The Divine Madness

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Available at: https://works.bepress.com/randall_snyder/245/
The Divine Madness

an opera
for six players
in five scenes

words and music by
Randall Snyder
(1996)

the players (in order of appearance)

a middle-aged composers, dressed in 19th century costume
an impresario, speaks with W.C.Fields accent, dressed in a Dickensian style
a flamboyant soprano, an aging diva, colorfully dressed
an alto, a timid musicologist, dressed as a 1960s college co-ed
a tenor, a jazzer, dressed in a pin-striped zoot suit, wears sun glasses
a bass, a bitter old man, speaks with German accent, wearing shabby clothes
stage audience and crew

sets

a garret and the backstage of a theater

contents

Scene One: The Commission
Scene Two: The Company
Scene Three: The Composition'
Scene Four: The Premier
Scene Five: Coda

the opera takes place in five days

synopsis

A composer is looking at slides of famous composers and comes to the realization that he will never be able to compose great music. He decides to do away with himself but is interrupted by an impresario who commissions him to write an opera that will be premiered in five days. The composer agrees and meets the cast and orchestra. The opera is composed but the premier is a disaster and the composer once again contemplates suicide.

duration

c. one hour
orchestration

Flute 1
Flute 2
Oboe
English Horn
Bb Clarinet 1
Bb Clarinet 2
Bassoon 1
Bassoon 2
Horn 1
Horn 2
Bb Trumpet 1
Bb Trumpet 2
Trombone
Timpani
Percussion
Harp
Violin 1
Violin 2
Violas
Cellos
Double Basses
The Divine Madness

Overture

Randall Snyder
1996

piano vocal score

Sardonic

Orchestra

(8\textsuperscript{th})

(8\textsuperscript{th})

Composer

Orch.

Slower

\( \text{rit.} \)

1996

Randall Snyder

piano vocal score
Scene One
The Commission

Composer

Such great spirits of the past

Orch.

Schubert, Mozart, Johann Sebastian Bach!

Faster

Faster

ah yes and the greatest of us all Ludwig Van Beethoven!

Slow

true - ly they are im - mor - tal for as long as our spe - cies ex - ist they will re - main

Orch.
Faster

etched in our collective subconscious

Pa\hspace{1cm}p\hspace{1cm}Haydn

Orch.

Brahms

Fe\hspace{1cm}lix\hspace{1cm}Mendelsohn

Wagner

rit.

Slow

Car\hspace{1cm}Marie\hspace{1cm}von\hspace{1cm}Weber

a "prince of musicians"

their sonic constructs er\hspace{1cm}iterate
analogs of their reciprocal mix have passed into the common inheritance

A Little Faster \( \downarrow \frac{72}{4} \)

Doloroso \( \downarrow \frac{60}{4} \)

mor-tals possess-ing di-vine dust from a de-ox-y-ri-bo-nucle-e-ic
My modest gifts have been fully manifested

appearing as brief inconstant bagatelles they pass softly

in the void

A Little Faster \( \bowtie \) 72

George Frederick Handel
Slow \( \frac{63}{\text{min}} \)

Composer

they maintain a subtle and precious agelessness

Orch.

A Little Faster

Composer

Ros- si - ni

Pe- ter II - y ich Tchai - kov - sky

Orch.

Forlorn \( \frac{188}{\text{min}} \)

Composer

My life lost na - rive - te a se - con - da - ry da guerre - o - type tan - ta - lized by proxi - mi - ty

Orch.
have unani-mously declared you the re-cipient of a Com-mis-sion!

and what may I ask was the cause of this la-

tically to fill a lacuna in our in-mi-nent re-pert-toire

the sudden demise of our composer-in-residence

I would just like to men-tion some of the stip ula-tions gov-ern’d by the com-
e-spe-cly the mo-ne-ty

mis-sion

it is to be an Op’ra that is to say a Dra (m) ha ha ha ha ha per
Impresario
157
mu-si-ca
probably of the more serious variety

Impresario
158
the performers will provide the necessary variety may be something with a Metastasian

Composer
160
the remuneration?

