4 (marked *ma flessibile, sempre ppp e lontano*) and then proceeds in a downward pitch motion that includes fourths, fifths and minor seconds. The ‘delicate’ and ‘light’ feel Berio achieves via the slow tempi and with the sounds of the soft eight-foot register.¹¹⁹

Musical example 47: *Sequenza XIII (Chanson)*, page 1, staff 1



Berio also chooses to add resonances as an expressive means. In the opening chord gestures of the piano *Sequenza IV* (see Musical example 48: *Sequenza IV*, page 1, staff 1, bars 1—4),¹²⁰ the auditory information begins

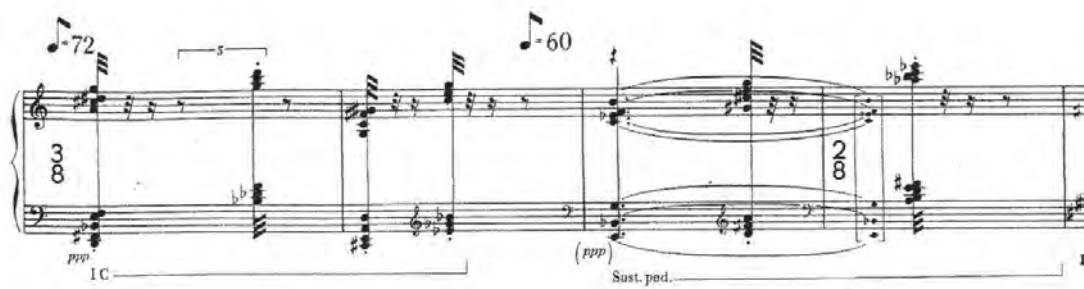
¹¹⁸ Luciano Berio, *Sequenza XIII* (for accordion, 1995), Universal Edition: 30377.

¹¹⁹ The pitch of a single bank of reeds is defined in a similar manner to organ stops. A bank that sounds at unison pitch when keys are depressed is called eight-foot pitch that alludes to the length of the lowest-sounding organ pipe in that rank, which is approximately eight feet.

¹²⁰ Luciano Berio, *Sequenza IV* (for piano, 1966), Universal Edition: 33012.

with a chromatic chord immediately followed by a chord constructed of two superimposed triads that include B flat minor (left-hand) and G major (right-hand). In the second bar, the first chromatic chord is followed by another two superimposed triad including E flat minor (left-hand and) and C major (right-hand). Berio juxtaposes these measures with sustained chord in measures 3—4 that are played after and over a chord held by the *sostenuto* pedal. The silently held notes by the *sostenuto* pedal combined with the soft dynamic range (*ppp*) evoke for the listener an ‘otherworldly’ atmosphere interrupted by the ‘crisp’ and ‘dry’ *staccato* chords.

Musical example 48: *Sequenza IV*, page 1, staff 1, bars 1—4



Berio creates a polyphonic effect for the trumpet in *Sequenza X* via the added piano resonance.¹²¹ For this listener, a halo of resonance is sustained almost throughout the entire work, apart from the fifteen-note gesture in the middle of the work and the concluding few isolated notes. In the opening gesture (see Musical example 49: *Sequenza X* for trumpet and piano resonance, page 1, Segments 1—3)¹²² the minor third pitches (D4—F4 marked with an accent and *ff*) are followed by a series of unbroken articulation and slurs, and the gesture concludes with a pause after F4 (marked *f*). The interval of a third is reiterated (marked *fff*) before the introduction of C5 then followed by another pause. The ‘melancholy’ feel of

¹²¹ The pianist depresses the keys without sounding the instrument.

¹²² Luciano Berio, *Sequenza X* (for trumpet and piano resonance, 1984), Universal Edition: 18200.

this gesture is evoked by the minor third interval, the longer note durations (marked *pp—p*) as well as the effects of the piano resonance.

Musical example 49: *Sequenza X*, page 1, Segments 1—3



Berio employs resonance in the oboe *Sequenza VII* to function on a cognitive level for the listener. The pitch B4 acts as a referential tonic and sounds throughout the entire piece via an invisible source such as an oscillator, a clarinet or a pre-taped oboe.¹²³ The opening gesture is by way of multiple repetitions of B4 reiterated in a wide range of dynamics and articulations (see Musical example 50: *Sequenza VII*, page 1, staff 1).

Musical example 50: *Sequenza VII*, page 1, staff 1



Berio also immediately brings into focus the thematic material of the violin *Sequenza VIII* —the dyad A4—B4 (see Musical example 51: *Sequenza VIII*, page 1, staves 1—5)¹²⁴ firstly, by the introduction of the single pitch A4 (marked *fff*). The rhythmic regularity of the crotchet movement and the forceful and insistent repetition give the effect of stability. This pitch (A4) then gathers up B4 to create a new sonority, which is then interrupted by a chromatic cluster (G sharp 4— A4—B flat 4). The continuing interruptions

¹²³ Luciano Berio, *Sequenza VII* (for oboe, 1969), Performance Notes, Universal Edition: 31263.

¹²⁴ Luciano Berio, *Sequenza VIII* (for violin, 1976), Universal Edition: 15990.

further bring into focus the dyad A4—B4 that become an inescapable focus for the listener as the music unfolds to communicate simultaneously a sense of ‘urgency’ and a ‘strange immobility’.¹²⁵

Musical example 51: *Sequenza VIII*, page 1, staves 1—5

Berio articulates the tension and drama of the narrative in *Sequenza III* through gestures composed of a sung and non-sung text. The following example presents a non-sung text (see Musical example 52: *Sequenza III*, page 3, line 1), ‘to—be—to’ (marked urgent); ‘to—me—to—sing (marked apprehensive); ‘few words’ (marked extremely intense); ‘be—fore, to—be—us, be—fore (marked frantic); ‘a few words (marked distant); ‘be—fore—to—be (marked extremely intense); ‘us be—fore give’ (marked increasingly desperate). The deconstructed phonemes and the quick, wide-

¹²⁵ Eugene Montague, “The Compass of Communications in *Sequenza VIII* for Violin,” *Berio’s Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis*, ed. Janet K. Halfyard, Hampshire, England and Burlington, USA: Ashgate Publishing, 2007, 137.

ranging articulations of this non—sung gesture, for the listener, create the sensation tension and panic, for the seemingly impossible task ‘to build the house of words before night comes’.¹²⁶

Musical example 52: *Sequenza III*, page 3, line 1

- 3 -

The following gesture, in contrast, is sung (see Musical example 53: *Sequenza III*, page 3, line 4). Here the character appears less concerned about not completely task of ‘building a house before night comes’. The auditory information begins with ‘be—fo—o/ore night’ (marked ecstatic) followed by a laugh (marked witty) then ‘comes to’ (marked tender) and the word ‘sing’ (marked wistful, distant) concludes the work. The culmination of these articulations evoke, for the listener, a sense of unfazed calm.

¹²⁶ Halfyard, “Provoking Acts: The Theatre of Berio’s *Sequenzas*,” *Berio’s Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis*, 106.

