

“SPARRING WITH FATE”: MIRIAM GIDEON’S 1958 OPERA *FORTUNATO*

by

STEPHANIE JENSEN-MOULTON

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Music in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

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## Abstract

“SPARRING WITH FATE”: MIRIAM GIDEON’S 1958 OPERA *FORTUNATO*

by

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In 1958, American composer Miriam Gideon (1906-1996) completed her only opera, *Fortunato: An Opera in Three Scenes*. Although the opera has never received a performance, it may be regarded as a central work within Gideon’s style and oeuvre. Gideon fashioned her own libretto for *Fortunato* from Serafín and Joaquín Álvarez Quintero’s 1912 farce of the same name, creating a uniquely personal work with distinct connections between music and biography. This study examines significant changes Gideon made when transforming the play to the libretto, and interprets these changes through the lens of Gideon’s personal writings and correspondence during the period of the opera’s composition. After outlining the musical language of the opera, I perform close analytical readings of significant passages and arias, drawing insights from the fields of musicology, post-tonal analysis, feminist theory, and disability studies. Judith Butler’s concept of “utterance” informs an embodied exploration of *Fortunato* from the perspective of the singer. Attitudes towards women, sexuality, and feminism during the American 1950s provide a context for the study, which also delves into reception of Gideon’s other works during the postwar era.

In addition to providing a detailed biographical sketch and a comprehensive discography, this dissertation includes two transcriptions: Gideon’s “1939 Paris” diary,

and my edited version of *Fortunato* in piano-vocal score. Until now, the opera has only been available in a marginally legible handwritten copy. The provision of an edited score is central to the study's primary goal: to illuminate a valuable yet unsung American operatic work through an examination of the rich biographical material now available about its composer.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Contrary to popular belief, writing a doctoral dissertation is anything but a solitary effort. Outside of CUNY, I thank Alexander Ewen for giving me permission to microfilm and transcribe Miriam Gideon's incredible journals and personal writings. I thank all of the librarians who helped me sort through Gideon's papers and scores at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, and also those at the Library of Congress. I thank Judy Pinnolis for lending me both her expertise on Gideon and her Gideon collection, which contains many rare resources. To Carol Hess I offer my thanks for e-mail communications about Spanish music. I am grateful to Judith Tick for reading my initial proposal and offering suggestions for next steps. Wendy Hoffman graciously sent me materials about her grandfather, who was Miriam Gideon's first husband, and I thank her for sharing a piece of her family's history with me.

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

Complete publishing information, where relevant, for the collections listed below can be found in the bibliography.

FEP-TLNYU	Frederic Ewen Papers, Tamiment Library, New York University
JPC-MG	Judith Pinnolis Collection of Miriam Gideon Materials, in the home of Judith Pinnolis
MGP-NYPL	Miriam Gideon Papers, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

## PREFATORY NOTE ABOUT TECHNICAL TERMINOLOGY

In the fourth and fifth chapters of this dissertation, I apply basic techniques of post-tonal analysis to the music of *Fortunato*. For readers who may be unfamiliar with methods of analysis typically employed when examining twentieth and twenty-first century music, I have footnoted suggested texts for further reading on the subject. The following paragraphs briefly explain the basic terms I utilize for the analysis portion of the dissertation.<sup>1</sup>

Much of my analysis centers on Miriam Gideon's use of small groups of pitch-classes and the ways in which these pitch-class groups saturate her work. Each pitch-class represents all the notes of one name, without reference to frequency. In other words, all notes named C are part of the pitch class C, no matter how high or low they may be. If we use integers to indicate each pitch class, these integers provide an entrée into mathematical modes of composition, where operations can be performed on a group of pitch-class integers. In my analyses, I use 0 to represent the pitch class C, 1 for C#, and so on, with "t" and "e" representing ten and eleven. Enharmonic equivalents such as E $\flat$  and D# are members of the same pitch-class.

Gideon often composes using various pitch-class groups that are members of the same set class. Take the three pitch-classes D, D#, and F#, for example. When combined, these three pitch-classes comprise this pitch-class set: [D, D#, F#], or in integers, [2, 3, 6]; order and register are unimportant here. Pitch class sets that are related

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<sup>1</sup> This discussion is indebted to Joseph N. Straus, *Introduction to Post-Tonal Theory*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2005). For further reading, see also John Rahn, *Basic Atonal Theory* (New York: Longman, 1980); and Allen Forte, *The Structure of Atonal Music* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973).

can form set classes, which I identify in this dissertation using both the set class name given by Allen Forte (in this case, 3-3), and the prime form of the set class, which is (014) for the pitch-class set [D, D#, F#]. Gideon tends to saturate her work with one or several significant set classes, giving a cohesive quality to her compositions.

Finally, I refer to four pitch-class “collections” that I have found to be prevalent in the musical language of *Fortunato*. A pitch-class collection is merely another term for a pitch-class set; but the collections detailed in Chapter 4 have larger significance, in that they are also scales. The diatonic collection contains the pitch materials needed to make both major and minor modes, in addition to a great number of other traditional scales and modes. The octatonic collection contains the pitch materials for a scale that alternates between whole and half-steps, while the hexatonic collection provides materials for a scale that alternates between half-steps and minor thirds. Post-tonal theory has not generally been applied to the Jewish mode *Avahah rabbah*, but representation of this mode in integer notation reveals its many interesting qualities.

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## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction: “Moving about in other people’s houses”<sup>1</sup>

As writers of women’s history, we are called upon to look on the shelves of the library for the “books that are not there.”<sup>2</sup> This study focuses on American composer Miriam Gideon (1906-1996) and her only opera, *Fortunato*, completed in 1958. Through her dual role as composer and librettist, Gideon created a uniquely personal work of art with distinct biographical connections. Although the opera may invite many varied analytical approaches, this study examines significant changes Gideon made when transforming the play to the libretto, and interprets these changes through the lens of Gideon’s personal writings and correspondence during the period of the opera’s composition. An exploration of attitudes towards women, sexuality, and feminism during the American 1950s<sup>3</sup> illuminates ways in which the music and text of Gideon’s opera reveal aspects of the composer’s life.

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<sup>1</sup> Quotation from Miriam Gideon’s dream journal, Miriam Gideon Papers, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts (henceforth referred to as MGP-NYPL). In the context of Gideon’s journals, the quotation refers to a dream Gideon had which, to her, symbolized her perception that she often let herself be overpowered by others in both personal and professional situations. I find in reading her journals that Gideon’s sense of confidence in her music is often mixed with a lurking and poignant sense of insecurity about her position in the structures of power within her life: “Dreams of houses in which I hunt for P. or father, etc.—I am in their house—their power—therefore even tho I understand them I am unable to see them objectively.” Further along in the journal, she writes: “I dream of houses, boarding houses, foreign countries—I am always moving about in other people’s houses.” These “houses” can also be understood as the opera houses that served as venues for performances of operas composed mostly by men, rarely infiltrated by women composers.

<sup>2</sup> Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One’s Own* (New York: Harcourt, 1981 [1929]), 45.

<sup>3</sup> The use of the term “the American 1950s” references writings on this era by Alan Filreis, including his article “Words with ‘All the Effects of Force’: Cold War

Gideon's style during the 1950s may be characterized as freely atonal, and her compositions, in George Perle's words, are "free from irrelevancies."<sup>4</sup> Although a Guggenheim fellowship eluded her, she was the second woman elected to the National Institute of Arts and Letters, the first being Louise Talma (1906-1996).<sup>5</sup> Although Gideon was certainly recognized by her contemporaries, her works have not been amply examined, and her opera, though worthy of study, has been completely neglected in scholarship. A deeper understanding of this dramatic work and its composer also sheds light upon the socio-political climate of the professional music establishment in New York City within which the opera was written.

Gideon introduced her opera into a society that had historically rejected women as modernist composers and eschewed modernism as an idiom for opera; evidence of these barriers is the fact that *Fortunato* has never once, in the almost fifty years since its composition, received a performance. As Carol Oja states of musical culture in New York in the 1920s and 1930s, "increasingly, consonant music—especially the pretty sort representing long-standing European traditions—was linked with women or effeminacy, while dissonance was quickly labeled 'manly' or 'virile'."<sup>6</sup> Two decades and a world

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Interpretation" in *American Quarterly* 39 (Summer 1987), 306-12. Filreis also offers a course at the University of Pennsylvania entitled "The Literature and Culture of the American 1950s."

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in Julie Anne Sadie and Rhian Samuel, ed. "Miriam Gideon," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Women Composers* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1995), 185.

<sup>5</sup> Sadie, *The New Grove Dictionary of Women Composers*, 185-87, 368, 454; Christine Ammer, *Unsung: A History of Women in American Music* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980), 157-61, 293-95.

<sup>6</sup> Carol J. Oja, *Making Music Modern: New York in the 1920s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 225.

war later, women composers in the 1950s continued to receive, at best, mixed reviews for dissonant or atonal works.<sup>7</sup> Thus, Gideon was figuratively, “moving about in other people’s houses” in terms of musical style. Yet, her marginalization as both a female composer of opera *and* a modernist put her in a unique position to doubly subvert these dominant narratives: Gideon was a composer among women, and a woman among modernist composers.

A major component of the study focuses on the social and political implications of being a woman composer in the 1950s. Not only did Gideon transgress societal norms for women in the public sphere by pursuing a career as a composer, but she also chose to enact atypical modes of womanhood in the private sphere through her choices about marriage and motherhood. Marcia Citron argues that “women composers have to negotiate individual solutions to identity in the spaces between woman and professional as represented in ideology. A fundamental area of negotiation involves the family.”<sup>8</sup> Using musical, textual and cultural analyses of *Fortunato*, I argue that aspects of Gideon’s personal life directly affected her compositional output and stylistic choices. Gideon carefully crafted her public image, generally keeping her life separate from her career as a composer; yet, her diaries and other newly available personal writings can

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<sup>7</sup> Chapter 3 of this dissertation discusses the reception of Gideon’s work in the 1950s, much of which was mixed. Isabel Wilder, recalling reviews of the premiere of Louise Talma’s atonal opera (*The Alcestiad*, 1960), writes, “One veiled but definite complaint that came through in the most unsympathetic [reviews] was that women should not write operas, another [was] that the music was too modern.” Isabel Wilder, Foreword to *The Alcestiad, or A Life in the Sun: A Play in Three Acts with a Satyr Play, The Drunken Sisters* (New York: Avon Books, 1979 [1955]), 17. See also note 12 in this chapter.

<sup>8</sup> Marcia Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 89.

elicit new dimensions of Gideon's persona.<sup>9</sup> Until now, her personal life has, with a few notable exceptions, remained largely unconnected with her music. Dominant ideologies about women during the period following World War II have also contributed to the relative invisibility of 1950s women composers' lives and works. As Joanne Meyerowitz suggests,

While no serious historian can deny the conservatism of the postwar era or the myriad constraints that women encountered, an unrelenting focus on women's subordination erases much of the history of the postwar years.... Especially in works on the 1950s, the sustained focus on a white middle-class domestic ideal and on suburban middle-class housewives sometimes renders other ideals and other women invisible.<sup>10</sup>

Gideon enacted the subversive female role of working, writing, and living in an urban setting, complicating notions of womanhood in the 1950s.

Further, by writing an opera, Gideon renegotiated the gendered boundaries of musical genre. Citron writes: "Male composers have produced symphonies, operas, and other large-scale pieces in proportionally greater numbers than women, although there is certainly no reason why women cannot write in the large forms."<sup>11</sup> Gideon was not the only woman writing opera in the 1950s; Peggy Glanville-Hicks (*The Transposed Heads*,

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<sup>9</sup> As Ellie Hisama notes, Gideon's personal papers "rewrite the dominant image that has been established." Ellie M. Hisama, *Gendering Musical Modernism: The Music of Ruth Crawford Seeger, Marion Bauer, and Miriam Gideon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 141.

<sup>10</sup> Joanne Meyerowitz, introduction to *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), 4.

<sup>11</sup> Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon*, 130.

1954), Julia Amanda Perry (*The Cask of Amontillado*, 1952), and Louise Talma (*The Alcesteiad*, 1960) all composed operas between 1950 and 1960.<sup>12</sup> By bringing Gideon's opera into public and scholarly discourse, this study not only offers a corrective to the gendered notion that women have not generally written larger works, but also opens the door for scholarship on other operas written by women composers during the postwar era.

## Method

The social and political contexts in which Gideon composed is relevant to her compositional practice, and feminist theory provides a useful tool for the examination of Gideon's opera in relation to social norms in the United States following World War II. As feminist theorist Judith Butler states in *Undoing Gender*, "the viability of our individual personhood is fundamentally dependent on... social norms."<sup>13</sup> Within any social context, certain individuals are regarded as either "human" or "less-than-human," and these distinctions generally mirror race, class, gender and/or ethnicity, establishing structures of power within the norm. This view is particularly germane during the American 1950s given that both the civil rights and women's movements would grow out of the events of this decade. Butler argues that

the power that works in and through such norms... emerges in language in a restrictive way or, indeed, in other modes of articulation as that which tries to stop the articulation as it nevertheless moves forward. That double

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<sup>12</sup> Although the operas by Glanville-Hicks, Perry and Talma received premiere performances, none of these three operas has been subsequently performed. Ammer, *Unsung*, 159, 178, 206.

<sup>13</sup> Judith Butler, *Undoing Gender* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 2.

movement is found in the utterance, the image, the action that articulates the struggle with the norm.<sup>14</sup>

Musical compositions, as modes of articulation, have been sites of resistance within the social norms of the historical period during which they were composed.<sup>15</sup> Opera as a genre is particularly well suited to a study of this struggle for recognition of individual personhood, in that it encompasses utterance—musical and textual—as well as image (setting) and action (staging). Thus, applying a feminist theoretical framework to any opera is viable whether or not the composer is a woman. In the case of *Fortunato*, I have not applied feminist theory to my analysis because Gideon is a woman, but rather because of the particular issues of gender and sexuality that dominate the treatment of several principal characters in the opera, particularly the female characters.

Using feminist theory as a tool for analysis opens up a wide array of disciplinary doors. In this study, musical analyses employing post-tonal theory combine with inquiries based in feminist studies and other methods of cultural study (i.e. disability studies, studies of class and employment in America during the postwar period, and critical race theory). For example, aspects of feminist theory and disability studies complicate the musical analysis of Fortunato's Scene II aria, and deepen our

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<sup>14</sup> Butler, *Undoing Gender*, 13.

<sup>15</sup> Studies of social and/or political resistance as articulated within opera include Naomi André, *Voicing Gender: Castrati, Travesti, and the Second Woman in Early Nineteenth-Century Italian Opera* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006); Catherine Clément, trans. Betsy Wing, *Opera, or the Undoing of Women* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988); Mary Ann Smart, ed. *Siren Songs: Representations of Gender and Sexuality in Opera* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); John Bokina, *Opera and Politics: From Monteverdi to Henze* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997); and Jane F. Fulcher, *The Nation's Image: French Grand Opera as Politics and Politicized Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

understanding of the opera's connection with cultural forces outside of music. Firmly rooted in the idea that each composer leaves a personal imprint on her compositions, this study also acknowledges the importance of exploring the musical language of a neglected work such as *Fortunato*, regardless of its composer's gender.

### ***Fortunato* (1958)**

Gideon fashioned her own libretto for *Fortunato* from Serafín and Joaquín Álvarez Quintero's farce of the same name. The first English translation of *Fortunato*<sup>16</sup> was published in 1918 and the Neighborhood Playhouse in New York City performed the work the same year.<sup>17</sup> New English translations by H. Granville Barker of four Álvarez Quintero plays emerged in 1927, however, which inspired several new productions, including one of *Fortunato* in Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1932. Mills College Theatre produced *Fortunato* in both 1938 and 1947.<sup>18</sup> Thus, both the play and its authors were not unknown to American theatrical audiences in the early 1950s when Gideon was selecting a play for her libretto.

The Álvarez Quintero brothers wrote more than 200 works for the theatre, many of which found a setting in their native Andalusia during the early twentieth century.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Elijah Clarence Hills, "English Translations of Spanish Plays," *Hispania* 3/2 (1920): 100; Serafín and Joaquín Álvarez Quintero, *Four Plays by Serafín and Joaquín Álvarez Quintero in English Versions by Helen and Harley Granville-Barker* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1927).