Impresario
164
ah yes we'll get to that soon now if you look carefully

Impresario
167
you will note some of the finer points of the con-con-dance

Impresario
169
"there must be a solo for every member of the company including myself

Orch.

Impresario
169
it must be accessible employing functional tonal

Orch.
hands him a pull-off calendar

It must be compressed... in five days'

and the stipend?

Va...Va...remember fellow artists in this hour of need

Impresario

Composer

Impresario

Orch.
Impresario

the Wil-ly Nil-ly Trav-ling Op’ra Cir-cus Troupe a-wait your de-ci-sion

stagger out the door

with ba- ted breath!

Life is a seem-ing ran-dom bun-dle of cause and ef-
flect ir-ra-di-ating the il-lu-sion of choice and now one more con-tri-bu-tion

Composer
to the ether another bagatelle of parochial interest

another mesoteric palpitation yet the possibility of Par-

nasus that in one last trajectory I might gaze

laughs and picks up the poison puts the poison down this can wait at least for a quintet of solar revolutions to pass.

on their powdered perukes
Stage lights are turned on and the stage crew enters to strike the set. Members of the orchestra stand and talk as though getting ready to leave. Stage manager: “strike the set... we've got the Hamburg Meat-Grinders coming in tomorrow... got to make room for all their synthesizers and lasers.”

Conductor: “quick... jump to... letter Z”
Scene Two
The Company

Animato  \( \text{d} = 144 \)

stand until end of scene with back to the audience

Quiet...quiet, children...come to order... our noble benefactor has appeared

improvise continuous warming up and laughter

looks like a real winner this time...

improvise continuous warming up and laughter

this could be a really bummer

improvise continuous warming up and laughter

Ja, ja...

our noble benefactor has appeared

...19th century...

under der improvazione

...he's got to be better than the last one...

Ja - wohl Herr

this anachronistic spirit has arrived... come to order please...to greet our new tonkunst plenipotentiary! order please! have no concern...for their feckless antics...

what a fascinating experience...

collaborating with a living...

...19th century...

if this doesn't word I can always whip out my tenor...

and go on the road again

no more holograms and lasers...

enough with der multi-media stucke...

uder der improvisione
Impresario

Haupt - man

they truly are distinguished artists

with unique diversified backgrounds...

in the theater...

...terpsichory...

I wonder if he's married

chorus begins moving to the risers

Europe...
and now...great pleasure is at hand...as I introduce

The Wil-ly Nil-ly Trav-ling Op-’ra Cir-cus Troupe!

chorus shakes hands with each other

steps down from the risers

leaves the stage

laughing

Impresario

Dialogue
Impresario

A.

T.

S.:

S:

A.:

T.:

Och.

f

p

mp

Dialogue

pulled the alto down from the risers

rondes

dance around the Alto

Or la truax trop du

te voir voir a ceu k'elle
dance around the Alto

est simple
tele or la truax trop du
te voir voir a ceu k'elle est simple

Trop por ou-tre cui
dies me tains
cant je cu-doie es
tre cer-tains or la truax trop du

Pulls the alto down from the risers
Dialogue

Fast Bop

[Music notation with detailed musical symbols and instructions]

Impresario

S.

A.

T.

Orch.

[Text in the score indicating the lyrics and musical directions]

---

[Dialogue]

---

[Chorus begins moving to the risers]
Impresario

T. 241

Dialogue  L  Schrecklich  A Tempo

Och.

Impresario

T. 247

shambles back to the risers receiving "high fives" from the soprano

Och.

Impresario

S. 253

throughout bass solo make faces and histrionic poses

Och.

Impresario

A. 253

throughout bass solo make faces and histrionic poses

Och.

Impresario

T. 253

throughout bass solo make faces and histrionic poses

Och.