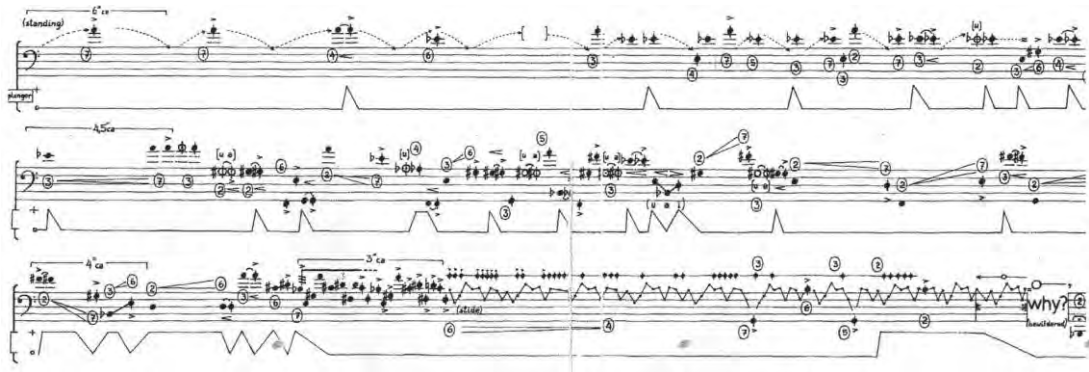
Musical example 53: *Sequenza III*, page 3, line 4

The implied narrative and drama of *Sequenza V* is the dual personality of a clown—the extrovert (Section A) and the introvert (Section B). To interpret these images we decipher the auditory information by way of tempo, articulations, note durations and dynamics levels.¹²⁷ The opening gesture (see Musical example 54: *Sequenza V*, Section A staves 1—3)¹²⁸ begins with three pitches sounding A5; first two (marked 7—‘as loud as possible’) followed by A5 (marked 4—‘moderately loud’). The twelve note series gradually accumulates as a combination of rapid articulations in the upper registers of the trombone and the predominantly loud dynamics all contribute to imagining an extroverted character. The constituent parts of the word ‘why’ (u—a—i) are produced by the voice, or imitated by the trombone with the aid of a plunger mute. The short motive gestures conclude this section with the word ‘why’.

¹²⁷ Berio uses numbers in a circle to indicate the dynamic range whereby 1 in a circle represents to play ‘as soft as possible’ and 7 in a circle ‘play as loud as possible’. The numbers 2—6 are the gradations between these lowest and optimum level.

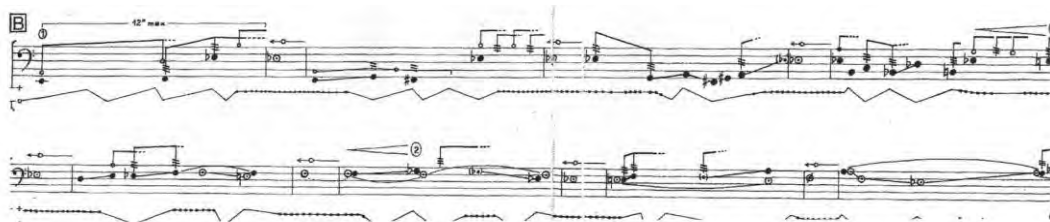
¹²⁸ Luciano Berio, *Sequenza V* (for trombone, 1965), Universal Edition: 13725.

Musical example 54: *Sequenza V*, Section A staves 1—3

The image shows three staves of musical notation for Section A of Sequenza V. The top staff is marked '(standing)' and contains a series of notes with various articulations and dynamics. The middle staff is marked 'A5cu' and features a complex, rhythmic pattern with many notes. The bottom staff is marked 'A4cu' and contains a series of notes with various articulations and dynamics. The notation includes many accidentals, slurs, and dynamic markings.

The following B section (see Musical example 55: *Sequenza V*, Section B staves 1—2) begins with longer, unarticulated note gestures with extremely soft dynamic levels. The chromatic motive gestures of this section meander in the lower registers of the trombone. The notes are blurred by the timbral effects that create airy sounds of the flutter tongue technique and the mute rattle to further conjure an introverted character. These vivid sound evocations also are enhanced by the visual gestures that emanate from the player in the performance realisation, which I will discuss later in this chapter.

Musical example 55: *Sequenza V*, Section B staves 1—2

The image shows two staves of musical notation for Section B of Sequenza V. The top staff is marked 'B' and contains a series of notes with various articulations and dynamics. The bottom staff is marked 'B' and contains a series of notes with various articulations and dynamics. The notation includes many accidentals, slurs, and dynamic markings.

Gestural 'drama' is also personified in the cello *Sequenza XIV* that Berio created by the unconventional technique of drumming on the instrument. Berio incorporated rhythms adopted from patterns used in Kandyan drumming. This particular drum, native to Sri Lanka, is cylindrical in shape

and produces four different sounds.¹²⁹ This requires the simultaneous action of both hands to strike in a percussive manner the fingerboard and the belly of the cello.¹³⁰ The vitality of these gestures the listener experiences not only via the rhythm but also visually, as the cellist's right-hand fingers play the rhythms on the belly of the cello while the left-hand fingers strike the strings at fixed pitches on the fingerboard.¹³¹

For the listener, the gestures of the *Sequenzas* are highly evocative and the expressive dimension of these works is further enhanced by live performances. The following discussion focuses on Berio's more overt measures to enhance the expressive and theatrical dimensions of select *Sequenzas*.

9.2.2: Use of 'theatre' to enhance the communicative function of the *Sequenzas*

The *Sequenzas* are highly theatrical in execution and musicians are required to make physical gestures.¹³² They are about the 'drama of performing'.¹³³ To appeal to audiences, mezzo-soprano Clare McCaldin argues that works by Berio, Ligeti and Stockhausen do require showmanship and 'there is no room for shyness or hesitation'.¹³⁴ For instance, Christian Lindberg in particular is noted for his 'uninhibited' performance style, and is known to 'hurl himself around the stage and shout exuberantly when called for'.¹³⁵ To convey successfully the theatrical aspects of the music in an 'uninhibited' manner, Berio insists that musicians memorise his *Sequenzas*.¹³⁶ Musicologist Teresa Vila Verde proposes that musicians should look to theatre to discover new

¹²⁹ Rohan de Saram, "*Sequenza XIV* for cello," Program Notes to *Omaggio: A Celebration of Luciano Berio*, 15—30 April 2004, South Bank Centre, London, 9.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹³² Ford, Interview with Williams.

¹³³ Butler, "Luciano Berio: The Godfather," 15.

¹³⁴ Clare McCaldin, "Swinging on the squeaky gate: The joys of singing modern music," *The Opera Insider*, http://theoperainsider.com/home/article_detail/26 (accessed 20 February 2012).

¹³⁵ Martin Hoyle, "Blow by blow," *Guardian* (London, United Kingdom: 11 August 2000), 14.