<sup>17</sup> William V. Jackson, "Modern Spanish Plays Produced in the United States, 1900-1947," *Hispania* 33/2 (1950): 140.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> "Joaquín Quintero, Spanish Writer, 71" in *The New York Times*, 15 June 1944: C2.

Born in 1871 and 1873 respectively, Serafín and Joaquín produced their first play in 1888. *Fortunato*, written in 1912 and set in “early twentieth century Madrid,” drew upon the economic history of the brothers’ homeland. Spain’s economy in the 1900s and 1910s continued to lag behind other Western European countries and the United States. Not only were industrial developments considerably delayed by governmental upheavals including the Spanish-American War of 1898, but also food prices increased drastically during the early years of the twentieth century, leading to widespread poverty<sup>20</sup> which the Álvarez Quintero brothers experienced first-hand in their native Seville.

*Fortunato* centers on the title character, who, desperately poor after having been without work for four years, tries to make an honest living on a wintry day in Madrid.<sup>21</sup> Fortunato encounters individuals of widely varied character and background in each of the three scenes of the opera. Unlike many of his fellow citizens in need, he is unwilling to sacrifice his morals in order to feed his five children, and spends the entirety of the opera looking for work. In the first scene, Fortunato seeks employment at the home of Alberto, a middle-class architect, and Constanza, his gullible wife. Fortunato not only finds that Alberto has no job to offer him, but he also quickly discovers that the fraudulent Don Victorio has arrived first, and has won both sympathy and cash from the generous couple with his outlandish tales of woe. In the second scene, Don Victorio is back on the streets of Madrid, celebrating his financial victory with a healthy serving of wine. Victorio tries to give Fortunato a few pointers about begging, but it is of little use.

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<sup>20</sup> James Simpson, “Economic Development in Spain, 1850-1936,” *The Economic History Review* 50/ 2 (May 1997): 348-59.

<sup>21</sup> My transcription of Gideon’s own synopsis of the opera can be found in Appendix B of this dissertation.

Desperate after several unsuccessful attempts, Fortunato steals from the full collection plate of a blind guitarist, but upon learning that the guitarist has children of his own, Fortunato returns what he had stolen. In the final scene, he replies to an advertisement for an assistant and finds himself at a carnival with the famous female sharpshooter Amaranta. Despite his cowardice, Fortunato accepts the job, looks down the barrel of Amaranta's shotgun and rejoices that he will be able to feed his family after she pays his wages for the day's work. The opera concludes with Amaranta repeatedly shooting at Fortunato as he cries "for my children!"

Gideon's choice of the play *Fortunato* as the basis for her libretto reflects the lively humor often found in her diaries and correspondence.<sup>22</sup> While many of her compositions set contemplative, serious, or religious texts, Gideon's wit comes through in her opera, which maintains the farcical aspects of the play. Yet, Gideon adds emotional depth to several of the principal characters through her addition of several arias composed to original texts written by the composer herself. These arias also reflect significant changes in characterization between play and opera. The female characters Fortunato encounters provide ample commentary on ways of enacting womanhood. Gideon's libretto and score emphasize these varied modes of femininity, which are intimately intertwined with Fortunato's capacity to maintain his high moral standard. Even in the plot synopsis written by Gideon, the composer re-writes and emphasizes certain aspects of the play that reflect her personal writings.

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<sup>22</sup> MGP-NYPL.

Gideon's opera features three scenes in piano-vocal score; only one orchestrated scene is found among her papers.<sup>23</sup> Her musical style is evident in the opera: written in a modern musical idiom that makes extensive use of atonal motives, Gideon combines her own style with the tunes and rhythms of Spanish folk songs. The use of musical motives as the driving force for the opera is apparent within each scene—Gideon does not employ a traditional recitative-aria-ensemble form—and is especially evident in Gideon's use and transformation of certain trichords throughout the individual sections of the piece.

Frequent octave doubling renders her musical language concise, and also provides the singers with a sense of stability when starting pitches are not always readily apparent. The work is not strictly serial, but makes use of serial techniques within the context of Gideon's freely atonal style. Gideon capitalizes on her considerable experience with choral writing by adding a chorus to her opera, but she notes that the chorus parts are optional and may be sung by the primary characters for economy of production.<sup>24</sup> A very brief instrumental introduction precedes each scene. *Fortunato* may be regarded as a central work within Gideon's style and oeuvre, yet it has not been studied in any of the major Gideon sources.

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<sup>23</sup> Though the Gideon collection at the New York Public Library holds only Scene I in full orchestration, some of Gideon's papers remain in her Central Park West apartment. One hopes that the other two scenes may be found among those uncatalogued papers, held by Gideon's step-grandson, Alexander Ewen.

<sup>24</sup> Gideon's choral works before 1958 include *Slow, Fresh Fount* (B. Johnson), 1941; *Sweet Western Wind* (R. Herrick), 1943; *How Goodly are thy Tents* (Ps. LXXXIV), 1947; and *Adon Olam* (Hebrew liturgy), 1954.

### State of Scholarship

An annotated holograph score of Miriam Gideon's *Fortunato* is housed in the Miriam Gideon Papers at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, along with journals, correspondence, and other writings. Ellie M. Hisama's *Gendering Musical Modernism* is the first work to incorporate Gideon's journals into a music theoretical framework. Hisama uses the framework of feminist theory to amplify her analytical standpoint as she provides close readings of "Night is my Sister," a vocal chamber work, and "Esther," one of *Three Biblical Masks* for violin and piano. Hisama's study also provides valuable information from her interviews about Gideon with Milton Babbitt, Leo Kraft, pianist Sahan Arzruni, and Lucille Field Goodman (a student of Gideon's). Marianne Kielian-Gilbert's work also touches on aspects of feminist theory and music theory as applicable to Gideon's vocal chamber music.<sup>25</sup>

Other important studies of Miriam Gideon's works include George Perle's examination of Gideon's style, providing an in-depth analysis of "Hound of Heaven."<sup>26</sup> Judith Pinnolis studies Gideon's contribution to Jewish reform music through the analysis of "Hound of Heaven" and "The Condemned Playground: Hiroshima."<sup>27</sup> Pinnolis has

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<sup>25</sup> Marianne Kielian-Gilbert, "Of Poetics and Poesis, Pleasure and Politics: Music Theory and Modes of the Feminine," *Perspectives of New Music* 32/1 (Winter 1994), 44-67.

<sup>26</sup> George Perle, "The Music of Miriam Gideon," *American Composers Alliance Bulletin* 7/4 (1958).

<sup>27</sup> Judith Pinnolis Fertig, "An analysis of Selected Works of the American Composer Miriam Gideon (1906-) in Light of Contemporary Jewish Musical Trends" (M.A. thesis, University of Cincinnati, 1978).

also recently published an annotated transcript of her 1977 interview with Gideon.<sup>28</sup>

Barbara Petersen, an executive at Broadcast Music, Incorporated, who has followed Gideon's career very closely, explores Gideon's vocal chamber music in a significant article in *The Musical Woman*.<sup>29</sup> Petersen also maintains an archive of Gideon's press clippings and of her correspondence with Gideon, which is housed at BMI.<sup>30</sup>

Dissertations by Stella Bonilla and by Loraine Sims provide a conductor's analysis of Gideon's cantata *The Habitable Earth* and an introduction to Gideon's songs, respectively, while Anne-Margaret Petrie's dissertation examines the relationship of text and music in the songs.<sup>31</sup> Christine Ammer and Jane Weiner LePage have written significant biographical entries about Gideon, and Linda Ardito has written a memorial for Gideon in *Perspectives of New Music* that summarizes biographical information about

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<sup>28</sup> Pinnolis, "A Conversation with Miriam Gideon (1906-1996): Sunday, June 19, 1977" *Musica Judaica: Journal of the American Society for Jewish Music* 17 (2003-2004), 107-142.

<sup>29</sup> Barbara Petersen, "The Vocal Chamber Music of Miriam Gideon" in *The Musical Woman: An International Perspective*, vol. 2, ed. Judith Zaimont, Catherine Overhauser and Jane Gottlieb (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987), 223-255.

<sup>30</sup> In her capacity as an executive at BMI, where she has been Vice President of Classical Music Administration, Petersen took charge of Gideon's performances and royalties during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Petersen's archive contains a series of letters between Gideon and herself during the last years of Gideon's life. Barbara Petersen Archive, Broadcast Music, Incorporated.

<sup>31</sup> Stella Bonilla, "Miriam Gideon's Cantata *The Habitable Earth*: A Conductor's Analysis" (D.M.A. diss., Louisiana State University, 2003); Loraine Sims, "An Introduction to the Songs of Miriam Gideon" (D.M.A. diss., Louisiana State University, 1996); and Anne-Margaret Petrie, "The Relationship of Music to Text in Selected Solo Vocal Works of Miriam Gideon" (Ph.D. diss., University of Oklahoma, 1990).

Gideon in the composer's own words, in addition to stylistic traits and personal attributes.<sup>32</sup>

### Chapter Overview

Following the Introduction (Chapter 1), this study is divided into five chapters and a conclusion. Chapter 2 provides a detailed account of Gideon's biography. This biographical account is unique in its exploration of Gideon's ancestry, family connections, and early life. I also include information from her journals, as well as letters and documents from the papers of Frederic Ewen, Gideon's third husband.<sup>33</sup> Judith Pinnolis's newly published interview with Gideon has also proved a valuable resource for genealogical information.<sup>34</sup> A biographical account, central to my analysis of Gideon's opera, enables the reader to approach the chapters on *Fortunato* with significant knowledge of her life as context.

In Chapter 3, I examine the socio-political context for Gideon's opera through her reception as a composer in New York during the 1950s. Focusing on works other than her opera that premiered and were reviewed between 1950 and 1960 provides a musical context in which to place *Fortunato*. This chapter also takes into account larger

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<sup>32</sup> Ammer, *Unsung*, 293-295; Jane Weiner LePage, *Women Composers, Conductors, and Musicians of the Twentieth Century: Selected Biographies* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1980), 118-141; and Linda Ardito, "Miriam Gideon: a Memorial Tribute" *Perspectives of New Music* 34/2 (Summer 1996), 202-214.

<sup>33</sup> Frederic Ewen Papers, Tamiment Library, New York University, hereafter referred to as FEP-TLNYU.

<sup>34</sup> Pinnolis, "A Conversation with Miriam Gideon," 106-121.

narratives at work in the United States after World War II, in particular notions about gender and sexuality, and the meanings of the word “feminist” to 1950s New Yorkers.

Chapter 4 is the first of three chapters focused on Gideon’s opera, and delves into *Fortunato*’s musical language. I argue that Gideon employs four primary pitch collections in the composition of her opera; this chapter details the properties of those collections and provides examples of how they interact in the opera. Discussion of significant trichords and of the Spanish melodies Gideon uses to add local color also appear in this chapter. Chapter 5 applies the theoretical information provided in the previous chapter to a musical-biographical analysis of several scenes in *Fortunato*. Through the close readings found in Chapter 5, I forge connections between the opera and the composer’s life and personal writings, basing my conclusions on musical evidence. Rather than searching for a musical answer to a biographical question, I have answered musical and dramatic questions with answers found in Gideon’s music.

Chapter 6 links the performer’s role—specifically that of the opera singer—with musical meaning found in the opera. The bodily experience of the singer provides another useful tool for a gendered analysis of *Fortunato*, and in this chapter I connect my own experience performing parts of the opera with my experience as a music historian. The triangulation of performer, composer, and librettist places the singer in a unique position to enact the psychological concept of “utterance”—a deep communication of content and meaning—as put forth by Judith Butler in “Bodily Confessions.”<sup>35</sup> The body, therefore, is present in the analytical apparatus used in this dissertation.

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<sup>35</sup> Judith Butler, *Undoing Gender* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 2.

Appendix A is my transcription of Gideon's journal, titled "1939 Paris," which details her summer in Paris on the cusp of Nazi occupation.<sup>36</sup> This journal not only documents the composer's experience during a particularly complicated time for American musicians abroad—among Gideon's acquaintances in France were David Diamond, Darius Milhaud, Norman Dello Joio, and Nadia Boulanger—but also solidifies Gideon's identity as a Jewish woman in a European city on the brink of war.

Appendix B is Gideon's own plot synopsis of *Fortunato*, followed by my edited transcription of Gideon's piano-vocal score, which, until now, has only been available in handwritten copy. Legible scores are essential to the survival of musical works; the transcription of *Fortunato*, an opera that has never received even a premier performance, may lead to a full-scale production of this rare and personal work. The digitalization of *Fortunato* is emblematic of the central goal of this study: to illuminate a valuable yet unsung American operatic work through an examination of the rich biographical material now available about its composer.

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<sup>36</sup> The original journal is housed among Gideon's other personal writings. (MGP-NYPL).

## CHAPTER 2

### BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

In a dream journal kept by Miriam Gideon in the early 1950s, she writes of a “captive audience: perhaps I play this role, with Father the play (main actor), mother the Greek chorus (comments but never aids action), myself witness and baffled.”<sup>1</sup> Gideon kept journals not as a daily routine, but rather, to record her thoughts during what I believe were intense periods of her life. The statement above reveals her desire to understand the family dynamics in the Gideon household, the complex and sometimes disturbing environment in which she grew up, and the way her upbringing affected her life both personally and professionally. Although Gideon gave numerous interviews which were subsequently published, her own accounts of her life vary in detail from interview to interview, resulting in a carefully constructed public persona that, when considered in light of her journals, was sometimes at odds with her private opinions, thoughts, and beliefs. This chapter will bring together many primary and secondary sources, some which have only been made available recently, in an attempt to map the life of an American composer.<sup>2</sup>

Gideon’s father, Abram Gideon (1867-1952) was one of nine children born to Bavarian immigrants Louis Gideon (b. 1836) and Henrietta Brück (or Brook) Gideon (b.

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<sup>1</sup> MGP-NYPL. In this study, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization remain intact, preserving the text as it appears in Gideon’s journals.

<sup>2</sup> In order to prevent confusion, I shall refer only to Miriam Gideon as “Gideon;” all others with that surname will be referred to by first name only.

1839).<sup>3</sup> Louis and Henrietta settled among the many Germans in Louisville, Kentucky, a Southern town whose architectural façade still reflects the influx of German immigrants during the nineteenth century. According to Judith Pinnolis, “Louis served in the Confederate Army in the 34<sup>th</sup> Kentucky Infantry as a private during the Civil War.”<sup>4</sup>

The Shoninger family also resided in Louisville during the late nineteenth century. Henry and Sophia Shoninger, both born in 1833, came to the United States separately from Bavaria. Henry was naturalized in 1858, approximately two years after his marriage to Sophia.<sup>5</sup> Miriam Gideon’s mother, Henrietta “Hattie” Shoninger (b. 1867), was one of the seven surviving children of Sophia and Henry. The Shoningers and the Gideons, all Bavarian Jews from the same small town, would have been, at very least, acquaintances, although public records indicate that Hattie was born in New York City.<sup>6</sup> Hattie and Abram, who were the same age, married in December, 1903 in Chicago, where their engagement had been printed “In the World of Society” in the *Chicago Daily Tribune* on November 22 of the same year.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Judith Shira Pinnolis, “A Conversation with Miriam Gideon (1906-1996): Sunday, June 19, 1977,” *Musica Judaica: Journal of the American Society for Jewish Music* 17 (2003-2004), 112-13. I am indebted to Judith Pinnolis for her genealogical research on Miriam Gideon’s family.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. Pinnolis noted in a personal conversation in June, 2007 that genealogical and governmental records for Sophia Shoninger were the most difficult to locate of all Gideon’s grandparents’, most likely because she came to the United States using her maiden name, which is as yet unknown.

<sup>6</sup> Miriam Gideon’s birth certificate. (FEP-TLNYU).