Impresario

B. 253

ich  dir  sag  dein  schütz

Och.
Impresario

A.

B.

T.

B.

Dialogue

N

Crisp

first the frothy woodwind section

Impresario

A.

ny our compa - ny

T.

ny our compa - ny

B.

ny and cir-cus troupe

Och
takes out a notebook and desperately tries to keep up with the Impresario

Impresario

Composer

Impresario

Och.

Composer

Impresario

Och.

Slower

A Tempo

Impresario

Och.

Impresario

Composer

Impresario

Och.

Impresario

Composer

Impresario

Och.

Slower

Tempo I

Impresario

Och.
Impresario

Composer

Impresario

Och.

Impresario

Och.

Composer

Impresario

Och.

Composer

Impresario

Och.

Impresario

Impresario

Och.

Composer

Impresario

Och.

Composer

Impresario

Och.

Dialogue

Elfte Stück

\( \text{Dialogue} \)

\( \text{Elfte Stück} \)

\( 436 \)

\( 431 \)

\( 431 \)

\( 426 \)

\( \text{such marvelous orchestration mit klangfarbenmelodie} \)

\( \text{aside to the audience} \)

\( \text{I thought that went out in the sixties} \)

\( \text{this is the quiet heart of the piece retrograde in} \)

\( \text{such elementary serial techniques!} \)

\( \text{version such inductive lines} \)
Impresario

composer

basic hex-a-chord - ma-nip-u-la-tions be-ref of skill

Comb-in-a-torial wizard-ry!

Orch.

454

what! I've heard that be-fore

a pos-modern touch! - with a hint of sturm und drang

this is ri-dis-u-lous

now the co-da with its crys-tal line point - il-issim

A Tempo
I've got nothing to say
but it's OK

Wil-ly Nil-ly Com-pan-y
ciao!

Well...wasn't that splendid
now that you've seen and heard our company
before it's off to wrestle with the muse?
then God speed you on your
creative way......the
in five days hence!

Alas...a great talent...taken from us... all too soon
do you harbor any last questions...

in five days! It must be ready!

but it's OK

I've got nothing to say

Unus...a great talent...taken from us... all too soon
Well... wasn't that splendid
now that you've seen and heard our company
before it's off to wrestle with the muse?
then God speed you on your
creative way......the
in five days hence!

Well... wasn't that splendid

I've got nothing to say

but it's OK

Wil-ly Nil-ly Com-pan-y
ciao!

Well... wasn't that splendid

I've got nothing to say

but it's OK
Scene Three
The Composition

Composer

Orch.

Tense $\frac{1}{8}$ $\frac{f}{8}$

Slower $\frac{1}{8}$ $\frac{s}{8}$

rit. plays piano

writes on manuscript paper

fp
tears up page

Tempo 1

fp
mf
f
pp

No!

not this!

the white expanse

mf
p

pp

writes

between the lines

fp

mf

mf

f

pp

not this!

f

mf

p

writing on manuscript paper

Slower

fp

fp

fp

<>

pp<>

f

p

fp

mf

p

p

3

p

f

5

f

mf

p

3

p

3

p

3

p

3
I must find the path!
yet time is of the essence...

yet is of the essence...
I must find the path!

alchemy that transmutes red cinnabar of soul into bright golden sound?

ah but it's no use!

yet the seed is brighter in the mind than on the page
I must try again and settle for what comes... for even mediocrity has its place in the scheme of things.

now I seemed to have found the thread that will lead me... to immortality.
molto rit...

A Tempo

stream of consciousness lighting through m. 612

Like the sal - a - man der I burn

with un - quench - a - ble fire

pul - pi - ta - ting with hot - jell - ied spa - sms

of cause and ef -
Composer

fect a spec-ta-tor of my own in-

Orch.

ff 3

Compositor

tox-i-ca-tion musings Pull-ing me down to un-

Orch.

\( \text{ff} \)

Compositor

to-pec-ted realms

Orch.