¹³⁶ Personal correspondence with Giles (31 January 2014).

paths to perform contemporary repertoire.¹³⁷ Entwining music into a narrative may call upon the performer to additionally speak, walk, sing, dance or mimic within the music as in an actor's script.¹³⁸ A player needs to approach each work with a different personality as an actor.¹³⁹

To engage the audience, the player needs to adopt actions including gestures, expressions, movement and mood to convey the expressive or emotional content of the music.¹⁴⁰ Giles also recommends that the soloist imparts, metaphorically, a monologue as an actor but without a script, and the dramatic gestures engendered in the realisation of the music, therefore, come to be part of the performance experience for the audience.¹⁴¹ Giles adopts a story or a concept and notes that 'unless I come to this piece each time with a fresh story to tell or abstract emotional landscape to portray, it dries up and becomes harder to carry off'.¹⁴² Giles approaches *Sequenza II* in many ways, such as a 'circus', a 'forest', a 'love story', or even '*comedia dell'arte*'.¹⁴³

A performer also needs to adopt a whole spectrum of movements besides the instrumental ones, including non-musical gestures, body postures, facial expressions, breathings/sighs, and glances.¹⁴⁴ Berio instructs the player to give a non-musical gesture in the middle section for the accordion *Sequenza XIII*. After a virtuosic outpouring of notes the player is required to pause for a period of six seconds. Accordionist Joseph Petric's primary concern with this

¹³⁷ Teresa Vila Verde, "Assessing the importance of visual/theatrical features in the perception of music by an audience, using sociological tools," International Symposium on Performance Science, 2007 www.performancescience.org (accessed 13 September 2013).

¹³⁸ Vila Verde, "Assessing the importance of visual/theatrical features in the perception of music by an audience, using sociological tools."

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Personal correspondence with Giles (31 January 2014).

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Vila Verde, "Assessing the importance of visual/theatrical features in the perception of music by an audience, using sociological tools."

gesture is if an audience member is unfamiliar with this work, they may perceive this as a memory lapse of the player.¹⁴⁵

In *Sequenza V*, the theatrical element is more explicit by the direct reference to the clown, Grock, the persona of Charles Adrien Wettach (1880—1959), who performed throughout Europe and North America during the early-mid-twentieth-century.¹⁴⁶ Berio's conceptual idea for this *Sequenza* is to explore the clown's world of dualities such as simultaneous happiness and sadness, of being an extrovert and introvert. In the trombone *Sequenza V*, players are called upon to speak, walk and mime during the performance. In the preface to the score, Berio instructs the trombonist to enter the stage and strike poses in the manner of a 'variety-showman about to sing an old favourite'.¹⁴⁷ Here, Berio's type of showmanship, functions as another dimension to communicate his conceptual ideas to the audience. Costumes further enhance the theatrical aspect of a performance.¹⁴⁸ Berio's instructions on the score explain that the soloist is to wear a white tie and tails and to stand on the stage illuminated by a spot light. Each different performer also has a different approach to dress, which is sometimes original and entertaining.¹⁴⁹ For instance, Toyoji Tomita chooses to dress as a clown with white make-up.¹⁵⁰ In contrast, Shachar Israel wears a white suit, a black top hat and a red bulb nose.¹⁵¹ The visual aspect for the audience conjures both the burlesque and the pathetic sides of a clown's persona.

Sequenza V also requires the players to act. Take, for example, Tomita's performance of this work, (San Francisco Community Centre, 2004), in which Tomita began the performance by warming up with a few loud notes that

¹⁴⁵ Citron, "Berio's *Sequenza* Back to Back,"

¹⁴⁶ Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 120.

¹⁴⁷ Luciano Berio, Instructions to score *Sequenza V*, for trombone, Universal Edition, UE13725.

¹⁴⁸ Vila Verde, "Assessing the importance of visual/theatrical features in the perception of music by an audience, using sociological tools."

¹⁴⁹ Webb, "Performing Berio's *Sequenza V*," 207.

¹⁵⁰ Jules Langert, "Celebrating Luciano Berio," *San Francisco Classical Voice* (San Francisco: 7 June 2004), http://www.sfc.org/arts_revs/berioconcert_6_8_04.php (accessed 31 May 2008).

¹⁵¹ Smith, "In Single File, Berio's Menagerie on Parade," E. 5.

seemed to frighten him.¹⁵² Often during Grock's elaborate and virtuosic skits on stage, he would turn to the audience and ask "Warum" (Why), which Berio also adopts for the trombonist. After a relatively short 'A' section that consists of virtuosic fluctuations between rapid articulation and silence and between constant register and the tritone interval, as well as constant shifts in the dynamics, the trombonist turns to the audience and utters in a bewildered tone "Why". Tomita turns to the audience and utters the word 'why', then proceeds to play a longer, more vigorous passage.¹⁵³ Alternatively, Israel first cavorts about the stage. Steve Smith suggests that when Israel moaned 'why,' it came as a 'painful stab amid his cavorting'.¹⁵⁴ For this statement, there are many approaches; for instance, in his recording Alain Trudel expresses the word 'why' in the style of a 'frightened cartoon' character.¹⁵⁵

In a live performance, the first section of *Sequenza V* requires the trombonist to stand, then after uttering the word 'why' in a bewildered manner, the performer sits down on a stool with a music stand to present the rest of the piece as though rehearsing in an empty hall.¹⁵⁶ The following 'B' section is longer in duration and provides a sense of disproportion to the work. The time displacement of the two sections further depicts the stereotypical techniques of clown acting.¹⁵⁷ Jules Langet recounts that Tomita's performance exhibited a combination of 'intensity' and 'playful bemused resignation'.¹⁵⁸ The 'intensity' that Langet describes we attribute to the 'A' section for which Tomita stands and performs in an overtly theatrical manner to convey the clown's extroverted character. The latter part of Langet's statement reflects the following 'B' section that requires Tomita to sit and to perform as if practising in an empty hall, oblivious to his audience.

¹⁵² Langert, "Contemporary Music Review: Celebrating Luciano Berio."

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Smith, "In Single File, Berio's Menagerie on Parade," E. 5.

¹⁵⁵ Midgette, "A Set of Defiant Works, Two Ways, Both Difficult," 2. 23.

¹⁵⁶ Performance Instructions in score, *Sequenza V*.

¹⁵⁷ Niels Chr Hansen, "Luciano Berio's *Sequenza V* Analyzed along the Lines of Four Analytical Dimensions Proposed by the Composer," *Journal of Music and Meaning* 9 (Winter 2010), 22.

¹⁵⁸ Langert, "Celebrating Luciano Berio."

Berio achieves the evocation of an introverted character by slower articulation and softer and more constant dynamics. In contrast to the silent moments of section 'A', section 'B' section requires continuous sounds that include simultaneous singing and playing, flutter-tongue technique and microtonal *glissandi*. To evoke sadness in the music, Berio creates a sobbing effect for which the player needs simultaneously to inhale, sing into the trombone and rattle a plunger inside the bell.¹⁵⁹ Arguably, in listening to a recording of this *Sequenza* rather than a live performance we may not immediately recognise that Berio takes a clown as its point of departure. Roger Smalley comments that for 'people who have attended a performance [of *Sequenza V*] will know how important, and how beautifully integrated are its visual aspects'.¹⁶⁰

However, Webb argues that these overtly theatrical antics could pose a risk of saying more about the performer than the piece.¹⁶¹ Too much gratuitous clowning may create an unintended empathy with the audience that could detract from the impact of the music.¹⁶² For example, foregoing the formalised gestures at the start (which ought to begin without the customary acknowledgement of the audience applause) may have the effect of alienating an audience, rather than immediately putting them at ease.¹⁶³ Arguably, Berio seeks this tactic as a foil to the musical material that in turn, focuses the audience on the musical content. However, despite Webb's reservations about the overt theatrical antic of this work, he acknowledges this *Sequenza* as a revolutionary work that has a firm place in the trombone repertory, and has been 'influential in encouraging the composition of new works for solo trombone'.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁹ Hansen, "Luciano Berio's *Sequenza V* Analyzed along the Lines of Four Analytical Dimensions Proposed by the Composer," 25.