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. See “In the World of Society,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, November 22, 1903: 20; “Marriage Licenses,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, (December 23, 1903):11. It is likely that

Before having children, Abram and Hattie were both engaged in the teaching profession.<sup>8</sup> Although no public record exists of Hattie's teaching career, Gideon mentions her "mother's interest in teaching" in her 1950s diaries.<sup>9</sup> Gideon's father studied at Harvard, where he took graduate classes as a non-matriculated student, and at the University of Cincinnati, where he earned a Bachelor's degree in 1892.<sup>10</sup> According to Gideon,

My father was a graduate of Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati [1890] and an ordained Rabbi [1894]. But, my father has sort of drifted away from [religion]. He was interested in philosophy. As a matter of fact, after he was ordained, he studied philosophy. He went to Germany and got his doctorate in philosophy at Marburg.... He taught [philosophy at

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the Shoningers and Gideons arranged the marriage between Abram and Hattie when the two were children in Louisville.

<sup>8</sup> Biographical information on Gideon may be found in Christine Ammer, *Unsung: A History of Women in American Music* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980), 293-295; Linda Ardito, "Miriam Gideon: a Memorial Tribute" *Perspectives of New Music* 34/2 (Summer 1996), 202- 214; Ellie M. Hisama, *Gendering Musical Modernism: The Music of Ruth Crawford Seeger, Marion Bauer, and Miriam Gideon* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 6-7, 139-46; Jane Weiner LePage, *Women Composers, Conductors, and Musicians of the Twentieth Century: Selected Biographies* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1980), 118-141; and Julie Anne Sadie and Rhian Samuel, ed. "Miriam Gideon," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Women Composers* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1995), 185.

<sup>9</sup> MGP-NYPL; see also Hisama, *Gendering Musical Modernism*, 140; and Miriam Gideon's Birth Certificate.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 114; also, Judith Pinnolis Collection on Miriam Gideon, hereafter referred to as JPC-MG.

Colorado State Teachers College from 1903-1912] after he came back to this country.<sup>11</sup>

Thus, after their marriage in Chicago, Abram and Hattie made their home on the campus of Colorado State Teachers College in Greeley, Colorado, where their first daughter, Judith, was born on October 22, 1904.<sup>12</sup>

According to the Certificate of Birth issued by the State of Colorado, Miriam Sophia Gideon was born without complications at 6:00 AM on October 23, 1906 in her parents' home at 1863 Tenth Avenue in Greeley.<sup>13</sup> Hattie's "usual occupation" is listed as "Teacher & Housewife," while Abram listed "Educator" as his primary employment, signing the document "Abram Gideon, Ph.D." Gideon lived with her sister and parents in Greeley until she was six years old. Of her life in the Colorado town, Gideon recalls that

We lived right on the campus.... Right behind the college were some trees and stuff, and the mountains in the back.... And I even went back to the house where I was born.... I think I would say I really had a happy childhood. It may not be so, if I really go into it. But, you know, it seems so.<sup>14</sup>

Since neither of Gideon's parents were musicians, her only musical training in those early years was at school, where, according to Gideon, children learned solfège—she specified

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<sup>11</sup> Quoted in Pinnolis, "A Conversation with Miriam Gideon," 113-14.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 113.

<sup>13</sup> FEP-TLNYU.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 114. Gideon's journals reveal a more troubled childhood than she revealed to her interviewers, but she subtly alludes to that reality in this statement from her interview with Pinnolis.

“moveable *do*”—at the same time they learned reading. She attributes her ease with sight-reading to this early training.<sup>15</sup> When Gideon’s family left Greeley in 1912, her musical education continued. While her father taught in Los Angeles at the Harvard School, Gideon enjoyed the player piano in their new home in California, but did not have formal lessons.<sup>16</sup> For a period, Abram changed jobs frequently and the family gradually migrated East. During the 1913-14 academic year, Abram taught at the University of Wyoming, and then worked as a reporter.<sup>17</sup> His obituary in the *New York Times* also indicates that he worked on the Simplified Spelling Board,<sup>18</sup> an organization supported by Andrew Carnegie and linked with the Chicago Tribune.<sup>19</sup> In retrospect, Gideon expressed that she thought her anxieties about traveling were “partly assoc[iated] with early changes of residence and father’s upsetting transfer from one place to another.”<sup>20</sup> For a young Gideon, uprooted from Greeley, the only home she had ever known, it must have been a relief to arrive in Chicago, where her maternal grandparents lived.

Gideon’s piano study began in earnest during her family’s brief stay in Chicago in 1914-15, when she was eight to nine years old. Gideon related to Linda Ardito that

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 113.

<sup>16</sup> Ardito, “Miriam Gideon,” 205.

<sup>17</sup> Pinnolis, “An Interview with Miriam Gideon,” 115.

<sup>18</sup> “Dr. Gideon Favored Simplified Spelling” *New York Times*, (December 18, 1952): 29.

<sup>19</sup> John H. Vivian, “Spelling an End to Orthographical Reforms: Newspaper Response to the 1906 Roosevelt Simplifications,” *American Speech* 54/3 (Autumn, 1979), 163.

<sup>20</sup> MGP-NYPL.

“when we moved to Chicago [and we were] living with relatives, one of whom was a pianist, I did learn to read music. It seems to me that the first piece of music I learned to play was a Beethoven Sonatina.”<sup>21</sup> She also recalled early memories of Jewish music-making at her grandparents’ home in Chicago: “I have some very early recollections of hearing and singing some traditional Jewish songs on Friday nights at the home of my maternal grandfather....”<sup>22</sup> After a year in Chicago, Abram relocated his family to 500 Van Cortlandt Park Avenue in Yonkers, a town on the Hudson River north of New York City.<sup>23</sup> Gideon states, “By that time, [Gideon was ten] I was addicted to music.”<sup>24</sup> In Yonkers, Gideon studied with the pianist Hans Barth, who required an audition/interview with students before they were accepted into his studio. Gideon’s interview with Barth was memorable: “He gave me a Chopin piece that I didn’t know and I transposed it at sight before reading it through in the original key. I thought that was what he wanted. Of course he was doubly surprised and said he would take me on as a student and so he did.”<sup>25</sup> Gideon’s parents also treated their daughters to other musical experiences, such as attending a series of chamber music concerts at the local high school: “[A]s soon as I heard string quartets—Haydn or Mozart or whatever—I was on cloud something.”<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Quoted in Ardito, “Miriam Gideon,” 205.

<sup>22</sup> Albert Weisser, “An Interview With Miriam Gideon,” *Dimensions in American Judaism* 4/3 (Spring 1970), 38.

<sup>23</sup> Pinnolis, “A Conversation with Miriam Gideon,” 115.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Quoted in Ardito, “Miriam Gideon,” 205.

<sup>26</sup> Pinnolis, “A Conversation with Miriam Gideon,” 116.

Gideon also particularly remembers hearing Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* on one of the rare occasions when her parents would take her and Judith to the opera.<sup>27</sup>

On his occasional visits to his brother Abram's home in Yonkers, Gideon's uncle, Henry Louis Gideon (1877-1955), noticed that his niece, Miriam, had an exceptional interest in music. According to Gideon, "[m]y uncle semi-adopted me. That is, I went to spend summers with him in Boston. He was Director of Music at Temple Israel there. He was a fine pianist and organist...."<sup>28</sup> In a slightly different account, Gideon elaborates on her "adoption" by Uncle Harry (as she called him), adding that when she "was about thirteen or so he asked my parents if I could stay with him."<sup>29</sup> Gideon did spend her high school years with her uncle, attending Girls High in Boston and graduating at age 15. Although the arrangement was fruitful in terms her musical education, some family relationships did not weather well during Gideon's stay in Boston. Her sister Judith was left at home in Yonkers, where Abram was in ill health; Uncle Harry's wife, Constance Ramsey Gideon, left him during the time that Gideon was a guest in their home.<sup>30</sup> Whether Gideon's presence and the attentions she received from Harry were a factor in the breaking up of his marriage is unknown, but Gideon refers in her diary to her "Uncle—blind actor in dream, who spoils performance for all—I identify with him in

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Quoted in Pinnolis, "A Conversation with Miriam Gideon," 115.

<sup>30</sup> Quoted in Ardito, "Miriam Gideon," 205.

sense that I fear also to disregard my failings and pay the penalty.”<sup>31</sup> The “penalty” for her uncle may have been the dissolution of his marriage to Constance.

Gideon’s relationship with her sister Judith also changed during this time, and the strain between the sisters is often evidenced in Gideon’s personal writings. In the 1950s she writes, for example, of a “[d]ream of jealousy of other girls; often drab ones: my early rivalry with J.”<sup>32</sup> Judging from Gideon’s letters and journals, their relationship was somewhat rocky throughout their lives, but regained strength as the two women grew older. She describes Judith in one entry as “earnest, undeviating, an ‘express train,’” whereas she sought humor and mischief in the same situations.<sup>33</sup> In another entry from the same journal, Gideon writes:

I worry about J., lest the strain is too much but she may very well go on “as is,” letting off enough steam to avoid an explosion but not enough to resolve anything or a break may lead to more insight or receptiveness to psychotherapy. The heredity business still bothers me, but she and I are different. What difficulties I have might have been avoided with wiser parents.<sup>34</sup>

Here, Gideon alludes to the fact that her journal is part of a course of psychotherapy she undertook in the early 1950s. “The heredity business” refers to her father’s illness, which was both physical and mental, during Gideon’s teens and twenties. Judith Gideon surely

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<sup>31</sup> MGP-NYPL.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

felt abandoned when her sister departed the household for Boston, leaving Judith with a father who was on the brink of mental breakdown.<sup>35</sup> Gideon’s personal and professional opportunities during the sisters’ teen years and beyond—such as going to live in Boston with Uncle Harry—also gave Gideon a sense of anxiety with regard to Judith. She writes: “I have feared being greedy, having something J. doesn’t have—like children. Have felt guilty of having too much.”<sup>36</sup> Gideon also felt a “[s]ense of doom. Fate, unchangeability may come partly from J’s refusal ever to accept amends—image of heartless selfish sister is preserved by her & her friends no matter what I do—they will not change.”<sup>37</sup> But Judith may not have understood fully the situation into which Gideon had been placed; to live with a married couple that would soon divorce cannot have been entirely pleasant, whatever the dynamic between Gideon and Uncle Harry. Gideon writes (of her first and second husbands): “did I not find each a trap and escape to another—like father to uncle.” Thus, because of the complicated circumstances of each of their lives, a rift began to separate the Gideon sisters when Gideon left for high school and college, deepening as Gideon’s accomplishments as a composer developed.

Gideon related to Judith Pinnolis that her uncle was not her teacher while in Boston, but that many singers would come to the house for lessons with him. In this way, she had a thorough introduction to the art song repertory: “A lot of vocal music, which may be the one reason I’ve written so much.”<sup>38</sup> She also remembers listening to her

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<sup>35</sup> JPC-MG.

<sup>36</sup> MGP-NYPL.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Quoted in Pinnolis, “A Conversation with Miriam Gideon,” 116.

uncle's temple choir and sometimes participating in the services as an organist or pianist.<sup>39</sup> Gideon continued her piano studies with Felix Fox, who in Gideon's memory was a very fine pianist but not particularly enthusiastic about teaching her.<sup>40</sup> Although through her high school years, she had given only passing thought to composition in the form of a few songs modeled after the German Lieder she heard in Uncle Harry's house, Gideon notes that "finally, I was in my late teens I think, I wrote a song, and that seemed different from anything I'd written. It seemed really quite special. From that time on I was thoroughly engrossed in composing."<sup>41</sup> Another account draws Gideon's distinct and strong interest in poetry into the equation: Gideon was "already addicted to poetry, and when I came across a poem that genuinely moved me... something in me was ready to latch on to it, and I realized that something had to come into being that had not been there before. From that point on, whether I was working with words or not, I was a composer."<sup>42</sup>

After graduating from high school, Gideon attended Boston University, where she studied in the music department but did not pursue a music major. Gideon describes Boston University's music program in the 1920s as a "one man department," with John

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<sup>39</sup> Another musical effect of her stay at her uncle's house and participation in services was that Gideon became very familiar with the music associated with the Jewish reform service. Weisser, "An Interview," 40. In the interview conducted by Judith Pinnolis, Gideon notes that in Temple Israel "they did Lewandowski and Sulzer and so on—the nineteenth-century services" as well as Bloch's *Sacred Service*. Pinnolis, "A Conversation with Miriam Gideon," 117.

<sup>40</sup> Ardito, "Miriam Gideon," 206.

<sup>41</sup> Quoted in Pinnolis, "A Conversation with Miriam Gideon," 116.

<sup>42</sup> Page, "Gideon and Talma," H23.

Marshall at the helm; she learned harmony and counterpoint but the class offerings in music were, understandably, quite limited.<sup>43</sup> Her love of words and poetry prompted her to study and major in French literature, with a minor in mathematics.<sup>44</sup> She graduated in 1926 at age 19, and finally returned home to New York. In an undated letter addressed to Gideon at her parents' home in Yonkers, Mrs. Marjorie Weaver, Gideon's cello teacher in Boston writes:

Dear Miriam: I'm so sorry you've gone away!... but alas, when I talked with your uncle he said you had gone to New York.... Also I just wanted to whisper that if you find things not going as you want there that I hope you'll come back to Boston—to Cambridge if you like and have a room at the top of 119 Walker Street...should you want to come back and be “on your own” and not with “Unk.” I should be happy to have you up top here. It's been such a real joy to teach you cello and to watch you blossoming into a rare, fine woman, and I hope it's friendship just begun.<sup>45</sup>

Mrs. Weaver's letter not only reveals that Gideon had been studying cello in addition to piano, but also that if Gideon should return to Boston, staying with her uncle might not be the most appealing option for her. Unfortunately, Mrs. Weaver was entirely correct in her perception that things in New York were not what Gideon would “want.” Although in interviews, Gideon alluded only to her father's illness and to the “somewhat dismal”

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<sup>43</sup> Ardito, 206.

<sup>44</sup> Pinnolis, 118.

<sup>45</sup> FEP-TLNYU.

Yonkers household where her father “really wasn’t very well,”<sup>46</sup> the situation was, in actuality, much more dire than she had expressed. On September 12, 1926, a brief article with the harrowing headline “Teacher Found With Throat Cut” appeared in the *New York Times*, stating that

Abram Gideon, a teacher of modern languages, was found yesterday with his throat cut in his home, 500 Van Cortlandt Park Avenue, Yonkers. He was taken to St. Joseph’s Hospital, where it was said his condition was critical. Police said Gideon had been despondent.<sup>47</sup>

A similar article appeared in the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, with the pronouncement that Abram had attempted suicide.<sup>48</sup> In the face of this unspeakable and very public situation, Gideon looked for employment. Getting a job would not only take her out of the fray of household turmoil, but would also help with any trouble the Gideons may have had making ends meet during Abram’s convalescence. While earning money as an assistant at a doctor’s office, Gideon took classes at New York University towards a teaching certificate, in order that she might secure a position with the public schools.<sup>49</sup> She took music classes with Marion Bauer and composition lessons with Martin Bernstein, who

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<sup>46</sup> Ardito, “Miriam Gideon,” 206.

<sup>47</sup> “Teacher Found With Throat Cut,” *New York Times*, September 12, 1926:8.

<sup>48</sup> “Simplified Spelling Move Leader Attempts Suicide,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, September 12, 1926:20. I thank Judith Pinnolis for starting me on the trail to these articles.

<sup>49</sup> Ardito, 206.

found that Gideon had talent and told her that she was “a composer!”<sup>50</sup> Gideon related that Bernstein’s encouragement meant a great deal to her and helped to solidify an already strong interest in composition, crystallizing her aspiration to teach at the university level.<sup>51</sup>

Following her coursework at New York University, Gideon spent several months abroad in Paris, where she kept a journal from May 9 to June 7, 1927.<sup>52</sup> The journal entries do not indicate why she had traveled to Europe, but rather, what activities she enjoyed in Paris, whom she had met, and allusions to love affairs. Gideon also wrote of a fear that her father should die while she was away, a fear that was well founded given the events of the past year. Gideon must have become engaged shortly after her return from Paris, because a small, delicately engraved card dated simply “1928” announces the marriage of Dr. and Mrs. Abram Gideon’s daughter Miriam to Gaylord McIlvaine Du Bois.<sup>53</sup> Du Bois (1899-1993), whose photo appears in Figure 2.2, was a writer and graduate of Boston University, where the two met in the foreign language department.