\( \text{mf} \)

Compositor

this is the ne-ther world of

Orch.

\( \text{fp} \)
Faster

A Catalog.....
Nine Remembrances of Sounds Past:
One: Subterranean saxhorn riffs with oodles of noodles....
Two: Chopin staring me in the face and a night at the opera....
Three: Wind Ensemble Pastorales with viola-less decrescendos...
Four: Hard Bop ditties and other whole-tone forays...
Five: Modal adventures in Neo-Classic Land...
Six: Hard-edged combinatorial hipnesses by the lake...
Seven: Enter the Diatonic: a return to Nebraska normalcy...
Eight: On the road with Pansori and Pelog...
Number Nine.. Number Nine.. Number Nine: all the stuff of my accidental...enneagram...
Primal Scream and other Rockabilly delights.
S walks back to the piano

an becomes enveloped in an unearthly red light

calendar reads “2 Days”

normal lighting returns

Slower than before

mp

pp
lies down on the sofa and falls asleep

Interlude Three

Ruminative

Agitato
molto rit.

Tragic \( \frac{d}{58} \)

Orchestral tuneup
Scene Four
The Premier

Composer

Impresario

Orch.

S.

A.

T.

B.

pacing nervously looking for the composer

stretching and warming-up

stretching and warming-up

stretching and warming-up

composer bursts in carrying completed opera

bands the score over to the Impresario

c'est li mi
laus de o

ah just in time the nick of time
Impresario

Composer

Impresario

Orch.

Composer

Impresario

Orch.

Composer

Impresario

Orch.

Composer

Impresario

Orch.

Composer

Impresario

Orch.
Impresario

Composer

Orch.

T.

B.

Och
Fast \( \text{\textbullet\textbullet} \) Elgar  

you think so?

\( \text{\textbullet\textbullet} \) Elgar

a love-ly har-mo-nic touch

bleak house a poor house

\( \text{\textbullet\textbullet} \) I really feel you have done it this time

Ed war (d) Elgar

\( \text{\textbullet\textbullet} \) Ed war (d) Elgar

no this sounds like Sir Ed-ward Elgar

no this sounds like Sir Ed-ward Elgar

\( \text{\textbullet\textbullet} \) Elgar
Impresario

Composer

Orch.

\[\text{Impresario:} \quad \text{thank you good luck}\]

\[\text{Composer:} \quad \text{quite splendid ah yes it's time for my sol-lo we'll}\]

\[\text{Impresario:} \quad \text{da dit da da la}\]

\[\text{A:} \quad mf \quad fp\]

\[\text{T:} \quad mf \quad fp\]

\[\text{B:} \quad mf \quad fp\]

\[\text{Impresario:} \quad \text{da dit da da la}\]

\[\text{Orch.}\]

\[\text{Composer:} \quad \text{I'm sorry}\]

\[\text{Impresario:} \quad \text{take our art to the com-mon man and de claim through-out the land that's not right a bad mis-take!}\]

\[\text{A:} \quad \text{our art man sing through-out ha ha ha!}\]

\[\text{T:} \quad \text{our art man sing through-out ha ha ha!}\]

\[\text{B:} \quad \text{our art man sing through-out ha ha ha!}\]
Composer

this is my fav'rite part

Impresario

such fresh apogia turas

S.

A.

T.

B.

Och.

Composer

I tried my best

Impresario

such mas'ry of tech'nique he tried his best

S.

A.

T.

B.

Och.
Composer

S.

A.

T.

B.

Och.

molto rit......

his best is not good e - nough

nough

nough

molto rit......

A Tempo

molto rit......

Cadenza

ah

da yá

ark!

not good this is not go - ing ve - ry

not good not good this is not go - ing ve - ry

not good not good this is not go - ing well well

this is not go - ing well this is not good not good this is not go - ing well well well

Melodramatic from here to m.137 growing improvised effects

stage audience start booing

fp

fp

fp

fp

fp

fp

fp

fp

fp
Orch.