¹⁶⁰ Roger Smalley, "Music Reviews: Novelty and Variety," *The Musical Times* 109, 1509 (November, 1968), 1046.

¹⁶¹ Webb, "Performing Berio's *Sequenza V*," 207.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 207.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 207.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 207.

The theatrical scenery techniques, including light design and scenario, also expand the visual dimension to engage the audience.¹⁶⁵ Concert promoters regularly present the *Sequenzas* as a series, in a quasi-theatrical setting with special lighting effects. For instance, in Cassone's performance of *Sequenza X*, the trumpeter entered the stage in total darkness, with a single spotlight illuminating the player as he began the piece.¹⁶⁶ This technique focuses the audience attention exclusively on the player. Another theatrical effect in this work is by positioning the player next to an open piano. The necessary sideways movement of the trumpet player 'focuses the listener's attention on the physical aspect of the performance, the relationship between the subject and the structure'.¹⁶⁷

To further provoke thought and a story for the *Sequenzas*, Berio gives a narrative in the form of a short poem by Sanguineti that the player may recite prior to the performance of each *Sequenza*. These recitations also act as transitional element for works when presented in concert format as a series. For instance, Alan Feinberg, prior to his performance¹⁶⁸ of the piano *Sequenza IV*, recited the following poem:

I draw myself against all your mirrors, I transform myself with my veins,
with my feet: I shut myself up inside all your eyes¹⁶⁹

For the listener/viewer, the experience of a live performance of the *Sequenzas*, rather than only listening to a recording, expresses and conveys the theatrical ideas of character, action and narrative.

¹⁶⁵ Vila Verde, "Assessing the importance of visual/theatrical features in the perception of music by an audience, using sociological tools."

¹⁶⁶ Dambly, "*Sequenza X* comes full circle: Report on Gabriele Cassone's concert and masterclass in Los Angeles," [Performance at the Concrete Frequency Series, Los Angeles in 2008].

¹⁶⁷ Jonathan Impett, "Shadow Boxing: *Sequenza X* for Trumpet and Piano Resonance," in *Berio's Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis*, ed. Janet K. Halfyard, Hampshire, England and Burlington, USA: Ashgate Publishing, 2007, 84.

¹⁶⁸ Performance took place at the 92nd Street Y in November 1995.

¹⁶⁹ Edoardo Sanguineti, liner notes to recording of *Berio Sequenzas*, Ensemble InterContemporain, (Hamburg: Deutsche Grammophon, 457 038—2, 1998), 13.

Conclusion

The critical reception of the various *Sequenzas* suggests that players of the *Sequenzas* successfully relate to Berio's performer/instrument relationship, which requires the musician to 'step outside the box' of her/his instrument's established repertoire, history and physical structure. In addition, these works not only command physical, technical and intellectual virtuosity but also require a passionate musical personality to 'pull off the performance'. These highly expressive and theatrical works resonate with players and as a result, the *Sequenzas* are often performed and increasing more recorded. The critical reception also confirms that the *Sequenzas* are innovative, virtuosic works that are important additions to the Western art music canon in their respective instruments.

CHAPTER 10

Conclusion

In focusing on the critical reception of Luciano Berio's works, this study evaluates the success of the composer's music within the mainstream classical music market. In the early 1960s Berio, like many progressive composers, struggled to find an audience outside academic institutions. During this period, the media and the press, for the most part, lacked the incentive to promote these types of 'highbrow' performances in major concert venues. During the late 1980s, a select number of influential North American newspaper critics, including Donal Henahan and Albert Goldberg, even took a hard line against modernist music. As a result, their reviews relayed an unwarranted attack of modernist works that arguably did little to entice the reader to this music.

By the late-twentieth and early twenty-first century, the attitudes of North American critics toward modernist music changed, with critics including Lucy Krauss, Paul Griffiths, Bernard Holland, Edward Rothstein, Anthony Tommasini, Steve Smith and Allan Kozinn openly promoting the music of modernist composers. Today, as an alternative to the opinions of newspaper critics, arts bloggers give the public another perspective on and insight to Berio's works that is instant, global and free. Arguably, during the 1980s, the availability of the latter types of public commentary via the internet may have rebalanced Henahan's scathing critique of *Laborintus II*. This chamber work as well as Berio's *Corale*, *Opus Number Zoo*, *Cries of London*, *O King*, *Recital I (for Cathy)* and the *Chemins* series continue to feature steadily in major festivals and concerts throughout the English-speaking countries.

The critical reception of Berio's *Sinfonia* advocates that this work currently has a firm position within the concert orchestral repertoire. Likewise, *Coro* and *Rendering* continue to have wide appeal and are a drawcard for audiences. This is in part, due to the fact that Berio targeted a broad musical public. In particular, Berio's modernist aesthetic aimed at fusing high art and

the vernacular to communicate in an accessible manner to audiences. Throughout his career, Berio played a significant part in shaping the reception of his works via pre-concert talks as well as engaging with the press. A commercially available magazine *Incontri musicale* (1956—60) as well as a concert series of the same title, and Berio's television series *C'è Musica e Musica* of the 1970s, demonstrate his pursuit of mainstream audiences.

The critical reception of Berio's more abstract compositions including *Bewegung*, *Eindrück*, *Ekphrasis*, *Alternatim* and his Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra illustrates not so much the deficiencies in the works themselves but, rather, that these works require multiple listening to grasp the many nuances within the music. In turn, these works are not widely and frequently performed. One of the options to enhance the reception of these works and, indeed, all modernist music, is by way of public discussions. Music promoters see the merit of public educational programs as evidenced by the inauguration of, for instance, the New York Philharmonic's *Hear and Now* and Sydney Symphony's *Meet the Music*. To further enhance the reception of modernist music it would be beneficial to contextualise it within the social, aesthetic and political parameters of the production. Performing venues could also include lectures on the influential writers, visual artists, filmmakers and scientists as well as the political and social history of the day.

To date, the critical reception also recommends that the hallmark of Berio's solo output is the *Sequenzas*. This is due to the easily identifiable structural aspects within the music, player virtuosity and the highly evocative and expressive gestures. In turn, many high profile soloists continue to perform and to record these pieces. In acknowledging the public appeal of these works, concert promoters tend to format the series in one program, which inevitably attracts the press.

The collaboration between Berio and Berberian epitomised a creatively productive partnership. Both artists stretched each other's musical capabilities to the limits and into terrain they may not have discovered on

their own. The Berio/Berberian partnership justly defines their individual reputations as major exponents of the avant-garde. The partnership produced *Thema (Omaggio a Joyce)*, *Visage* and *Sequenza III* that are acknowledged 'classics' within the avant-garde milieu. No doubt, Berberian's creative input for these works, in turn, elevated the status of Berio among critical circles. The multiple performances of *Folk Songs* by a number of high profile vocalists including Dawn Upshaw, Luisa Castellani and Elissa Johnston as well as critical acclaim of these songs indicates that this work, is an important addition to the current concert and recording vocal repertory. Berberian's and Berio's commitment to engage a wide variety of listeners is evidenced by works including *Recital I (for Cathy)* and transcriptions of popular songs by the Beatles and Kurt Weill.