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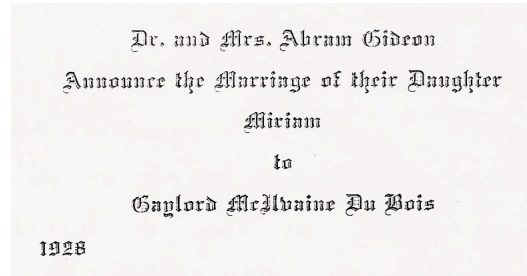
<sup>50</sup> Hisama, *Gendering Musical Modernism*, 6; Rosenberg and Rosenberg, *The Music Makers* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), 62.

<sup>51</sup> Rosenberg and Rosenberg, *The Music Makers*, 62.

<sup>52</sup> MGP-NYPL.

<sup>53</sup> FEP-TLNYU.

**Figure 2.1. Card announcing Gideon's first marriage.<sup>54</sup>**



**Figure 2.2. Gaylord McIlvaine Du Bois (undated photo circa late 1920s).<sup>55</sup>**



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<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Photo courtesy of Du Bois's granddaughter, Wendy Hoffman.

Du Bois, born in Massachusetts, is most famous for writing the dialogue in over three thousand comic books, including comics featuring well-known characters such as *Tarzan*, *Roy Rogers*, and the *Lone Ranger*.<sup>56</sup> Du Bois shared Gideon's love of poetry and language, as is evidenced in two poems written for Gideon during their brief marriage. The first poem, transcribed in Figure 2.3, celebrates the heritage of Gideon's first name in an ode to her personal strength. But the poet Du Bois also regards his "Miriam" as a wild, untamed "daughter of bards," as though he cannot grasp her, in any sense of that word. If Du Bois seems to hold Gideon at a distance in "To Miriam," the chasm grows even wider in another poem written on December 28, 1932, entitled "When you're away." In his poem, Du Bois has a mock conversation with his cat about whether or not the mistress of the house will forget them; the 1932 poem indicates that the two were still married, if frequently apart. In a letter from the same period, Gideon's mother wrote with her own news, then expressed that she was "glad you and Gay had a little visit and that he is happy in his work. My dearest love to him!"<sup>57</sup> From this letter, addressed to "Miss Miriam Gideon" at her longtime address of 410 Central Park West, we can surmise that Gideon and Du Bois were not together, but rather that Gideon was on a hiking trip with a female friend named Ruth.

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<sup>56</sup> Gaylord M. Du Bois's granddaughter Wendy Hoffman runs a website that displays the fruits of her considerable research on her grandfather's life and work. Wendy Hoffman, "Research on Gaylord Du Bois," <http://gaylorddubois.com/> (accessed September 6, 2007).

<sup>57</sup> FEP-TLNYU. The letter is dated July 28, 1931.

**Figure 2.3. “To Miriam” by Gaylord Du Bois.**

TO MIRIAM

Flower of a chosen seed  
     Scattered on strong earth,  
 Hardened by strife and need,  
     Fruitful in draught and dearth,---

Child of a dauntless race,  
     Stubborn of hope, and bred  
 Long with the strength to face  
     Forward with tireless tread,---

Daughter of bards and seers,  
     Rich in your lifeblood flow  
 Mingled their songs and tears,  
     Wonder and love and woe!

Bred of their lofty stem  
     Deep in your heart’s desire,  
 Sired by the soul of them,  
     Lit from their holy fire,

Beauty and faith and power  
     Burn in a timeless flame.  
 These are your ancient dower,---  
     These and your name! (By her husband, G. du B., August 24, 1931.)<sup>58</sup>

According to Du Bois, the marriage ended in 1933, though no public documents have been found to confirm that date. In a letter to his niece, DuBois explained the circumstances of his first marriage to Gideon. He writes: “College was finished in 1928. Various erotic adventures culminated in marriage to an agnostic Jewess whose career was music. After 5 years of marriage, in 1933, my wife’s erotic adventures broke that up.”<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Both poems, “To Miriam” and “When you’re away,” were graciously sent to me by Du Bois’s granddaughter, Wendy Hoffman.

<sup>59</sup> According to Hoffman, the marriage had been something of a scandal in the family where young Gaylord had been groomed for the ministry. Personal e-mail communication with Wendy Hoffman, received Sunday, September 9, 2007. Hoffman

The nature of Gideon's "erotic adventures" is unclear, and this note clearly bears only one side of the Gideon/Du Bois story. What is certain is that Gideon was remarried by 1939 to Peter Rosoff (b. unknown-1979).<sup>60</sup>

During the early 1930s, Gideon's compositional career started in earnest. Rather than pursuing a career as a music teacher, as she had initially thought after college, Gideon began private composition lessons with the eminent Russian Jewish composer/conductor/author Lazare Saminsky. At Gideon's first interview with Saminsky, she recalls that "He asked me to do a four-part harmony exercise and he looked at it and said 'my dear, child, you don't know the first thing about harmony.' This was not true, I can tell you that."<sup>61</sup> Saminsky had studied with Prokofiev, who was a student of Rimsky-Korsakov, and was, in Gideon's words, a "first rate musician;"<sup>62</sup> Gideon worked a great deal on harmony, counterpoint, and orchestration during the three year period (1931-34) she studied with Saminsky.<sup>63</sup> In a warm letter written to Gideon during their second year of study, Saminsky writes:

Please kindly forgive the delay in sending you the corrected "May the Words" and quartet-opening (I shall send the fugue later). The proofs of

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also believes that several letters from Gideon burned in 1957 along with Du Bois's house in Alberta.

<sup>60</sup> Gideon's 1939 Paris journal includes references to her husband, Peter Rosoff. Her personal papers do not contain documentation of her marriages or divorces (MGP-NYPL); many documents pertaining to Gideon's legal affairs are among Frederic Ewen's papers, but none pertaining to either of her first two marriages.

<sup>61</sup> Quoted in Ardito, "Miriam Gideon," 206.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Pinnolis, "A Conversation," 119.

my book begin to pour in, and with other things my hands are more than full... Have, however, no misgivings! It gives me the greatest pleasure to look over your scores and to guide you in your work; I like everything about both pieces: the graceful and fresh turn of your themes and their harmony, your excellent taste and decided polyphonic gift. And I miss your very sweet and very intelligent self greatly. Cordially yours, L.S.<sup>64</sup>

After three years of teaching Gideon, Saminsky declared that he had taught her to the limit of his ability and that she needed to study with someone else. Miriam Gideon commented that this statement was “ridiculous, because he had a lot to teach. He was very interested in my development.”<sup>65</sup> Gideon let Saminsky decide whether she would study with Arnold Schoenberg or Roger Sessions. Her teacher reasoned that since Schoenberg was likely to leave the East Coast in favor of California, Gideon ought to study with Sessions, which she did. Saminsky proved to be a vital connection with the world of Jewish Music, however, and the two maintained a cordial, professional relationship for years after their lessons had ceased.<sup>66</sup>

Gideon’s composition lessons with Sessions, which started in 1935, were quite different than those she had experienced with Saminsky. She remembers:

He saw us in groups, and that was very stimulating because we had some interesting people in those groups at that time... Milton Babbitt, David

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<sup>64</sup> Letter dated July 18, 1932, from Saminsky’s residence in Port Chester, New York (Westchester County) MGP-NYPL.

<sup>65</sup> Quoted in Pinnolis, “A Conversation,” 119.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

Diamond, Leon Kirchner, Edward Cone, Vivian Fine, Hugo Weisgall, and several more.... He thought it would be a good idea for some of these young composers to organize a kind of apprentice group around the ISCM [International Society for Contemporary Music].... We called ourselves the “Forum Group” and... sometimes we were performed by the parent group itself.<sup>67</sup>

Gideon names “proportion”<sup>68</sup> in composition as the single, outstanding skill she learned in studying with Sessions, in addition to making valuable career connections with other young composers. She had the opportunity to meet more artists in the summer of 1936, which she spent at the MacDowell Colony. Among the composers she met that summer were several women: Marion Bauer (whom she had met at New York University), Amy Beach, Mabel Daniels, and Mary Howe.<sup>69</sup> During this period, Gideon began to compose some of her earliest works. A set of *German Songs* written between 1930 and 1937 establish her as a vocal composer, and the 1936 *Three Cornered Pieces* for flute, clarinet, and piano—probably composed while in residence at the McDowell Colony—reveal an early interest in chamber music composition.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Quoted in Pinnolis, “A Conversation,” 121.

<sup>68</sup> Ardito, “Miriam Gideon,” 207.

<sup>69</sup> Pinnolis, 121.

<sup>70</sup> Ellen Dale Lerner, “The Music of Selected Contemporary American Women Composers: A Stylistic Analysis” (master’s thesis, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, 1976), 70. Lerner’s thesis, unlike many of the published works containing lists of Gideon’s compositions, includes Gideon’s earliest, unpublished works.

Through 1943, Gideon was a student of Roger Sessions, and was thus involved with the Forum Group and their musical activities. In the summer of 1939, Gideon traveled to Paris for what was to be a long-term stay, but one that was cut short by the events of World War II in Europe. Gideon was simply in the wrong place at the wrong time. Although Paris was not invaded until May of 1940 by the Nazi military forces, the city was already in a state of preparation for attack by the time Gideon left in September of 1939, and her journal gives a firsthand account of a city in panic. Early in her trip, however, Gideon was able to enjoy Paris, brush up on her French, and meet with composers of her acquaintance including Norman Dello Joio and David Diamond. With her on the trip was her second husband, Peter Rosoff. Rosoff's sister, Sophia, was a noted pianist and piano teacher, and thus Gideon may have met Peter through his sister; Gideon's personal papers contain several of her poems, and in her will, Gideon left Sophia her piano and clavichord keyboard.<sup>71</sup> Peter Rosoff was involved in finance and economics, and had an office job in Paris during their stay. Gideon references "the office" numerous times in her journal, with a kind of contempt in her writerly voice. She notes on Saturday, June 3, "I found Pete waiting impatiently. A nap while he went back to the office."<sup>72</sup> And on June 4, "Pete had to go to the office, after all, so that's that."<sup>73</sup> Peter had some musical training, however, and Gideon writes on June 13 that she "walked down Rue de Rivoli for the first time. In evening played Handel and Corelli

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<sup>71</sup> Barbara Petersen's collection of papers in regard to Miriam Gideon, a BMI artist. The collection is in Petersen's possession at BMI in New York.

<sup>72</sup> MGP-NYPL.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

with Pete.”<sup>74</sup> Gideon spent a good amount of time composing while abroad, working specifically on an unnamed Piano Sonata, which may have evolved into part of her *Sketches for Piano* (Suite No. 2), composed between 1937 and 1940.

Gideon had also hoped to hear Nadia Boulanger lecture at Fontainebleau during her stay in Paris, but through an almost comedic series of events, Gideon’s many attempts to attend Boulanger’s talks went awry due to missed trains, changed times, and miscommunications. On July 10, 1939, Gideon writes: “Missed the train again to Fontainebleau. There is a destiny separating me from Boulanger.”<sup>75</sup> In a letter from August 12, 1939 to Gideon in Paris (which she received on August 22, “a long swell letter from Roger!”<sup>76</sup>), Sessions comments:

I am amused to hear of your possibly going to Fontainebleau and coming face to face with the famous “Nadia.” If you do so you will feel her extraordinary charm + her vitality + enthusiasm as well. Naturally I hope you will not come away feeling that R.S. has perhaps behaved in a somewhat small way in feeling + in sometimes talking about her as he does!<sup>77</sup>

Sessions clearly had a negative opinion of Boulanger, but wanted to make sure Gideon had room to formulate her own thoughts about the “master teacher” of the twentieth

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> MGP-NYPL.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Andrea Olmstead, ed. *The Correspondence of Roger Sessions* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1992), 317.

century. When, finally, Gideon did manage to hear Boulanger speak on Monday, July 17, 1939, she remarked in her journal: “Heard Boulanger for the first time. Inspired and inspiring with her passionate love of music, her endless flow of associations musical and literary; too frequently she winds up to the Holy Spirit, however.”<sup>78</sup> And with this entry, Boulanger is not mentioned again in the journal. On August 24, 1939, Gideon reports the signing of the Soviet-German pact: “a terrible day. We were fitted for gas masks.”<sup>79</sup> The following day, she received a letter from the American Embassy advising her to return to the United States: “the weather, the neighborhood, the people—everything is so sinister and calm.”<sup>80</sup> Gideon’s sister Judith arrived with her friend Etta in Paris on August 28, but the party had to find return passage almost immediately. Gideon and her husband left Paris shortly thereafter on September 1, 1939, and arrived safely in the U.S. on September 30.<sup>81</sup>

Gideon’s compositional style solidified during the period following her 1939 adventure in Paris. According to composer George Perle, she “found her true compositional voice in ‘free atonality’ and did not continue into what for the Vienna School and its disciples was the next historical step, the twelve-tone system.”<sup>82</sup> Gideon remained a student of Sessions until 1943, and the following year accepted her first

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<sup>78</sup> MGP-NYPL.

<sup>79</sup> MGP-NYPL.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> George Perle, “A Tribute to Miriam Gideon,” memorial statement read at American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters meeting, New York City, 1996, 1.

teaching appointment at City University of New York's Brooklyn College, where she taught music classes for the next ten years.<sup>83</sup> In 1942, Gideon decided to pursue a Master of Music degree in Musicology at Columbia University. After studying with Professor Paul Henry Lang for almost four years, Gideon asked him what thesis topic might be appropriate. He gently suggested that Gideon not pick a topic that dealt with contemporary music because of his own lack of interest in that area, and steered Gideon in the direction of her thesis on W.A. Mozart's string quintets.<sup>84</sup> Gideon's degree was conferred in 1946, when she was forty years old. Gideon makes no mention of her somewhat protracted period as a student in interviews or writings; thus, she must have been unperturbed by her unusually late entry into the master's program at Columbia.

During the period between 1940 and 1948, Gideon and Rosoff's marriage deteriorated, and they divorced.<sup>85</sup> With her second marriage behind her and a master's degree on her *curriculum vitae*, Gideon fully invested her time in teaching and composition. She had begun to receive commissions for her work, and several important pieces were published in the early 1940s by American Composers Editions, including the Lyric Piece for String Orchestra (1941); *The Hound of Heaven* (Francis Thompson) for Voice and Chamber Ensemble (1945), commissioned by Temple Emanu-El in New York, where Saminsky was music director; the Quartet for Strings (1946); and the Canzona for

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<sup>83</sup> Hisama, *Gendering Musical Modernism*, 7.

<sup>84</sup> Ardito, "Miriam Gideon," 207.

<sup>85</sup> FEP-TLNYU. No specific date of Gideon's divorce from Rosoff has been found. Her relationship with Frederic Ewen began in 1948, and Ewen's letters to her allude only to *his* divorce. Thus, it is likely that Gideon was divorced before 1948.

Piano (1945).<sup>86</sup> In 1947, Gideon accepted her second college teaching appointment at City College in Manhattan. “How Goodly are Thy Tents,” one of Gideon’s most frequently performed choral works, dates from the same year.

While teaching at Brooklyn College in the late 1940s, Gideon met Frederic Ewen, an English professor and scholar of Heinrich Heine and Bertolt Brecht. Ewen, like Gideon, had been married twice before, and his second divorce was still in process when in 1948 he wrote to Gideon at her summer residence in Aspen. Apparently, Gideon had let Ewen reside in her apartment at 410 Central Park West on the condition that he do some painting on his breaks from writing. On July 7, 1948, Ewen wrote his first letter to Gideon, his “darling Miriam,” noting in it that “the matter of Berenice [his second wife] is being taken care of,” indicating that he was still technically married at the time of their courtship. Divorce records from Ewen’s papers clarify the letter’s statement: Ewen’s first marriage, to Dorothea Werker, had resulted in a son, Joel Joachim (d. 1990) to whom Gideon refers in her diaries. That marriage was officially dissolved on October 17, 1940; eight years later, Ewen’s second marriage (to Berenice) ended in a divorce finalized on November 12, 1948.<sup>87</sup> In his letter of July 7, an elated Ewen writes “What a summer this is going to be, sweetheart! I can’t really tell you how I feel because I’m somewhat amazed myself. It’s different, that’s all I know now.” After two unsuccessful marriages each, certainly both Gideon and Ewen had high hopes for their relationship to be something “different” than either had yet experienced. The three additional letters from Ewen to Gideon written during the summer of 1948 are filled with the excitement of

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<sup>86</sup> Repertory list prepared by Gideon for Barbara Petersen at BMI, from the BMI archive.