A.

oh I should have stayed put in school

T.

to be on the road again

B.

should have stayed with Brecht Ja Ja Ja Ber-lin in the stage audience becoming disruptive

Orch.

fp

B.

Twen-ten Zeit Op’-ta mit Hin-de-mith und E- pic The-a-ter mit Brecht und Weil

Orch.

p

B.

und Song - speil mit Mar-le-ne Die-trich! A Tempo

Orch.

p

A.

C’est Dom - mage! I should have ap - plied for a Grad-u-ate Ful - bright

Orch.

mp
impresario improvising growing alarm over audience behavior

S. roo - ty

A. roo - ty oh I should have stayed put in school

T. roo - ty to be on the road a - gain!

B. roo - ty I should have stayed with Ber - tol Brecht

orch. stage audience becoming disruptive

improvising growing alarm over audience behavior

composer and attacks the stage audience

improvising growing alarm over audience behavior

S. mon Dieu! le sacré bleu! mende!

A. incoming! chill out!

T. es ist schlecht! verdämmt!

B. stage audience throws fruit at chorus

orch.
A Little Slower than Before  \( \text{\textcopyright} \) - 20

Composer

Impresario

Och.

molt(0) rite... Slow \( \text{\textcopyright} \) - 40

Composer

Impresario

Och.

Mystical \( \text{\textcopyright} \) - 300 \( \text{\textcopyright} \) - 72

Impresario

Och.

Hands to composer three Thalers

for do we not sit warm and serene under the transcendent umbrage... of

Be not depressed by minor setbacks

Be not depressed by minor setbacks

Mystical
Music is a crack in the pate of fate
the be-sign de-cep-tion we glad-ly em-brace

a grand ex-per-i-ence!
a niche in Die Mu-sik in Ge-schich-te und Ge-gen-wart
The Wil-ly Nil-ly Op'ra com-pa-ny bids you a-

bent over and dejected...turns to the audience and drops the three Thalers

begins walking off the stage...turns to the composer...

begins walking off the stage
dieu...till the next time
Scene Five
Coda

Ominous \( \frac{d}{=60} \)

Faster \( \frac{d}{=60} \)

Composer

Orch.

985

such augus\-t person\-na\-ges

990

Bi\-zet

Chris\-toph Wil\-li\-bald Gluck

994

Kar\-lheinz Stock\-hau\-sen

serial\-ism and be-

996

yond a ha\-gi\-o\-logical e\-lite inc\-cur\-ing my en\-vy

Orch.

pp

mf

mf p

p

f

p < f

rit.

f

\( \frac{d}{=60} \)
and picks up a copy of his opera.
rit.

another bag-a-telle of in-

dif-ference waxed and waned into the ether

meaning less pho-tons esc-a-ting with reck-less pre-
cip-i-tancy
Life seems an endless succession of
capital turn-style of promise
reaches for the poison and uncorks it a lack of genius...
yielding the same predictable meld
my only sin
as he reaches to drink the poison
a quadruple knock on the door is heard

but I didn’t order any...

twelve large combos...
anchovies on the side
this is 5848 N. Calvert
says here...something about a cast party

CODA

true ly an obj ective work of art!
er... that is des timed...

A Divine Madness

The Re view!
by Mon sieur Jacque Cat lett

impresario
orch.
Impresario
&

Orch.

ff

f

ff

p

Impresario

for greatness and its com-poser... will surely

the entire company

be enshrined with the immor-tals

3 We sa-

Impresario

lute you!

Vivo

Orch.

fp

fff
Bows

Broad \( \frac{\text{l}}{\text{q}} = 60 \)

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Orch.} \\
1088 \\
\text{Orch.} \\
1096 \\
\text{Orch.} \\
1103 \\
\text{Orch.} \\
1109
\end{array}
\]

\textit{rit}, Slower \( \text{rit} \)

Fast \( \frac{\text{l}}{\text{q}} = 108 \)

\textit{molto rit}