The critical reception highlights that Berio extended the opera genre and creates a new music theatre experience that stimulates both intellectual thought and emotions. Berio's early experimental *azione musicali* demonstrate the composer's exploration of other art forms, including theatre and dance, as well the employment of progressive writers to enhance the dramatic content of his works. All of Berio's *azione musicali* are in the form of an 'open' work and present no plot or clear linear narrative. In 1970, this was a significant factor that contributed to the demise of *Opera* within the commercial opera arena. However, the critical reception suggests that not all attendees of the day rejected Berio's confronting and ambiguously layered subject matter, and his moral and political stance on issues regarding democracy and justice still are relevant to modern audiences.

The critical reception of later works including *La Vera Storia*, *Outis*, *Cronaca del Luogo* and *Un re in ascolto* proposes that these works are complex and require both attentive listening and viewing to decipher meaning. The semantic depth of Berio's 'open' narratives, in combination with the music and the stage action/imagery, however, will continue to provide new interpretations and re-evaluations for future generation opera goers. The composer's tongue-in-cheek self-referentiality in *Un re in ascolto* and his engagement with *Turandot* also demonstrates his anti-elitist stance. Berio's

azione musicali are at the forefront of contemporary musical development and through their aesthetic radicalism these works are important additions to the opera genre.

Yet, Berio's *azione musicali* are his least performed works. It appears that opera companies do not recognise the merits of mid-late twentieth century changes within the art form, nor do they attempt to educate audiences in the same ways as the programs organised by orchestral administrators for their symphony attendees. Hence, opera management are extremely risk averse and apprehensive in staging untested new works. In regard to funding, the differences between Australia, the United Kingdom and the North America are significant. This thesis makes no mention of these possible differences, as it goes beyond the scope of this present study. Therefore, future directions of research may centre on opera companies' funding profiles and the ways to engage new audiences. I suggest that collaborative enterprises between theatre and opera companies may be a possible solution to broaden the audience base.

However, lack of critical success was amply compensated for during Berio's life by a steady stream of commissions. The high esteem in which Berio was held within academic circles is demonstrated by numerous commissions from major North American organisations, including the Fromm Foundation, the Koussevitzky Music Foundation (Washington, D.C.), Mills College, Grinnel College (Grinnel, Iowa), the University of Washington and Ball State University. He accepted commissions from high profile ensembles including the Lenox Quartet and the Aeolian Players. Berio, also, was highly sought after by high-profile orchestras that resulted in commissions from the New York Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony, and the San Francisco Symphony Association, the Los Angeles Philharmonic Association the Dallas Symphony Association, Symphony Australia and the Scottish National Orchestra. Berio also accepted commissions from The Santa Fe Opera and London's South Bank Centre.

While modernist masterpieces have their supporters among audience members and performers, many of these works still have a tenuous place in concert repertoire. A wider acceptance from the music listening public will promote continued concert performances and new recordings to ensure a recognised place for Berio's music in the concert repertoire of the twenty-first century.

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APPENDIX

Luciano Berio: List of Works and Biography

The following list of works is by year of composition and indicates instrumentation, duration of the work, the commissioner(s) and publisher(s). This list is compiled from Berio's official website: Centro Studi Luciano Berio, created 24 October 2009, by Talia Pecker-Berio.

Composition	Year	Instrument	Duration	Commissioner	Publisher
<i>Pastorale</i>	1937	Piano			
<i>Toccata</i>	1939	Piano duo			
<i>Preludio a una festa marina</i>	1944	String orchestra			
<i>Petite Suite</i> (from the <i>Berio Family Album</i>)	1947	Piano	20' 10'		Universal Edition (UE)15950
<i>L'annunciazione</i> (Rilke)		Soprano and chamber orchestra			
<i>Due cori popolari</i>	1946	Unaccompanied choir			
<i>Tre liriche greche</i>	1946	Voice and piano			
<i>O bone Jesu</i>	1946	Choir			
<i>Quattro Canzoni popolari</i>	1946— 1947	Female voice and piano	12'		
<i>Quintetto</i>	1948	Wind			
<i>Trio</i>	1948	Strings			
<i>Ad Hermes</i>	1948	Voice and piano			
<i>E di ten el tempo</i>	1948	Voice and piano			
<i>Due pezzi sacri</i>	1949	2 sopranos, piano, 2 harps, timps and 12 bells			
<i>Magnificat</i>	1949	2 sopranos, mixed choir, 2 pianos and instruments	13'		Belwin Mills Publishing
<i>Concertino</i>	1950/ 1970 1949/ 1970	Clarinet, violin, harp, celesta and strings	11'		UE14979
<i>Due liriche di Gracia</i>	1947— 1951	Bass and orchestra			
<i>Deus meus</i>	1951	Voice and 3 instruments			
<i>Sonatina</i>	1951	Wind Quartet			
<i>Due pezzi</i>	1951/ 1966	Violin and piano	8'		Edizioni Suvini Zerboni / 5081

Composition	Year	Instrument	Duration	Commissioner	Publisher
http://www.wildwomenontop.com/ <i>Number Zoo</i> (Children's play)	1951/ 1970	Wind quintet	7'		UE15637
<i>El mar la mar</i>	1952/ 1969	Soprano, mezzo-soprano and 7 instruments	12'		UE13752
<i>Study</i>	1952/ 1985	String quartet	9'		RCA Edizioni Musicali
<i>Cinque Variazioni</i>	1952— 53	Piano	7'		Edizioni Suvini Zerboni / 5119
<i>Reduction</i>	1953	2 sopranos and piano, arranged for soprano, mezzo soprano, flute (piccolo), 2 clarinets (bass clarinet), harp, accordion, cello and double bass			
<i>Mimusique</i>	1953	Magnetic tape	ca 2'		
<i>Chamber Music</i>	1953	Female voice, cello, clarinet and harp	8' 30"		Edizioni Suvini Zerboni / 5053
<i>Ritratto di città</i>	1954	Magnetic tape	29'24"		
<i>Nones</i>	1954	Orchestra	10'		Edizioni Suvini Zerboni / 5203
<i>Variazioni</i>	1954	Chamber orchestra	11'35"		Edizioni Suvini Zerboni / 5097
<i>Mutazioni</i>	1955— 56	Electronic sounds on tape	3'30"		Edizioni Suvini Zerboni / 5992
<i>Mimusique n. 2</i>	1952— 55	4 mimes and orchestra	ca 30'		Edizioni Suvini Zerboni
<i>Quartetto</i>	1956	String quartet	7'		
<i>Allelujah I</i>	1955— 56	Orchestra	9'30"		Edizioni Suvini Zerboni / 5373
<i>Variazione sull' aria di Papageno</i> (No. 2 from <i>Divertimento für Mozart</i>)	1956	2 basset horns and strings	3'		