<sup>87</sup> FEP-TLNYU.

a new romance, fueled by the separation and by the anticipation of Ewen's train trip to visit Gideon in Aspen. Many protestations of love and desire fill the typed pages of the letters, as well as plans for the future of their relationship. In a letter dated July 13, Ewen exclaims: "My thoughts are of you constantly—of the present and the future. And what plans! I'm almost ashamed you'll think me crazy."<sup>88</sup> Gideon and Ewen married on the anniversary of Beethoven's birthday, December 16, 1949 in a civil ceremony.<sup>89</sup> Their marriage lasted until Ewen's death in 1988.

Gideon's new marriage did anything but put a damper on her compositional output. A period of great productivity began in 1948 with the composition of several chamber works, including her *Allegro* for woodwinds, and Sonata for Viola and Piano, both from 1948. The following year, Gideon continued her composition of chamber music with a *Divertimento* for woodwinds, her *Fantasy on a Javanese Motive* for cello and piano—the first of several pieces that would draw upon world music traditions—and the *Sonatina (Hommage à ma jeunesse)* for two pianos. Gideon's compositional fervor would not wane during the next decade. Chapter 3 is entirely devoted to Gideon's life and works in the 1950s.

In 1955, after Ewen and Gideon had both lost their teaching positions because of Ewen's communist leanings, fellow composer Hugo Weisgall offered Gideon a turning

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Eleanor Cory gave this information to Judith Pinnolis in the context of an interview in 2002. I thank her for permitting me to listen to the recording of her interview with Cory.

point in the form of a teaching position at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.<sup>90</sup>

Gideon recalls:

I had an interview with the dean of the seminary and I think that he had been briefed on my background.... He asked me one question: “Do you believe in the American Flag and the principle for which the United States stands?” And I said “Yes sir, I absolutely do,” and my job was secure.<sup>91</sup>

Weisgall, also a former student of Roger Sessions, had been appointed the director of a new department at the Seminary specifically geared towards the training of cantors, named the Cantor’s Institute. With his knowledge of Gideon’s professional status as a composer (as well, a composer of Jewish heritage), but also with his understanding of her political predicament, Weisgall naturally thought of her for the position.<sup>92</sup> Gideon continued to teach at the Seminary while composing; during the period following the tumult of the early 1950s, Gideon continued to compose both sacred and secular works, receiving numerous “platonic commissions.” Gideon defines a platonic commission as “one that doesn’t have any money attached to it.... In other words, somebody asks you to write something and they are going to perform it, which is great.”<sup>93</sup> Gideon noted that

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<sup>90</sup> FEP-TLNYU. Chapter 3, “Miriam Gideon in the 1950s,” details the personal and political turmoil of life in the Gideon/Ewen household in the early 1950s.

<sup>91</sup> Alexander Ewen, Miriam Gideon Interview, FEP-TLNYU.

<sup>92</sup> Cantor Charles Osgood summarized the situation in his videotaped talk with Bruce Saylor just before the Jewish Music Forum on November 10, 2006 at the Center for Jewish History, Manhattan.

<sup>93</sup> Pinnolis, “A Conversation,” 124.

she would rather hear a piece performed than obtain money for a composition that would never be realized in performance.

In the 1960s, Gideon's taste for orchestral works seems to have shifted into a love of chamber music that had been building since Gideon's earliest compositions. Gideon began the decade with the composition of a piece for chamber orchestra and narrator, *The Adorable Mouse* (1960), with text based upon a French folk tale. Though Gideon wrote two works in 1961, the *Songs of Voyage* (with texts by Peabody and Wilkinson) and Sonata for Cello and Piano seem tame when compared with the extraordinary creativity of the pieces that follow them. In 1963, Gideon composed *The Condemned Playground*, a vocal chamber work for soprano, tenor, flute, bassoon, and string quartet. In the piece, Gideon extends British critic Cyril Connolly's notion of Art as a playground of decaying toys, to "the impingement of the sinister upon the pleasurable, not only in Art, but in Love (Pyrrha), Life (Hiroshima), and Knowledge (Litanies of Satan),"<sup>94</sup> a statement from the score that refers to the different movements of the piece. *The Condemned Playground* represents a turning point in Gideon's compositions toward a new and original conception of language in vocal chamber music that includes not only translation of texts from non-English sources, but also the non-English texts themselves, within the same piece. In addition, the unabashedly political nature of this piece signals Gideon's return to confidence in her compositional and artistic vision. Gideon's *Questions on Nature* (1965), *Rhymes from the Hill* (1968) and *Seasons of Time* (1969) are all vocal chamber works that draw upon techniques established in *The Condemned Playground*.

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<sup>94</sup> Miriam Gideon, *The Condemned Playground* (Hillsdale, NY: Mobart Music Publications, 1980), 1.

Gideon also composed her only cantata, *The Habitable Earth* (1965), with texts from the book of Proverbs, during this fruitful period.

In 1967, Gideon began teaching composition at The Manhattan School of Music, while continuing in her position at the Jewish Theological Seminary. Two significant compositions arose from Gideon's association with the Seminary: *Sacred Service for Sabbath Morning* (1971) and *Shirat Miriam l'Shabbat* (1974). Before these works had been completed, Gideon spent a tremendous amount of time researching and planning them; for her work, the Seminary awarded her a Doctor of Sacred Music Degree in 1970. Gideon, who had not applied for the degree, nor expected it, was quite surprised and pleased, calling the degree "a little prize" at the end of her work.<sup>95</sup> The following year, Gideon began a five-year period teaching at City College, in a poignant return to the institution that had dismissed her amid the anti-communist sentiments of the 1950s.

In 1975, one year before retiring from City College, Gideon was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters, joining her neighbor Louise Talma, who had been elected the previous year; Talma and Gideon were the first women composers elected to the Academy.<sup>96</sup> Several letters from Gideon to Talma are found among Talma's papers, and begin to illuminate one perspective on the relationship between these two women, who pursued such similar occupations, lived in the same building, and yet were never close friends. In one letter to Talma, Gideon describes herself as "your erstwhile secretary here at 410," going on to detail the mail she had forwarded to Talma,

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<sup>95</sup> Ardito, "Miriam Gideon," 209.

<sup>96</sup> Tim Page, "Gideon and Talma at 80—Composers and Neighbors," *New York Times* (19 October 1986): H23.

who assisted Boulanger at Fontainebleau for many summers. Gideon's other letters to Talma maintain an air of businesslike communication, with the exception of one, in which Gideon refuses Talma's request for a recommendation.<sup>97</sup> Adrienne Fried Block recalled that the two composers "were never as close as one might think."<sup>98</sup> Yet, both maintained a public persona of friendship, linked by their "disdain" for "the label 'woman composer.'"<sup>99</sup>

Gideon's compositions in the 1970s and 1980s veered in the established direction of vocal music, with the Mobart publication of her *Songs of Youth and Madness* for high voice and orchestra in 1977, and the American Composers Alliance publications of vocal chamber works *Voices from Elysium* (1979), *Spiritual Airs* (1979), and *Spirit Above the Dust* (1980). Gideon's most mature compositions are all vocal works, whether for chorus, *Where Wild Carnations Blow—A Song to David* for SATB chorus and violin (1983) or vocal chamber ensemble. That Gideon's last four compositions, *Wing'd Hour* (1983), *Steeds of Darkness* (1986), *Bömischer Krystall* (1988) and *Songs from the Greek for Pipes and Strings* (1989) are all vocal chamber works not only highlights Gideon's affinity for composition in that genre, but also reinforces her long-professed love of words.

Gideon continued to teach at Manhattan School of Music until 1991, continuing to compose until she was forced to stop by the onslaught of Alzheimer's disease, the

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<sup>97</sup> Louise Talma Collection, Performing Arts Reading Room, Library of Congress.

<sup>98</sup> Interview with the author, May 23, 2007.

<sup>99</sup> Page, "Gideon and Talma," H23.

illness that would take her life in 1996.<sup>100</sup> Gideon's will provides yet another document which attests to her enduring personal and professional relationships: to Sophia Rosoff, she left her piano and clavichord; to Joel Ewen's wife, Petra and her three sons, she left sums of money; to a community music school in Manhattan, her collection of books and scores; and to the New York Public Library, her archival materials.<sup>101</sup> Gideon left the largest bequests to the institutions that had employed her as a teacher (except to Brooklyn College), and to the Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. Gideon's vocations as teacher and composer fulfilled her most deeply, enabling her to transcend the difficulties of personal history and to compose her music.

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<sup>100</sup> Perle, "A Tribute," 4.

<sup>101</sup> Gideon's will is among Barbara Petersen's collection of Gideon materials.

## CHAPTER 3

### Miriam Gideon in the 1950s

[S]elf-supporting women were in some way un-American....  
[A]nticommunist crusaders viewed women who did not conform to the domestic ideal with suspicion.<sup>1</sup>

—Elaine Tyler May

Whatever shape you give to the arc of postwar culture, there's evidence in this period of transition pointing to a palpable if undefinable sense that in the realm of the social relations between men and women, but especially for American women, things were changing.<sup>2</sup>

—Nancy K. Miller

There's one question about composers I'm frequently asked that is as self-defeating as it is impossible to answer: "Why are there no great women composers?"<sup>3</sup>

—Miriam Gideon

By the middle decade of the twentieth century, Miriam Gideon had not only established herself as a composer of international stature, but she had also recently embarked upon a new marriage, her third, to Frederic Ewen. The tumult of Gideon's personal life during the 1950s resulted in one of the most productive periods of Gideon's compositional life. In this chapter, I will explore both public and private reception of Gideon's 1950s works via primary news sources, personal writings, and correspondence. Framed by socio-cultural studies of American women's lives during the postwar era, and taking into account burgeoning feminist discourses, this examination of Gideon in the

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<sup>1</sup> Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988), 13.

<sup>2</sup> Nancy K. Miller, *But Enough About Me: Why We Read Other People's Lives* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 53.

<sup>3</sup> Deena Rosenberg and Bernard Rosenberg, *The Music Makers* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), 68.

1950s provides the biographical and cultural context needed to examine her 1958 opera, *Fortunato*.

**Figure 3.1.** Miriam Gideon's passport photo from 1958.<sup>4</sup>



### **A Second Opinion: Feminist Re-examination of the Fifties**

Reassessments of historical assumptions with regard to the 1950s reveal a more complex period than America's collective memory would acknowledge. In Deborah Nelson's words, feminist scholars have devised "their own critical revisions of the decade and mainstream nostalgia for the fifties as a time of prosperity, family togetherness, and national strength. Against the massive edifice of this ideal, a revisionary account has been mounted, primarily from the political Left and in the realms of gender and sexuality

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<sup>4</sup> FEP-TLNYU.

studies.”<sup>5</sup> This nostalgic “edifice” pervades our everyday lives in the form of both visual and musical culture, particularly reinforcing entrenched ideas about gender relations during this period. Scholarly work, too, reinforces the “gap” between first-wave feminism (suffrage and related humanitarian work) and second-wave feminism (the women’s movement of the 1970s).

One of the first scholarly inquiries into women’s social and political history “between the waves,” Elaine Tyler May’s *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era*, introduces a theory of white, middle-class women’s containment (social, sexual, psychological) within the suburban family unit. May writes that “domestic containment and its therapeutic corollary undermined the potential for political activism and reinforced the chilling effects of anticommunism and the cold-war consensus.”<sup>6</sup> Though May’s statement provides much-needed social and political context for the familiar figure of the 1950s suburban housewife, the concept of containment also reinforces the familiarity of the object of analysis as a symbol of postwar woman, contributing to the continued historical erasure of urban women, women of color, women who were not mothers, and women who pursued careers outside of the home. May notes that “virtually everyone of childbearing age participated in the production of the baby boom.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Deborah L. Nelson, Introduction, *Women’s Studies Quarterly* 33, nos. 3 & 4 (Fall/Winter 2005): 11.

<sup>6</sup> May, *Homeward Bound*, xxv.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, ix.

Individual life narratives written by and about women who defied or simply did not conform to the 1950s' return to "traditional" sex roles complicate May's theories. Gideon, for example, chose not to have or adopt children during a time when, as May writes, "The view of childbearing as a duty was painfully true for Jewish parents."<sup>8</sup> Gideon's first two marriages ended in divorce, and she married Frederic Ewen in 1949; Ewen already had a son, Joel Joachim, from his first marriage. Thus, by not having or adopting children in her third marriage, one that began precisely during the period of the baby boom, Gideon not only stepped outside of the typical sex role expected of a woman, but also that of a Jewish woman after World War II.<sup>9</sup> Gideon's career as a woman composer, another step towards subversion of typical sex roles, placed her in the perfect position to contribute to a re-writing of dominant gender ideologies of the 1950s.

### **Political becomes Personal: Miriam Gideon and McCarthyism**

A staunch member of the Communist party and public supporter of anti-propaganda movements, Ewen had been on the U.S. government's radar since at least 1940, when he refused to testify at a hearing held by the Rapp-Coudert Committee.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>9</sup> Gideon makes no indication in her personal writings as to whether she actually decided not to have children with Frederic Ewen or whether she simply did not become pregnant. Ellie M. Hisama examines this issue in the first of her two chapters on Gideon's life and music in *Gendering Musical Modernism: The Music of Ruth Crawford, Marion Bauer, and Miriam Gideon* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 144-45.

<sup>10</sup> The Rapp-Coudert Committee investigated anti-communist activities in New York public schools; the committee's letterhead also bears the title "Joint Legislative Committee to Investigate the Educational System of the State of New York," (FEP-TLNYU). See also *Culture, Gender, Race, and U.S. Labor History*, ed. Ronald Kent,

Given that the “postwar impulse to channel propaganda consciousness was waged with greatest initial intensity in ivory-tower locales,”<sup>11</sup> Ewen’s firmly anti-establishment stance posed a threat to his job security as an untenured college professor at a publicly funded school. On December 12, 1951, less than two years after his marriage to Gideon, Ewen received a letter<sup>12</sup> from the Joint Committee Against Communism in New York, to which was attached a résumé of his own Communist activities for his correction. A January 23, 1953 letter from the same committee acknowledges Ewen’s “retirement” from his position as Assistant Professor in the Department of English at Brooklyn College. Gideon summarized the situation in an interview with Ewen’s grandson, Alexander Ewen, in 1990:

Everything was going pretty swimmingly until 1952 and my husband Frederic Ewen and I came back from a summer’s camping trip. He found a notice that he would receive a subpoena and would have to appear before a committee connected with McCarthy. I went on, uninterrupted, blithely teaching, and these were not especially happy days as you can see. In 1952, that is, Frederic’s teaching was terminated and he was left suddenly, he was somehow managed to get retirement rights. Very, very low pension but he did get that. I went on teaching at City College. One fine day I received a letter asking me to appear before a committee connected, of

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Sarah Markham, David R. Roediger, and Herbert Shapiro (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993).

<sup>11</sup> J. Michael Sproule, *Propaganda and Democracy: The American Experience of Media and Mass Persuasion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 224.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

course, with McCarthy and answer questions... I refused to go to the meeting and therefore I wrote a letter to City College saying unfortunately I would not be available for future teaching....<sup>13</sup>

Although her department at City College was very supportive when she requested to talk only about her own activities and not those of her husband, the administration refused to honor her request and Gideon resigned without attending the meeting.<sup>14</sup> The music department at Brooklyn College was not so sympathetic to her plight; she had been an adjunct lecturer there, replacing a man who had been away during WWII and for whom the department had saved a position.<sup>15</sup> Thus, in the eyes of her employers, Gideon was unfortunately expendable.

Ewen's collection of papers housed at the Tamiment Library contains an entire folder dedicated to the situation at Brooklyn College; that he saved so many letters from faculty and students expressing admiration and sympathy suggests the impact of these events on Ewen's self-perception.<sup>16</sup> Gideon felt the effects, too, as is evidenced by the words she wrote on a scrap of paper found in her undated personal writings. After attempting to put a metaphorical spin on the situation, Gideon writes: "Thus may we

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<sup>13</sup> Alexander Ewen, Miriam Gideon Interview. FEP-TLNYU.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. See also Linda Ardito, "Miriam Gideon: A Memorial Tribute," *Perspectives of New Music* 34/2 (Summer 1996): 202-14.

<sup>16</sup> Ewen's collection contains more documents pertaining to Brooklyn College than documents pertaining to Miriam Gideon.

clothe [with] philosophic abstractions the sensations of he who has just been fired.”<sup>17</sup>

Gideon kept this undated scrap of writing, one of relatively few individual sheets saved within her personal papers, as a testament to the relative importance of this situation on her already complex personal life in the first five years of the 1950s.<sup>18</sup>

### **Personal becomes Professional: Gideon Reviews and Notices**

1950 began on an optimistic note for Gideon. A recording of her 1949 composition for cello and piano, “Fantasy on a Javanese Motive,” had just been released on Paradox records, an independent label. On the “ten-inch, long-playing disc,” Gideon’s piece appears alongside cello and piano music by Alexandre Tcherepnine, George Perle, Ben Weber, Henry Cowell, and Anton Webern, performed by Seymour Barab and William Masselos. Howard Taubman’s review of the recording from January 22, 1950 in the *New York Times* follows another recording review, of Arnold Schoenberg’s *Serenade*, Opus 24. Taubman’s description of Schoenberg’s (mostly) twelve-tone piece provides a context for modern music’s reception in 1950s New York. He writes: “it is disturbed and disturbing music, filled with novel sonorities that catch the attention for themselves.

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<sup>17</sup> In full, Gideon writes: “We demand to be self-appreciated seekers of Nature. When she is thrust upon us we are appalled—disgusted, bored (three frequent stages in a violent reaction) we build us a sardine can to live in and punch breathing holes thru the top. We mope.

Thus may we clothe philosophic abstractions the sensations of he who has just been fired. First of all—to get down to brass tacks—we’re stunned with the unexpected fulfillment of our expectations—then we’ve been misused, unappreciated; next, well, it’s their look-out and their loss; and finally, what a huge relief—except that the ~~forbidden~~ [sic] leisure time which our monetary pursuits have crowded out has lost its glamour completely. But joy upon joy there always comes the overpowering sense of the huge force in which we are etching out a caper.” (MGP-NYPL).

<sup>18</sup> Gideon’s parents both died in 1952.

With the best will in the world, one can profess only respect for it, not affection.”<sup>19</sup>

Taubman’s words articulate a bifurcation in reception of mid-century art music that would continually place Gideon on the fence between music worthy of respect and music worthy of affection. Media coverage of her compositions from the 1950s exemplifies the term “mixed review,” as though those attending performances of her work could not effectively place her in one category or another.

Taubman continues his review by warning potential buyers of the Paradox record not to be “scared away by Milton Babbitt’s crushingly erudite program notes.”<sup>20</sup> Having already established his somewhat negative opinions of twelve-tone technique, Taubman notes that the pieces by Webern, Perle, and Weber employ tone rows; he then places Gideon in opposition to the serialists by acknowledging that “[t]here are some interesting works in this collection, particularly Miss Gideon’s Fantasy on a Javanese Motive.”<sup>21</sup> Although the review was positive, Taubman singled out Gideon’s music from among the more “serious” serialists, whose work the reviewer deemed more intellectual than palatable.

Later in 1950, Gideon’s recently composed “Air” for Violin and Piano was premiered at Carnegie Hall, performed by American violinist Max Pollikoff. The reviewer, C.H., allows Gideon a bit of praise in noting that the “violinist was sensitive to

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<sup>19</sup> Howard Taubman, “Records: New Music: Old and Young Composers Among Many Represented in Recent Releases,” *New York Times*, January 22, 1950.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

the controlled intensity and open-work textures of Miriam Gideon's 'Air,' a first performance."<sup>22</sup>

A concert organized by the International Society for Contemporary Music's "Forum Group" in 1951 brought together performances of works by French composer/conductor Jacques-Louis Monod (b. 1927), Gideon, Gunther Schuller (b. 1925), and Irwin Bazelon (b. 1922). The "Forum Group" of I.S.C.M., to which Gideon referred as a kind of apprentice group to the parent group, collectively organized performances of works by composers at the student or young professional level.<sup>23</sup> One wonders why Gideon, a generation older than the other featured composers on the concert, remained in the Forum Group rather than joining I.S.C.M. itself. Did she still think of herself as a "student" composer? In one journal entry from the 1950s, Gideon writes of a "dream of piano books, myself grabbing them and frantically hunting for something to play...."<sup>24</sup> Gideon often allowed feelings of insecurity live on the pages of her diaries—sentiments that would have no place in her professional persona. Gideon's maintenance of distinct public and private personas exemplifies the publicly sanctioned necessity for women in the 1950s to keep negative feelings private, as a part of Cold War ideology.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> C.H., "Pollikoff Gives Recital on Violin: Performs Contemporary Music of Gideon, Cowell, Rathaus and Ives at Carnegie Hall," *New York Times*, October 21, 1950.

<sup>23</sup> Judith Shira Pinnolis, "A Conversation with Miriam Gideon (1906-1996): Sunday, June 19, 1977," *Musica Judaica: Journal of the American Society for Jewish Music* 17 (2003-2004), 121.

<sup>24</sup> MGP-NYPL.

<sup>25</sup> May, *Homeward Bound*, 28.

Despite the encouraging atmosphere of the Forum Group performance, Gideon's pieces still received the most mixed reviews from among her colleagues. The same reviewer who had given Gideon a positive review at Carnegie Hall the previous autumn, C.H., noted that her *Five Sonnets from Shakespeare* "opened with high promise. Strings and a single sweet trumpet... blended with uncanny subtlety under the bard's musical metaphors to create an inspired affect."<sup>26</sup> Gideon utilized this much of the review in her professional clippings about this vocal chamber work for string quartet and trumpet, but wisely left out the remarks made in the subsequent paragraph. The reviewer concludes that "the later songs were unified in style and showed care for syllabification, but one became conscious of the large number of words in a sonnet. There was, perhaps, too narrow a profile to the vocal line."<sup>27</sup> On either side of this lukewarm reception of Gideon's piece, the reviewer chose "complicated" and "climatic" to describe Monod's piece; "stunning", "brilliant", and "shattering" complimented Schuller's Symphony for Brass and Percussion. The "sweet" trumpet and "subtlety" that the reviewer found in Gideon's piece contribute to a feminized reception of Gideon's music as compared to that of her male colleagues in concert.

Gideon and George Perle exchanged a series of letters about her *Sonnets from Shakespeare* early in the 1950s. Although the letters are undated, it is clear from their content that the pieces are still quite newly composed, and that both Gideon and Perle were eager to get a good performance of them in Europe. Perle's letters not only illuminate the warm collegiality between these two composers, but also that Gideon

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<sup>26</sup> C.H., "Present Day Music Given at Columbia: Monod's 'Passacaille,' Gideon's Five Shakespeare Sonnets on Program of I.S.C.M.," *New York Times*, April 2, 1951.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

would be quite willing to accept Perle's advice about her composition. In the private world of her dream journal, Gideon observes "there has been a pattern of consulting people—getting their advice about important steps."<sup>28</sup> Although Gideon and Perle studied with Sessions at around the same time, the tone of Perle's letters suggests, at times, a kind of teacher-student relationship that would reflect a more traditional enactment of gender roles than one might expect from Gideon at this point in her career.

In the first of several letters in this exchange dated December 21,<sup>29</sup> Perle writes Gideon to inform her that he had managed to get the pieces a performance in Italy:

Dear Miriam,

Your songs got an excellent performance Friday—the singer loves them and does them with real understanding and such fine diction that the mimeographed texts which were included with the program were quite superfluous.... The audience was really enthusiastic. I will try to get other reviews for you—there were several critics from local magazines there.

Now I'll tell you what I think you should do with the songs.

1. You should have a good copy made that includes all five songs. We performed the middle three from the revised edition, but followed the succession of movements as they are in the earlier version. I was only able to hear the next to last rehearsal and took the liberty—you can hate me if you want to—of restoring some details in the trpt part to what they

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<sup>28</sup> MGP-NYPL.

<sup>29</sup> The letters, though dated for day and month, have illegible postmarks; nevertheless, we can date the letters from the early 1950s from their content, specifically the discussion of Gideon's *Shakespeare Songs* (1952) as newly composed pieces.

are in the earlier version. I haven't compared the two in detail, but if you are interested I'll be glad to give you the benefit of my advice.

2. Ditto for the parts.
3. You should get lots of performances of it.
4. You should get the song cycle (the five-song version, preferably edited by me) published and recorded.

I have no doubt that you would have a genuine popular success with them if you would do something about them besides making needless revisions. I feel that you've hit something with your Shakespeare songs that seldom happens more than once in a lifetime to a composer.<sup>30</sup>

Perle, as this letter demonstrates, fervently championed Gideon's works.

In another letter, Perle wrote to her of his success in persuading William Glock of the BBC to arrange for a performance of the Shakespeare pieces in the early 1950s:

Here is what I told him about the FIVE Shakespeare Songs for SOPRANO, [trumpet] and string quartet:

1. It is the best American work of the last fifty years. (He said he would still be interested if it were the best of merely the last twenty-five years.)
2. That the British musical public especially would take to it.
3. That it's the kind of thing B. Britten would like to write but can't.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> MGP-NYPL.

<sup>31</sup> MGP-NYPL. The date of the letter is July 6, but the year is unreadable on the postmark.

Perle and Gideon exchanged several more letters on the topic of the *Shakespeare Songs*, until Perle had received an edition of the pieces from Gideon.

In May of 1951, a month after the concert at Columbia, Gideon heard the chorus at Temple Emanu-El in Manhattan perform her “How Goodly Are Thy Tents” as part of its Three Choir Festival, under the direction of her former teacher Lazare Saminsky.<sup>32</sup> Gideon had won the Ernest Bloch Award in 1947 for this mixed voice choral work.<sup>33</sup> On the final program of the same festival—but several years later, in 1954—Hugo Weisgall’s piece was cancelled because of a death in his family, so Gideon’s setting of “May the Words of My Mouth” (undated) substituted for Weisgall’s choral work.<sup>34</sup> These clippings reveal a gap in New York performances of Gideon’s works between 1951 and 1954, the years during which Gideon and Ewen were without university positions. Despite the lull in performances, Gideon produced some of her most intricate vocal chamber music at this time, specifically the 1952 *Sonnets from “Fatal Interview”* for voice and string trio.<sup>35</sup> Her *Symphonia Brevis* of 1953, one of only two published orchestral works, is another testament to Gideon’s amazing productivity during this difficult period.

In an announcement dated March 6, 1955, Gideon’s name appeared alongside those of Ezra Laderman, Peggy Glanville-Hicks, and Hugh Doris; their pieces would be

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<sup>32</sup> Noel Straus, “Saminsky Starts Three Choir Fete,” *New York Times*, May 5, 1951.

<sup>33</sup> Hisama, *Gendering Musical Modernism*, 142.

<sup>34</sup> “3 Choir Festival Comes to a Close,” *New York Times*, April 4, 1954.

<sup>35</sup> For a detailed analytical discussion of the *Sonnets from “Fatal Interview,”* see Hisama, *Gendering Musical Modernism*, 139-62.

performed on a Wednesday evening concert at the New School for Social Research.<sup>36</sup> By 1955, Gideon had been offered a job at the Jewish Theological Seminary, and had become—officially or unofficially—the primary breadwinner for the Gideon/Ewen household at 410 Central Park West. For a different married couple, the husband’s loss of employment might spell disaster for the family and for the relationship. But the traditional gender roles prescribed by 1950s cold war propaganda suited neither Gideon’s nor Ewen’s personal or professional situation. In her exploration of the increasing contradictions in women’s postwar lives, Mirra Komarovsky finds that

generally speaking, it would seem that it is the girl with a “middle of the road personality” who is most happily adjusted in the current historical moment.... She is a girl who is... informed and alert but not consumed by an intellectual passion; capable but not talented in areas new to women; able to stand on her own two feet and earn a living but not so good a living as to compete with men.<sup>37</sup>

For Gideon, then, part of the tumult of the 1950s was the constant renegotiation of her identity in the midst of an onslaught of powerful national propaganda about women’s “proper” position in society.

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<sup>36</sup> “Concert and Opera Programs of the Week,” *New York Times*, March 6, 1955.

<sup>37</sup> Mirra Komarovsky, “Cultural Contradiction and Sex Roles,” *The American Journal of Sociology* 52, no. 3 (November 1946): 189. See also Komarovsky, *Women in the Modern World: Their Education and Their Dilemmas* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1953). As Shira Tarrant notes in her article on Komarovsky’s work on 1950s sex roles, Komarovsky believed that women’s “economic, legal, psychological, and political positions were not derived from biological fact but were largely the result of social fiction.” Tarrant, “When Sex Became Gender: Mirra Komarovsky’s Feminism of the 1950s,” *Women’s Studies Quarterly* 33, nos. 3&4 (Fall/Winter 2005): 339.

In a February 13, 1956 review of “Lyric Piece,” an early Gideon work for string quartet (circa 1941), the author of the feature referred to Copland’s writing in “Quiet City” as “the plaintive voice of the isolated individual, writing minor works because of his loneliness.”<sup>38</sup> The reviewer proceeded to note that the same kind of individual, lonely voice could be heard “even more decisively in the works of the two lesser known composers on the program.... And both these last-named showed another sign of remoteness from the public in going on rather too long for the interest of their ideas.”<sup>39</sup> Another 1956 review by Howard Taubman held at least veiled praise for Gideon, and began with a mention of her new position as a “member of the faculty of the Cantorial Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary.” Taubman conceded that Gideon’s text setting in the *Sonnets from “Fatal Interview”* was “sensitive,” but that her 1944 *The Hound of Heaven* “did not seem to have marked individuality.”<sup>40</sup> Again, the feminine quality of sensitivity, particularly to a text, takes precedence, while individuality, a quality gendered masculine, is lacking; it is a Cartesian split of body and mind, remarkably written into reviews of Gideon’s work.

An extraordinary aspect of Taubman’s review lies not in what he said about Gideon, but rather in the other material that the critic needed to cover in his article, namely, the staging of Mozart’s *The Magic Flute* for N.B.C.’s opera company. Gideon began her composition of *Fortunato* in the mid-fifties. By 1956, the opera would have been well on its way to completion, and Gideon would have been searching for

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<sup>38</sup> “17<sup>th</sup> Music Fete of WNYC Starts,” *New York Times*, February 13, 1956.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> Howard Taubman, “Music: ‘Magic Flute’ Sung on N.B.C.,” *New York Times*, January 16, 1956.

performance opportunities. Chapter 6 addresses performance issues in the opera, and details the possibility that Gideon composed her opera with television in mind.

*The Lowell Sunday Sun*, a small Massachusetts paper, in 1959 featured an article on new music including Gideon's *Sonnets from "Fatal Interview."* Alfred W. Burke wrote: "Miriam Gideon has created music in sonnet form... The best of a brief, but most welcome list has been 'Millay Sonnets.'"<sup>41</sup> The Composer's Forum of San Francisco performed a work of Gideon in 1959; both examples illustrate that Gideon's reputation did not simply end at the New York state line.<sup>42</sup>

As the 1950s came to a close, Gideon's growing national stature as a composer began to evidence itself—if only on occasion—in reviews of her work and in the types of concerts at which her music could be heard. One of six works for piano written by Gideon in the 1950s received a performance at Carnegie Hall in 1958. The reviewer, John Briggs, noted: "Miriam Gideon's *Six Cuckoos in Quest of a Composer* [1954]... is an amusing journey through musical styles from Renaissance to the present day."<sup>43</sup>

Gideon's work also received performances on Max Pollikoff's Rockefeller-funded "Music in Our Time" series at the 92<sup>nd</sup> Street Y.M. and Y.W.H.A.<sup>44</sup>

1959 brought the first performance of Gideon's 1952 song cycle *Four Epitaphs by Robert Burns* at Carnegie Hall. Gideon's pieces rounded out an evening of vocal music

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<sup>41</sup> Alfred W. Burke, "Music," *The Lowell Sun*, February 16, 1957.