Composition	Year	Instrument	Duration	Commissioner	Publisher
<i>Perspectives</i>	1957	Electronic sounds on tape	7'		Edizioni Suvini Zerboni / 5994
<i>Divertimento</i> (In collaboration with Bruno Maderna)	1957	Orchestra	12'		Edizioni Suvini Zerboni / 5453
<i>Seranata I</i>	1957	Flute and 14 instruments	11'		Edizioni Suvini Zerboni / 5391
<i>Allelujah II</i>	1956—58	5 instrumental groups	19'		Edizioni Suvini Zerboni / 5507
<i>Thema (Omaggio a Joyce)</i>	1958	Magnetic tape	7'		Edizioni Suvini Zerboni / 5993
<i>Sequenza I</i>	1958	Flute	6'		Edizioni Suvini Zerboni - n.e. UE19957
<i>Tempi concertati</i>	1958—59	Flute, violin, 2 pianos and other instruments	16'	Northern German Broadcasting Corporation, Hamburg	UE13205
<i>Différences</i>	1958—59	5 instruments and tape	17'		
<i>Allez-hop</i>	1952—59	Mezzo-soprano, 8 actors, ballet and orchestra	28'		Edizioni Suvini Zerboni / 5637
<i>Momenti</i>	1960	Electronic sounds on tape	7'		
<i>Circles</i>	1960	Female voice, harp and 2 percussionists	20'	Fromm Foundation	
<i>Epifanie</i>	1959—61/1965	Female voice and orchestra		Southwest German Radio Orchestra, Baden-Baden	UE (withdrawn)
<i>Quaderni</i>	1959	Orchestra			
<i>Visage</i>	1961	Electronics	21'		
<i>Quaderni II</i>	1961	Orchestra			
<i>Quaderni III</i>	1961—62	Orchestra			
<i>Passaggio (Messa in scena)</i>	1961—62	Soprano (solo), choir and orchestra	35'		UE13702

Composition	Year	Instrument	Duration	Commissioner	Publisher
<i>Esposizione</i> (withdrawn and reworked to form part of <i>Laborintus II</i>)	1963	Mezzo-soprano, 2 treble voices, group of mimes/dancers, 14 instrumentalists and tape	12' (only tape)		UE (withdrawn)
<i>Sequenza II</i>	1963	Harp	7' 8'15		UE18101
<i>Traces</i>	1964	Soprano, mezzo-soprano, 2 choirs of 24 voices, 2 actors and orchestra	ca 45'	Koussevitzky Foundation	UE (retired 1972)
<i>Sincronie</i>	1963— 64	String quartet	15' 18'30"	Grinnel College (Grinnel-Iowa)	UE31490
<i>Folk Songs</i>	1964	Mezzo-soprano and 7 instruments	23'	Mills College, Oakland, California	UE13717
<i>Folk Songs</i>	1964/ 1973	Mezzo-soprano and orchestra	23'		UE35542
<i>Chemins I</i> (su <i>Sequenza II</i>)	1965	Harp and orchestra	12'	Southwest German Radio Orchestra, Baden-Baden	UE13720
<i>Wasserklavier</i>	1965	Piano	2'		UE33013
<i>Wasserklavier</i>	1965	2 pianos	2'		UE31413
<i>Laborintus II</i>	1965	Voices, instruments and tape	35'	French Radio and Television (Office de Radio et Television Francaise), Paris	UE13792
<i>Rounds</i>	1965	Harpsichord	4'		UE13716
<i>Sequenza III</i>	1965 1966	Female voice	8'		UE13723
<i>Sequenza IV</i>	1966 1965	Piano	9' 11'	Mr. May for the Washington University in St. Louis, Miss.	UE33012
<i>Il combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda</i> (Monteverdi-Berio)	1966	Soprano, tenor, baritone, harpsichord and strings	25'		UE13727
<i>Gesti</i>	1966	Treble recorder	7' 5'		UE15627
<i>Sequenza V</i>	1965	Trombone	8'	Stuart Dempster	UE13725
<i>Sequenza VI</i>	1967	Viola	8'		UE13726
<i>Chemins II</i> (su <i>Sequenza VI</i>)	1967	Viola and 9 instruments	12'		UE13740
<i>O King</i>	1968	Mezzo-soprano, and 5 players	5'	The Aeolian Chamber Players, Bowdoin College, Maine, USA	UE13781
<i>Rounds</i>	1967	Piano	4'		UE13794

Composition	Year	Instrument	Duration	Commissioner	Publisher
<i>Beatles Songs</i> - <i>Michelle I</i> - <i>Michelle II</i> - <i>Yesterday</i> - <i>Ticket to Ride</i> (Lennon-McCartney- Berio)	1965/ 1967	Voice and instruments	8'		
<i>Ballade von der sexuellen Hörigkeit - Song of Sexual Slavery</i> (Weill-Berio)	1967/ 1972	Alto (high) and ensemble	3'		
<i>Chemins III (su Chemins II)</i>	1968/ 1973	Viola and orchestra	15'		UE 16654
<i>Sinfonia</i>	1968/ 1969	8 voices and orchestra	35'	The New York Philharmonic Orchestra	UE35319
<i>Questo vuol dire che...</i>	1968	3 female voices, choir, speaker and tape		RAI	Property: RAI
<i>Sequenza VIIa</i>	1969	Oboe	10'		UE31263
<i>Erdenklavier (Pastorale for piano from 6 Encores)</i>	1969	Piano	2'		UE33013
<i>Opera</i>	1969— 70/ 1977	Soloists, actors, choir and orchestra	90'		UE16655
<i>Memory</i>	1969	2 pianos	19'		UE33314
<i>Memory</i>	1969/ 1973	2 pianos or electric piano and electric harpsichord	13'		UE33314
<i>The Modification and Instrumentation of a Famous Hornpipe as a Merry and Altogether Sincere Homage to Uncle Alfred</i> (Purcell- Berio)	1969	6 instruments	1'		
<i>Melodrama (from Opera)</i>	1970	Tenor and instruments			
<i>Air (from Opera)</i>	1970	Soprano and 4 instruments	7'		UE14986
<i>Chemins IIb</i>	1970	Orchestra	11'		UE14948
<i>Agnus</i>	1971	2 sopranos, 3 clarinets and electric organ	6'	Ball State University, Indiana	UE13755
<i>Autre fois (Berceuse canonique pour Igor Stravinsky)</i>	1971	Flute, clarinet and harp	1'		UE18701
<i>Bewegung</i>	1971/ 1984	Orchestra	14'	The Scottish National Orchestra	UE31495