<sup>42</sup> "News of Musicians," *Oakland Tribune*, December 6, 1959. The notice did not indicate which piece was performed.

<sup>43</sup> John Briggs, "Ray Lev is Heard at Carnegie Hall: Pianist Shows Evidence of Growth and Maturity—2 New Works Introduced," *New York Times*, April 10, 1958.

<sup>44</sup> Ross Parmenter, "World of Music: Cash and Sherry," *New York Times*, January 11, 1959.

by Webern, Babbitt and others, hence reviewer Eric Salzman's comment that "more than the above works, these songs are carefully arranged so that the singer has few difficulties in pitch. The result was that the piano part usually seemed more interesting than the vocal line. And Burns' ironic humor was missed altogether."<sup>45</sup> Salzman, who must have been acquainted with Taubman, pigeonholes Gideon's music as stylistically and technically simpler than that of her contemporaries and post-tonal predecessors. Though stated in a somewhat pejorative manner, Salzman identified one of the most extraordinary aspects of Gideon's music: the comfort with which singers can accomplish what is written on the page, without any sacrifice on the part of the composer in terms of style.

## Conclusion

Between 1950 and 1960, Gideon's concept of herself as a composer, teacher, daughter, and wife developed to an extraordinary extent. By the end of the 1940s, her formal schooling had ended, and she had to negotiate the boundaries of her life as an academic, and as a professional rather than a student composer. The subtle feminization of her music that comes across in reviews of her works reflects the subtlety of dominant notions about gender during the period following World War II. The historical moment of the early fifties was fraught with ideological changes— new "reports"<sup>46</sup> on human

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<sup>45</sup> Eric Salzman, "Shirley Sudock Offers Modern Songs at Carnegie Recital Hall," April 28, 1959.

<sup>46</sup> Among the most controversial books on sexuality to emerge in the 1950s were Alfred A. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, and Clyde E. Martin, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders, 1948); Alfred A. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, Clyde E. Martin, and P.G. Gebhard, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders, 1953); and Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. H. M. Parshley (New York: Knopf, 1953).

sexuality, women both meeting and defying typical sex roles, and the general public trying to understand modernism in art and music—that would resonate in the minds of cold war Americans. As they did so, these epiphanies illuminated the underlying conflict between what women *could* do and what they were *expected* to do. Thus, in an era remembered and mythologized for its stasis, Gideon experienced a period of profound personal and professional change.

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## CHAPTER 4

### Musical Language in *Fortunato*

Miriam Gideon composed in a style that was utterly her own. Two factors contribute to the extremely personal nature of her musical works: the stylistic medium in which she chose to create, and her own determination to make each work a statement of her identity. Gideon wrote in the idiom of atonal expressionism, occasionally employing serial techniques. The musical cousin of abstract expressionism in visual art, atonal expressionism allows for a kind of *tabula rasa* onto which a composer may write what she chooses and how she chooses, without adhering to the strictures of tonal composition.<sup>1</sup> Milton Babbitt describes the atonal compositional process as “self-referential,” meaning that “you make a work self-enclosed. You define its principles—a progression of relatedness—within itself.”<sup>2</sup> Thus, each composition provides its own context, without necessarily referencing other works or techniques. In the liner notes to a retrospective recording of Gideon pieces, Eric Salzman writes: “[N]onrepresentational art, free of references to the outside world, must of necessity build from its own premises and reflect an interior emotional world. This experience is exactly what we find in Miriam Gideon’s music.”<sup>3</sup> In referring to Gideon’s musical style as an “American

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<sup>1</sup> Eric Salzman, Liner notes to *A Miriam Gideon Retrospective* (New World Records 80393-2, 1990): 6; also, Salzman’s liner notes appear at [http://www.newworldrecords.org/album.cgi?rm=view&album\\_id=80393](http://www.newworldrecords.org/album.cgi?rm=view&album_id=80393) (accessed November 11, 2007).

<sup>2</sup> *Milton Babbitt: Words about Music*, ed. Stephen Dembski and Joseph N. Straus (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), 9.

<sup>3</sup> Salzman, Liner notes, *A Miriam Gideon Retrospective*, 6.

Expressionism”<sup>4</sup>—in contrast to Central European Expressionism—Lester Trimble further refines our search for stylistic descriptors. Thus, each of Gideon’s compositions is a highly individual, yet stylistically cohesive portrait of its composer.

In this chapter, I will discuss the principal features of Gideon’s musical language in the opera, establishing the primary compositional techniques, methods, and systems employed by the opera’s composer. One of Gideon’s primary techniques is the application of motives drawn from subsets of four primary pitch collections: the diatonic, octatonic, hexatonic, and the Jewish mode *avahah rabbah*. Another key factor in Gideon’s sound setting is her use of Spanish folk music. While *Fortunato* is certainly representative of Gideon’s larger stylistic mission, it also deviates from her established mode of composition by presenting recurrent material that draws upon more tonal melodic constructions in order to conjure images of Spain. Gideon’s introduction to her opera, although compact, contains many elements of her musical language and compositional technique that form the basis of the opera as a whole. Through a close reading of the introduction, I shall argue that Gideon’s primary tool in creating a meaningful operatic sound-setting for her characters is not the text, but rather, that meaning in *Fortunato* is found within the notes written in the score and performed by singer and orchestral musician alike. Many of these stylistic elements are features of Gideon’s larger oeuvre, but some are unique to *Fortunato*, and I will attempt to make this differentiation where applicable. In order to form a basis for the subsequent chapters that link musical analysis with social, political, and autobiographical context, this chapter

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<sup>4</sup> Lester Trimble, review of *Rhymes from the Hill* recording on CRI SD 286, *Stereo Review* (November 1972), 112.

specifically examines the primary features of Gideon’s compositional language in *Fortunato*.

### Four Pitch-Class Collections

Gideon derives much of the pitch material in the opera from her use—to greater and lesser degrees—of four main pitch-class collections.<sup>5</sup> The most significant sonorities in the piece find a home in more than one of these collections, so that these sets—primarily trichordal and tetrachordal subsets—serve as a kind of glue connecting musical material in the opera. The pitch collections in Example 4.1 are identified as follows: (1) diatonic, set class 7-35 (013568t); (2) octatonic, set class 8-28 (0134679t);

**Example 4.1** Four primary pitch-class collections used in *Fortunato* (1958).



1. Diatonic collection 7-35 (013568t)



2. Octatonic collection 8-28 (0134679t)



3. Hexatonic collection 6-20 (014589)



4. *Avahah Rabbah* collection 7-22 (0125689)

<sup>5</sup> A basic explanation of post-tonal theory and sources for further reading can be found on page ix, in the Prefatory Note about Technical Terminology.

(3) hexatonic, set class 6-20 (014589); and (4) a collection of pitches that is one of the traditional Jewish modes, *avahah rabbah*, set class 7-22 (0125689).<sup>6</sup> For the purposes of comparison, each collection begins on C in Example 4.1; I have also placed a second C at the end of the octatonic and hexatonic collections for ease of comparison, since these two collections do not necessarily include the octave. Each of the pitch collections shown in Example 4.1 has interesting and useful properties for a collection-centered analysis of *Fortunato*. These referential collections create a framework for Gideon's selection and use of pitch material in the opera, though none of the collections occurs in an extended passage without non-collection tones. The interaction between these pitch collections creates movement in and gives direction to the music, linking important motives through pitch materials that can be derived from two or more of the collections in question.<sup>7</sup>

### **The Diatonic Collection**

The diatonic collection, rich in triads, is familiar because of its historic use as the primary tool for Western tonal composition. The diatonic collection finds an important place in post-tonal composition, as well, but without its longtime partner, harmonic function. Still, the diatonic collection provides a direct link to tonal compositions and thus to the possibility of integrating tonal materials into a post-tonal idiom. For Gideon's opera, this quality is particularly useful since she utilizes Spanish tunes within the context

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<sup>6</sup> Eliyahu Schleifer, "Jewish Music," *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy, <http://www.grovemusic.com> (accessed November 8, 2006).

<sup>7</sup> For a thorough discussion of the diatonic, octatonic, and hexatonic collections, see Joseph N. Straus, *Introduction to Post-Tonal Theory*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2005), 140-154. The explanations of these three collections are indebted to Straus's discussion.

**Example 4.2** Spanish tune in E-Ionian with persistent G, *Fortunato*, Scene I, mm. 234-44.

*lively, accented*

The image displays two systems of musical notation. The first system, labeled '234', consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff has a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a 2/4 time signature. The melody is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic and the instruction '(Quasi guitarra)'. The bass staff has the same key signature and time signature, with a *sim.* marking. The second system, labeled '241', continues the melody and bass line. The treble staff has a key signature of three sharps and a 2/4 time signature. The bass staff has the same key signature and time signature, with a *sim.* marking.

of her post-tonal writing. One of these Spanish tunes, shown in Example 4.2, sits squarely in E-Ionian, one of several four-sharp diatonic collections. Here, a persistent G natural presents an example of the “modal mixing” Gideon often uses for coloristic purposes. Because the other pitch collections from which Gideon draws the majority of her pitch material share many properties and subsets, her use of the E-Ionian Spanish tune does not sound completely out of place. Like Stravinsky in his use of the diatonic collection, Gideon’s compositional events tend to be small and local.

### The Octatonic Collection

Unlike the diatonic set, the octatonic set is symmetrical and extremely self-referential. When viewed in scalar form, the eight notes of the set alternate between interval classes 1 and 2, creating an appealing circularity. Because of the inversional and transpositional symmetry of its construction, the set can map onto itself at four levels; for

this reason, many of its subsets are also highly symmetrical, and can be transposed to generate the entire collection. Subsets of the octatonic collection are vital to the construction of Gideon's musical language in *Fortunato*. In particular, trichordal set classes 3-2 (013) and 3-3 (014) have large-scale importance, while 3-11 (037) serves as a link between all but one of the collections. Gideon also takes advantage of several tetrachordal subsets that are familiar to listeners as seventh chords; set class 4-27 (0258) is the dominant/half-diminished seventh chord in a tonal context, and Gideon makes use of this quality particularly in her writing for the Scene III chorus. The opera begins with a set of pitches that draw from the octatonic collection, signaling its crucial part in the post-tonal language of the opera as a whole. The first four measures of Scene III's

**Example 4.3** Measures 1-4 of Scene III, *Fortunato*.

The musical score for Example 4.3 consists of two staves. The top staff is the vocal line, and the bottom staff is the piano accompaniment. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The piece begins with a '1' above the first measure, followed by the tempo marking 'moderato' and the dynamic 'pp'. The vocal line features a series of notes with slurs and accents, including an octave-up marking '8va' above the second measure. The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pattern. A box highlights the final two measures, labeled 'OCT<sub>1,2</sub>' and 'poco cresc.', with 'loco' markings above and below the notes. An 'accel.' marking is also present above the box. An '8vb' marking is located below the piano staff.

introduction, shown in Example 4.3, tease out OCT<sub>1,2</sub> [1,2,4,5,7,8,t,e], the form of the octatonic collection that begins with pitch-classes 1 and 2, with the first interval being a half-step (interval class 1). Two of the important interval classes in the opera derive from or generate the collection: interval class 1, the minor second and major seventh; and interval class 6, the tritone. As the discussion of the overture to *Fortunato* suggests (see Examples 4.6 through 4.12 below), Gideon uses subsets drawn from the three possible

forms of the octatonic collection, in addition to making use of the collection in its entirety in the composition of *Fortunato*.

### **The Hexatonic Collection**

Symmetry also dominates the structure of the hexatonic collection. Shown in Example 4.1, set class 6-20 (014589) splits up a space of nine semitones into three pairs of consecutive semitones separated evenly by three semitone intervals (interval class 3). One interval that the hexatonic does not reference is the tritone, which generates the octatonic collection.<sup>8</sup> As one of the all-combinatorial hexachords, the hexatonic set maps onto itself at three levels, making the degree of transpositional and inversional symmetry three. Much like the diatonic and octatonic collections, the hexatonic set possesses the aural potential for moving both within and without tonality; while the set is rich in major and minor thirds, minor seconds are also prevalent, contributing to the overarching dissonance in Gideon's opera. The most meaningful trichord in *Fortunato*, 3-3 (014), generates the collection, and Gideon makes particularly interesting use of this subset as a series in the cadenza to her introduction (shown in Example 4.6). Though discussed in greater detail below, the cadenza to the introduction embeds thirty-one permutations of the series <014>, creating a unified sonority that not only underlines the importance of 3-3 (014) as an unordered pitch-class set in the opera, but also brings to light Gideon's subtle use of order as a tool for the manipulation of small motives.

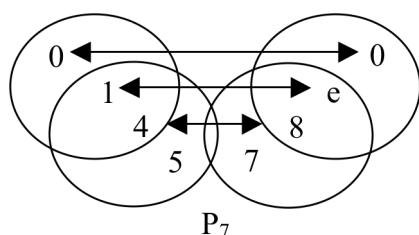
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<sup>8</sup> Gideon may have found that the use of *either* the hexatonic *or* the octatonic deprived her of intervals (either the minor third or the tritone) she found essential to her compositional aesthetic. In her 1953 *Two Movements for Orchestra*, for example, both the minor third and the tritone are primary building blocks of both harmony and melody.

### ***Avahah rabbah*: Traditional Jewish Mode as Pitch Collection**

Set class 3-3 (014) serves as one of the defining sonorities of the final pitch collection employed by Gideon in her opera: the Jewish mode *avahah rabbah*. Though Gideon used this set primarily for her sacred works, *avahah rabbah* also influences her opera in a post-tonal context as set class 7-22 (0125689). But since this mode has usually appeared in its manifestation as a scale, let us also consider its scalar form, (014578e). More than any other of the collections explored above, the *avahah rabbah* mode, when viewed as a pitch-class set, brings together the most important pitch materials of the

**Figure 4.1** Inversional relationships in the *avahah rabbah* mode, with 3-3 (014) trichords circled.



opera. The set is also highly symmetrical with an axis of symmetry around 6, as seen in Figure 4.1, particularly when the scale is completed with its octave. Figure 4.1 shows each integer of *avahah rabbah* mode directly across from its inversion, and thus provides a graphic representation of the set's symmetry. As seen above, the 4-7 (0145) tetrachord that forms the first half of *avahah rabbah* maps onto itself at  $P_7$  to complete the mode. And at a slightly deeper level,  $\langle 014 \rangle$  combines with its transposition at  $RI_5 \langle 145 \rangle$  to form 4-7 (0145). Thus, the entire scale and collection can be generated from 3-3 (014)

itself. This remarkable collection also subtly suggests that Gideon's identity as a Jewish composer appeared not only in her sacred works, but also in her secular oeuvre.<sup>9</sup>

### Interactions Between Pitch Collections

The interaction of pitch-class subsets from these collections is the primary means used by Gideon in the context of her motivic writing, but entire passages may derive material from one or more of the collections. In Example 4.3 above, Gideon writes what appears to be an octatonic passage beginning with the first measure of Scene III's carnival introduction. After several measures of teasing (01) intervals, Gideon builds this octatonic passage using hexatonic construction that alternates between interval classes 1 and 3, highlighted below in Figure 4.2. Gideon's Scene III chorus is also largely based on collectional interaction between subsets of the hexatonic and octatonic collections,

**Figure 4.2** Hexatonic construction at the start of m. 4, Scene III, which is built on OCT<sub>1,2</sub>.

<b>t</b>	+1	<b>e</b>	-4	<b>7</b>	+1	<b>8</b>	-4	<b>4</b>	+1	<b>5</b>	-4	<b>1</b>	+1	<b>2</b>
-3		-3		-3		-3		-3		-3		+7		+8
<b>7</b>	+1	<b>8</b>	-4	<b>4</b>	+1	<b>5</b>	-4	<b>1</b>	+1	<b>2</b>	+6	<b>8</b>	+2	<b>t</b>

even making reference to 4-18 (0147), a subset of the *avahah rabbah* collection.<sup>10</sup> On

<sup>9</sup> Gideon made use of the Jewish modes on occasion, but not always, in her sacred compositions, specifically in *Adon Olam* (1954) and *The Hound of Heaven* (1945). See Albert Weisser, "An Interview With Miriam Gideon," *Dimensions in American Judaism* 4/3 (Spring 1970): 38-40; Judith Pinnolis Fertig, "An Analysis of Selected Works of the American Composer Miriam Gideon (1906- ) In Light of Contemporary Jewish Musical Trends" (master's thesis, University of Cincinnati, 1978); and Irene Heskes, *A Passport to Jewish Music: Its History, Traditions, and Culture* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994).

the whole, these collections interact so effectively because of similarities in the arrangement of intervals and elements of symmetry.