Composition	Year	Instrument	Duration	Commissioner	Publisher
<i>Chemins Ilc</i>	1972	Bass clarinet and orchestra	11'		UE14948
<i>E vó</i> (Sicilian Lullaby from <i>Opera</i>)	1972	Soprano and instruments	4'		UE31494
<i>Recital I (for Cathy)</i>	1972	Mezzo-soprano and 17 instruments	35'	The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation	UE34399
<i>Still</i> (withdrawn by Berio and some material reworked and included in <i>Eindrücke</i> (1974))	1972	Orchestra			
<i>Concerto</i>	1972—73	2 pianos and orchestra	25'	New York Philharmonic Orchestra	UE15783
<i>Linea</i>	1973	2 pianos, vibraphone and marimba	15'	Katja and Marielle Labèque, Jean-Pierre Drouet, Silvio Gualda	UE15991
<i>Eindrücke</i>	1973—74	Orchestra	11'		UE34124
<i>A-Ronne</i>	1974	5 actors	32'	Dutch Radio, Catholic Radio Broadcasting, Hilverson	
<i>Musica Leggera</i>	1974	Flute, viola, violoncello and tambourine	5' 2'		UE32745
<i>Per la dolce memoria di quel giorno</i> (Ballet after Petrarca's <i>I Trionfi</i>)	1974	Electronic and instrumental sounds on tape	80'		
<i>Points on the curve to find...</i>	1974	Piano and 22 instruments	16' 11'30"	Anthony Di Bonaventura	UE15906
<i>Cries of London</i>	1974—76	8 voices	12'		UE16828
<i>Calmo</i> (in memoriam Bruno Maderna)	1974/ 1989	Mezzo-soprano and 22 instruments	20'		UE19478
<i>A-Ronne</i> (reworked from original version of 1974 for the Swingle Singers)	1975	8 singers	30' 32'		UE31679
<i>Chants parallèles</i>	1975	Electronic sounds on tape	23'		
<i>Diario immaginario</i> (Radio work)	1975	Electronics	31'		
<i>Fa-Si</i>	1975	Organ (with registration assistants)	6'		UE16827

Composition	Year	Instrument	Duration	Commissioner	Publisher
<i>Quattro versioni originali della Ritirata Notturna di Madrid di L. Boccherini</i> (Boccherini-Berio)	1975	Orchestra	8'		UE15953
<i>Coro</i>	1975— 76	40 voices and instruments	60'	West German Broadcasting Corporation	UE15044
<i>Sequenza VIII</i>	1976	Violin	15'	Serena de Bellis	UE15990
<i>Les mots sont allés ...</i> (<i>Recitativo pour cello seul</i>)	1976/ 1979	Violoncello	3'		UE18399
<i>Ritorno degli snovidenia</i>	1976— 77	Violoncello and 30 instruments	19'		UE16649
<i>Encore</i>	1978/ 1981	Orchestra	5'	Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra	UE33018
<i>Siete canciones populares españolas</i> (De Falla-Berio)	1978	Mezzo-soprano and orchestra	13'		UE16791
<i>Quatre dédicaces</i> (the title given by Pierre Boulez in 2007 to a group of four previously independent works for orchestra)	1978— 89	Orchestra	ca 13'		
<i>La vera storia</i> (<i>Azione musicale in 2 parts</i>)	1977— 80	Soloists, actors, choir and orchestra	120'		UE30242
<i>Entrata</i>	1980	Orchestra	3'	The San Francisco Symphony Association	UE33019
<i>Sequenza IXa</i>	1980	Clarinet	13'		UE15993
<i>Sequenza IXb</i>	1980	Alto saxophone	13'		UE17447
<i>Sequenza IXc</i>	1980	Bass clarinet	13'		UE31234
<i>Corale</i> (su <i>Sequenza VIII</i>)	1981	Violin, 2 horns and strings	15'		UE17545
<i>Accordo</i>	1980— 81	4 wind bands	30'		UE17712
<i>Fanfara</i>	1982	Orchestra	2'		UE33016
<i>Duetti per due Violini</i>	1979— 83	2 violins	70'		UE17757
<i>Un re in ascolto</i> (<i>Azione musicale in 2 parti</i>)	1979— 83	Soloist, actors, choir and orchestra	90'		UE32993
<i>Lied</i>	1983	Clarinet	4'		UE17812
<i>Requies</i>	1983— 85	Chamber orchestra	17'		UE19419
<i>Sequenza X</i>	1984	Trumpet (and piano resonances)	10'	Angeles Philharmonic Association	UE18200

Composition	Year	Instrument	Duration	Commissioner	Publisher
<i>Voci</i> (<i>Folk Songs II</i>)	1984	Viola and 2 instrumental groups	30'	Aldo Bennici	UE31122
<i>Call</i> (<i>St. Louis Fanfare</i>)	1985/ 1987	5 brass instruments	4'		
<i>Luftklavier</i>	1985	Piano	2'		UE33013 (<i>Six Encores</i>) UE18688
<i>Naturale</i> (su melodie siciliane)	1985	Viola, percussion and recorded voice	20'		UE32565
<i>Terre chaleureuse</i> (<i>Fragment</i>)	1985	Wind quintet	3'		UE18280
<i>Gute Nacht</i>	1986	Trumpet	1'		UE19060
<i>Sechs Frühe Lieder</i> (Mahler- Berio)	1987	Baritone and orchestra	22'	dell'orchestra "A. Toscanini" di Parma	UE18307
<i>Fünf Frühe Lieder</i> (Mahler-Berio)	1986	Baritone and orchestra	13'	Henry-Louis de la Grange	UE18651
<i>Opus 120 No. 1</i> (Brahms-Berio)	1986	Clarinet (or viola) and orchestra	25'	Los Angeles Philharmonic Association	UE18868
<i>Formazioni</i>	1985— 87	Orchestra	20'	Concertgebouw Orchestra, Amsterdam	UE31516
<i>Ricorrenze</i>	1985— 87	Flute, oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon	15'		UE18885
<i>Duetti</i>	1987	2 guitars	5'		UE16278
<i>LB.AM.LB.M.W.D. IS.LB</i>	1988	Orchestra	1'35"		
<i>Sequenza XI</i>	1988	Guitar	14' 15'15"	Philharmonic Association of Rovereto (Italy)	UE19273
<i>Ofanim</i>	1988/ 1997	2 children's choirs, 2 instrumental groups, female voice and live electronics	30'		UE32632
<i>Festum</i>	1989	Orchestra	2'	Dallas Symphony Association	UE33017
<i>Feuerklavier</i> (from 6 <i>Encores</i>)	1989	Piano	2'		UE33013 (<i>Six Encores</i>)
<i>Psy</i>	1989	Double bass	2'	Franco Petracchi	UE30272
<i>Continuo</i>	1989— 91	Orchestra	20'		UE19899

Composition	Year	Instrument	Duration	Commissioner	Publisher
<i>Rendering</i> (Restoration of Schubert's symphonic fragment in D major D936A) Schubert- Berio	1990	Orchestra	35'		UE19311
<i>Canticum novissimi testamenti</i> (Ballata)	1989— 91	4 clarinets, saxophone quartet and 8 voices	18'		UE34819
<i>Six Encores</i>	1965— 90	Piano	12'		UE33013
<i>Brin</i>	1990	Piano	1'30"		UE33013
<i>Brin</i>	1990	Guitar	1'30"		UE30302
<i>Leaf</i>	1990	Piano	2'		UE33013
<i>Touch</i>	1991	Piano (4 hands)	2'		UE36040
<i>Canzonetta</i>	1991	Piano (4 hands)	1'		UE36039
<i>Epiphanies</i>	1991	Female voice and orchestra	30'		
<i>Otto Romanze</i> (Verdi-Berio)	1990	Tenor and orchestra	25'		UE19915
<i>Chemins V</i> (su Sequenza XI)	1992	Guitar and chamber orchestra	20'		UE32542
<i>Notturmo</i> (Quartetto III)	1993	String quartet	26'	International Music Research Society, Vienna Konzerthaus and The South Bank Centre, London	UE30134
<i>Notturmo</i>	1993/ 1995	String orchestra	26'		
<i>There is no tune</i>	1994	Choir a cappella	2'		Casa Ricordi, Milan
<i>Twice upon ...</i> (Theatre without words)	1994	6 children's groups	25'		Casa Ricordi, Milan
<i>Compass</i> (Recital)	1994	Piano and orchestra	40'		UE
<i>Vor, während, nach Zaide</i> (commentary on an unfinished opera by W.A. Mozart)	1995		25'		Casa Ricordi, Milan
<i>Hör</i> (Prologue from Requiem der Versöhnung)	1995	Choir and orchestra	5'	International Bach Academy, Stuttgart	
<i>Re-Call</i>	1995	23 instruments	4'		UE31082
<i>Sequenza XII</i>	1995	Bassoon	19'		UE30264
<i>Sequenza XIII</i> (Chanson)	1995	Accordion	12'		UE30377

Composition	Year	Instrument	Duration	Commissioner	Publisher
<i>Shofar</i> (part of the third cycle of <i>Outis</i>)	1995	Choir and orchestra	8'		Casa Ricordi, Milan
<i>Outis</i> (Azione musicale in 2 parti)	1995—96	Choir, soloists and orchestra	115'	La Scala, Milan	Casa Ricordi, Milan
<i>Kol od</i> (<i>Chemins VI</i>)	1996	Trumpet and chamber orchestra	20'		UE30946
<i>Récit</i> (<i>Chemins VII</i>)	1996	Alto saxophone and orchestra	15'		
<i>Récit</i> (<i>Chemins VII</i>)	1996/2003	Alto saxophone, ensemble of 12 saxophones and percussion	15'		UE31686
<i>Alternatim</i>	1997	Clarinet, viola and orchestra	30'	La maison Vandoren	UE31439
<i>Glosse</i>	1997	String quartet	6'	Reggio Emilia Theatre	UE30442
<i>Korót</i>	1998	8 violoncelli	8'	The City of Beauvais	UE31339
<i>Altra voce</i>	1999	Alto flute, mezzo-soprano and live electronics	10' – 12'		UE35958
<i>Cronaca del Luogo</i>	1998—99	soloists, actors, choir and orchestra	90'	Salzburg Festival	Casa Ricordi, Milan
<i>Solo</i>	1999—2000	Trombone and orchestra	22'	Symphony Australia, Tonhalle Orchestra Zürich and The International Trombone Association	UE31515
<i>Chemins IV</i> (su <i>Sequenza VII</i>)	1975	Oboe and 11 strings	10'		UE31268
<i>Sonata</i>	2001	Piano	26'	Zürcher Festival	UE31873
<i>Turandot</i> (by Giacomo Puccini (1924). Completion of the third act by Luciano Berio)	2001	Choir, soloists and orchestra			Casa Ricordi, Milan
<i>Contrapunctus XIX</i> (J.S Bach-Berio)	2001	23 players	8'		UE32498
<i>E si fussi pisci</i> (<i>Sicilian love song</i>)	2002	Mixed choir a cappella	2'		UE32803
<i>Sequenza XIV</i>	2002	Violoncello	13'	West Gernam Radio, Cologne, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon, and the Quartet Society of Milan	UE32914
<i>Sequenza XIVb</i>	2004	Double bass	13'		UE33071

Composition	Year	Instrument	Duration	Commissioner	Publisher
<i>Stanze</i>	2003	Baritone, 3 small male choirs and orchestra	25'	Orchestra de Paris	UE 32653

Biography

Compiled from the Universal Edition Website.

1925	Luciano Berio, born on 24 October in Oneglia, Italy; began piano lessons at the age of six years from his father, Ernesto, and grandfather, Adolfo
1944	Served in the Italian Army and a hand injury permanently ended Berio's career as a pianist
1946–1951	Studied counterpoint with Guido Cesare Paribeni and composition with Giorgio Federico Ghedini at the Milan Conservatory; Berio makes first contact with the music of the Second Viennese School
1950	Obtains composition diploma from Milan Conservatory
1952	A bursary from the Koussevitzky Foundation enables Berio to return to the United States of America; composition course with Luigi Dallapiccola at Tanglewood (Berkshire Music Festival); attends first public electronic music concert in the United States of America
1953	Begins working for Radiotelevisione Italiana (RAI) in Milan
1954	Attends the Darmstadt summer school
1955	Berio and Bruno Maderna found the Studio di Fonologia Musicale, Milan, Italy's first studio for electro-acoustic music
1956—60	Publishes <i>Incontri musicali</i> magazine and organizes concert series with the same title
1960	Resigns from the Studio di Fonologia and returns to Berkshire School of Music in Tanglewood to teach composition
1961—62	Teaches composition at the Dartington Summer School, England
1962—64	Professor of Composition at Mills College, Oakland, California
1965—71	Teaches at the Juilliard School, New York.
1966	Berio teaches composition at Harvard University
1967	Berio resigns his post at Harvard in order to concentrate on his work at the Juilliard School

1967	Founds the Juilliard Ensemble
1971	Resigns his post at the Juilliard School; he begins work in Rome, on the television series <i>C'è Musica e Musica</i>
1972	Returns to Italy and settles in Radicondoli, in the Tuscan Hills near Siena
1974	Head of the electro-acoustic section of the Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique Musique (IRCAM), Paris
1975	Conductor/Artistic Director of the Israel Chamber Orchestra
1975—76	Artistic Director of the Roman Philharmonic Academy, Rome, Italy
1980	Resigns his post at Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique Musique, Paris; receives Honorary Degree from City University, London
1982	Artistic Director of the Tuscany Regional Orchestra, Tuscany, Italy; receives the Premio Italia Prize
1984	Guest Artistic Director of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino
1987	Founds and directs Tempo Reale, Florence, institute for live electrons
1989	Receives the Ernst von Siemens-Musikpreis, Munich, Germany
1991	Receives the Wolf Foundation Prize, Jerusalem
1992	Founder member of the Universal Academy of Cultures in Paris
1993—94	Norton Professor of Poetry at Harvard University, Cambridge, United States
1994	Receives the Mario Novaro Prize, Geneva
1995	Recipient of the Golden Lion at the Venice Biennale; receives an Honorary Degree from the University of Siena
1996	Receives the Praemium Imperiale, the Japanese Imperial Prize for the Arts
1999	Receives Honorary Degrees from the University of Turin, Italy and the University of Edinburgh, Great Britain; interim Director of the National Academy of Santa Cecilia, Rome

2000	Artistic Director of the Saarland Radio Festival, Germany “Music in the 21 st Century;” President and Artistic Director of the National Academy of Santa Cecilia, Rome; receives Honorary Degree from the University of Bologna
2001	Receives the International Prize “Luigi Vanvitelli,” Caserata, Italy; Artistic Director of the European project “L’Arte della Fuga,” Spoleto, Den Haag, Lyon, London
2003	27 May, Luciano Berio dies in Rome