Gideon's compositional language, then, finds its basis in the pitch materials and subsets available within the diatonic, octatonic, hexatonic, and *avahah rabbah* pitch collections. Because of the overwhelming number of minor second/major seventh intervals among these sets, dissonance becomes the norm in the opera. Gideon makes extensive use of trichordal and tetrachordal motives derived from the four pitch collections, with particular emphasis on 3-3 (014) and 4-18 (0147), and occasionally makes use of aggregate completion to clarify structure or highlight particular words when text is present. Gideon's music frequently includes voices doubled at the octave, so that one often hears only three pitch-classes in a four-part vertical sonority. Often Gideon doubles the pitch-classes from the vocal line, giving the singers a sense of pitch security seldom found in post-tonal literature.

### **Spanish Folk Tunes**

Three Spanish folk tunes aurally evoke geographic setting in a way that free atonal music may not readily represent to the listener. These tunes, as mentioned above, reference the diatonic collection in terms of pitch material, but because the diatonic collection interacts with other pitch collections within the context of the opera, Gideon can alter the pitch materials of the tunes after their initial presentation in order to establish character and setting. Example 4.2 above contains one of the Spanish melodies that recurs within Gideon's opera, though it is not the first heard by the audience that

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<sup>10</sup> A detailed analysis of this interaction appears below.

conjures Andalusian images. In the introduction, the composer highlights a malagueña tune by placing it between introductory and closing material. This malagueña melody, excerpted from the introduction in Example 4.4, recurs at dramatically important

**Example 4.4** Beginning of the malagueña in the Introduction to *Fortunato*, mm. 10-14.



junctures in the opera; Gideon even adds text to the tune at one point, creating an aria for the young beggar Conchita. Gideon meaningfully mixes two Spanish tunes within her aria treatment of the malagueña. While the tune in Example 4.4 is simply a typical flamenco tune, the text Gideon applies derives from another traditional Spanish dance tune from the flamenco tradition, “El Vito.”<sup>11</sup> In a complex process of borrowing, Gideon uses the melody of “El Vito” as an untexted street tune in the opera, while the poetry she sets to her malagueña derives from a traditional text applied to the “El Vito” melody.<sup>12</sup> The street tune, in its incarnation as a line of music to be whistled by the panhandler Don Victorio in the opera, is found in Example 4.5. Alterations to and

<sup>11</sup> The street tune in Example 4.2 and the primary theme of the malagueña in Example 4.4 were not derived from specific material, but rather were most likely composed in order to evoke Spanish style. By contrast, Gideon uses the tune from the traditional dance “El Vito” quite clearly, and plays with the text associated with the song, as well. Thanks to Carol Hess for sharing this interpretation with me.

<sup>12</sup> In his *Canciones Clasicas Españolas*, Fernando J. Obradors (1897-1945) composed a version of “El Vito.” The International Music Edition (edited by Sergius Kagen) of Obradors’ *Canciones* was published in New York in 1950 with English title and

deviations from these Spanish tunes, both original and borrowed, are loci of meaning for Gideon in her opera. In the case of the malagueña, Gideon first presents the tune as the

**Example 4.5** Street tune “El Vito” as whistled by Don Victorio in Scene II of *Fortunato*.



centerpiece of the opera’s introduction, but adds text and action to the same melody in Conchita’s Scene II aria; the text of the aria contributes significantly to Gideon’s new characterization of Conchita. Gideon introduces another Spanish tune as street music in Scene I; in Scene II, the same melody is altered, contorted in fact, when played by a blind violinist, reflecting a common conception about disabled bodies and their actions as being out of control. The alteration of these melodies engage our attention as listeners, and serve as aural touchstones within Gideon’s generally atonal style.

### **Introduction to *Fortunato***

Within the first forty-two measures of *Fortunato*, Gideon utilizes four pitch-class collections, as well as individual pitch classes with structural significance. Her use of motivic saturation operates in tandem with the reinforcement of certain important intervals and trichords, enabling the listener to grow accustomed to the sound setting that Gideon creates. Tritone, second, and seventh intervals become immediate aural signposts

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translations, so Gideon may have had access to this American version of the Obradors songs.

within the first nine measures. These opening measures also reflect the starkness of Gideon's compositional language, which blends ideally with her subject: abject poverty in Spain at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Gideon composed the introduction in three parts: an atmospheric prelude (mm. 1-9), a Spanish malagueña tune (mm. 9-41), and a cadenza with closing material similar in character to the prelude that, although it is three systems in length, is all encompassed within measure 42. Example 4.6 provides a score of all forty-two measures of Gideon's introduction.

Example 4.6 Introduction to *Fortunato*

SCENE I: Introduction

Piano

**Moderato**  
*freely*

*f* *p* *poco cresc.*

5 *mf* *decresc.* *p* *poco cresc.* *mp* *p* **Allegretto**  
*un poco marcato*

10

15 *mp* *cresc.*

21 *mf* *p subito*

The musical score is written for piano and consists of five systems of music. The first system is marked 'Moderato freely' and begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic in the right hand and piano (*p*) in the left hand. It features a seven-measure rest in both hands. The second system continues with a piano (*p*) dynamic and includes a decrescendo (*decresc.*) and a piano (*p*) dynamic. The third system starts at measure 10 and features a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The fourth system starts at measure 15 and features a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and a crescendo (*cresc.*). The fifth system starts at measure 21 and features a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and a piano subito (*p subito*) dynamic. The score includes various articulations such as slurs, accents, and phrasing slurs, as well as dynamic markings like *f*, *p*, *mf*, *mp*, *cresc.*, *decresc.*, and *p subito*. The tempo changes from Moderato to Allegretto un poco marcato at measure 5.

28

*poco cresc.*

33

*rit.*  
*8va--*  
*a tempo*  
*loco*  
*p*  
*pp (Quasi guitarra)*

37

*poco cresc.*

42

*ad lib.*  
*mp*

46

*molto cresc.*  
*accel.*  
*8va--*  
*ff*  
Curtain rises

The opening measure of *Fortunato* outlines a collection of the eight pitch-classes D, C, B, A, F, G#, F#, and D#—an octatonic collection (OCT<sub>2,3</sub>). Gideon employs the collection subtly, beginning her opera with a sweeping downward arpeggiation landing on D#; the gesture is an atmospheric one, reminiscent of late Debussy or Falla. Rather than repeating the exact pitches of m. 1 in the second measure, Gideon shifts the pitches down an octave, and changes the right hand's A-natural to an A# in the left hand, a gesture that highlights the re-entry of A-natural in m. 3, as circled in Example 4.7.

**Example 4.7** Measures 1-4, Scene I, *Fortunato*. Rectangles have been drawn around D# and Eb, and circles trace the path from A-natural to A#, returning to unison A-naturals in m. 3.

The image shows a musical score for measures 1-4 of Scene I from *Fortunato*. The tempo is marked "Moderato" and "freely". The score is in 3/4 time and consists of two staves: a piano part (bottom) and a violin part (top). The piano part begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a septuplet of eighth notes. The violin part begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a similar septuplet. In measure 2, the piano part has a circled A-natural in the bass clef, and the violin part has a circled A-natural in the treble clef. In measure 3, the piano part has a circled A-natural in the bass clef, and the violin part has a circled A# in the treble clef. In measure 4, the piano part has a circled Eb in the bass clef, and the violin part has a circled Eb in the treble clef. A "poco cresc." marking is present in measure 4. Rectangles are drawn around the D# in the piano part and the Eb in the violin part in measure 4. Circles trace the path from the A-natural in measure 2 to the A# in measure 3, and back to the A-natural in measure 4.

Gideon also establishes two focal points in pitch-class space in measures 1 through 4, solidifying these points as piece unfolds. The first and most obvious aural center is D#: Gideon emphasizes this pitch-class in the first two measures by making it the tone of longest duration and most important directional placement at the end of each septuplet run, also seen in Example 4.7 outlined with rectangles. D#'s enharmonic equivalent, Eb occupies the highest pitch in aural space. Eb is also the last pitch in the first phrase, the final held tone in the right hand before the first rest in the opera at m. 5. A-natural takes a back seat to Eb/D#, but in duration and doubling, A-natural outstrips it. As shown in

Example 4.7 above, at m. 3, both hands play the same note, although the pitch is written in both the right and left hands in bass clef; in the orchestral score, Gideon represents this doubling at the unison by scoring the A in both the cello and bassoon parts. While the left hand sustains the pitch for the duration of mm. 3 and 4, the right hand leaves A with a trajectory towards Eb in m.4. The most significant intervallic sonority of the first four measures is the diminished fifth heard at the end of m. 4, composed of the sustained A in the left hand, and the Eb eighth note under a fermata—the final pitch of the first system shown on Example 4.7.

Beginning in m. 5, a kind of conversation ensues between two voices. Even in m. 9, the measure before the *allegretto* section begins, no more than two notes sound at the same time. The sparseness of texture between measures 1 and 9 enables the listener to form a clear sense of the pitch materials at hand, and to focus on the intervals presented in this initial statement of the opera. Using duration and placement as key factors in determining the importance of intervallic tones heard within this small but analytically definitive section of the opera, interval classes 1, 2, and especially 6 carry the most aural weight. The first simultaneity heard in the opera is the D#/E-natural minor second on the fourth sixteenth note of the second beat in m. 2, shown in Example 4.7. The first sustained interval of any consequential duration is the diminished fifth between A-natural and Eb at the end of m. 4, also shown in Example 4.7. The Eb/A-natural relation is reiterated in m. 5, found in Example 4.8, but inverted, so that the left hand play Eb an octave lower than in the previous measure, and the right plays A-natural an octave higher than its sustained incarnation at measures 3 and 4. This unstable relationship shifts quickly to another incarnation of itself almost immediately, when the tritone shifts down

a half-step in each hand. D-natural takes precedence as the pitch-class of greatest importance in measures 5 through 9, subtly underlining the minor second as an interval to

**Example 4.8** Measures 5-9, Introduction to Scene I, *Fortunato*. The structural trichord 3-3 (014) is circled.

be heard in the opera as a whole, as shown above in Example 4.8. Sustained for two beats in m. 5, and held below a fermata in both measures 7 and 9, D-natural is also the final articulated pitch before the allegretto section begins in m. 9, also on Example 4.8.

Although tritones have predominated in Gideon’s musical language thus far, the G/C# diminished fifth heard at the start of measure nine “resolves” to a perfect fifth between G and D natural. The Eb, D and B of measure 6, shown in Example 4.8, outline a significant structural trichord in the opera: 3-3 (014), played by a solo bassoon in the orchestrated version. Thus, Gideon sets up four primary musical relationships that have large-scale importance for the musical language of the opera: 1) emphasis on interval classes 1, 2, and 6; 2) an overarching connection of the music in the opera to the octatonic collection; 3) significance of pitch-classes D, D#/Eb, and A; and 4) use of sparse, dissonant musical language that depends upon trichord constructions and motivic material for its cohesiveness.

The first Spanish tune heard in the opera begins in measure 9 with a tempo change to *allegretto*. Gideon indicates that this interpolated Spanish tune should be

performed *un poco marcato*, reflecting the importance of individual pitches in the ornamented melody. Dyads of minor seconds alternate with major sevenths in the left hand accompanimental figures, and the melodic material relies heavily upon stepwise motion for its construction, with ornaments rich in semitones, as seen in Example 4.9.

**Example 4.9** Measures 10-14, Introduction to Scene I, *Fortunato*.

Though the tune is memorable and contrasts with the more atmospheric beginning of the overture, the construction of the melody is modal. In this section, Gideon's melody vacillates between emphasis on D and emphasis on D#, two pitch-classes already established as having large-scale importance in the opera; when the melody is transposed up a perfect fourth, this vacillation also occurs between G and G#. A "ratcheting" upwards of both melodic and accompanimental materials occurs in this section, reinforced by an actual heightening of register throughout the passage. The melody itself is modal in nature, and features a rhythmic, ornamented phrase followed by a pulsing refrain. Eight measures in length, the first phrase of the melody builds in intensity of pitch and rhythm for the first six measures, then releases in a string of two chromatic sixteenth-note turns downward, landing on G#, shown in Example 4.10. As with many of her compositions of the 1950s, Gideon develops phrases through the manipulation of

smaller motives;<sup>13</sup> these phrases, or even just the pitch material introduced in them, then serve as a basis for entire sections of her composition, saturating the work with motivic material in both background and foreground. The melody in the allegretto section of the introduction provides the listener with an immediate entrée into Gideon’s compositional language. Within the melody, the semitone turn that gives Gideon’s malagueña its

**Example 4.10** Chromatic run in treble clef down to G# in the upper staff.



Spanish flavor is also an important motive within the tune, and Gideon presents it in four different transpositions during the course of the introduction.

The malagueña also contains ten out of the twelve pitch classes in its initial statement from m. 9 through beat one of m. 18. Although Gideon’s use of serial techniques is limited in the opera, she does make use of aggregate completion as a signifier in both versions of her malagueña; when examined with the text in mind, the word on which the aggregate is completed often carries special meaning. Without the

<sup>13</sup> Ellen Dale Lerner’s thesis examines Gideon’s 1970 song cycle *Seasons of Time*, and finds the work highly motivic in nature; Ellie M. Hisama performs close readings of “Night is my sister” from the vocal chamber work *Sonnets from “Fatal Interview”* (1952) and “Esther” from *Three Biblical Masks* for violin and piano (1958), finding both works to be motivically saturated, particularly at the trichordal level. Ellen Dale Lerner, “The Music of Selected Contemporary American Women Composers: A Stylistic Analysis” (master’s thesis, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, 1976); Hisama, *Gendering Musical Modernism*, 139-80.

text, the completion of the aggregate implies a structural point of significance, as is the case in Example 4.11 below.

**Example 4.11** Aggregate [C#,F#,G,D,E,D#,G#,A,F,A#,B,C] built into Gideon's malagueña. The beginning of the refrain is outlined with a rectangle.

The image shows a musical score for Example 4.11, consisting of two systems of music. The first system begins at measure 10 and the second at measure 15. The music is written in 3/4 time. The treble clef part features a complex melodic line with many accidentals and a prominent eighth-note pattern. The bass clef part provides a harmonic and rhythmic foundation. A rectangular box highlights the beginning of the refrain in the second system, starting at measure 18. The dynamics 'mp' and 'cresc.' are indicated in the boxed section.

In the context of the opera's introduction, the "refrain" appears only once, as contrasting material to the melody. This allegretto melody re-appears in a very different incarnation in Scene II of the opera, not as an instrumental piece, but as a malagueña song with text. In its aria version, the repeated, accented octave eighth notes also have a repeated text that makes reference to the song "El Vito," and serves as a refrain. The voice that sings the aria in Scene II is foreshadowed here in the introduction. Gideon underlines the importance of the Scene II aria by making it the only tune heard as both an instrumental piece and an aria; she also creates a tune so memorable that when Conchita sings it a full scene later in the opera, the tune is unmistakable. Gideon's unique application of this melody brings about a moment of aural recall that is unparalleled in

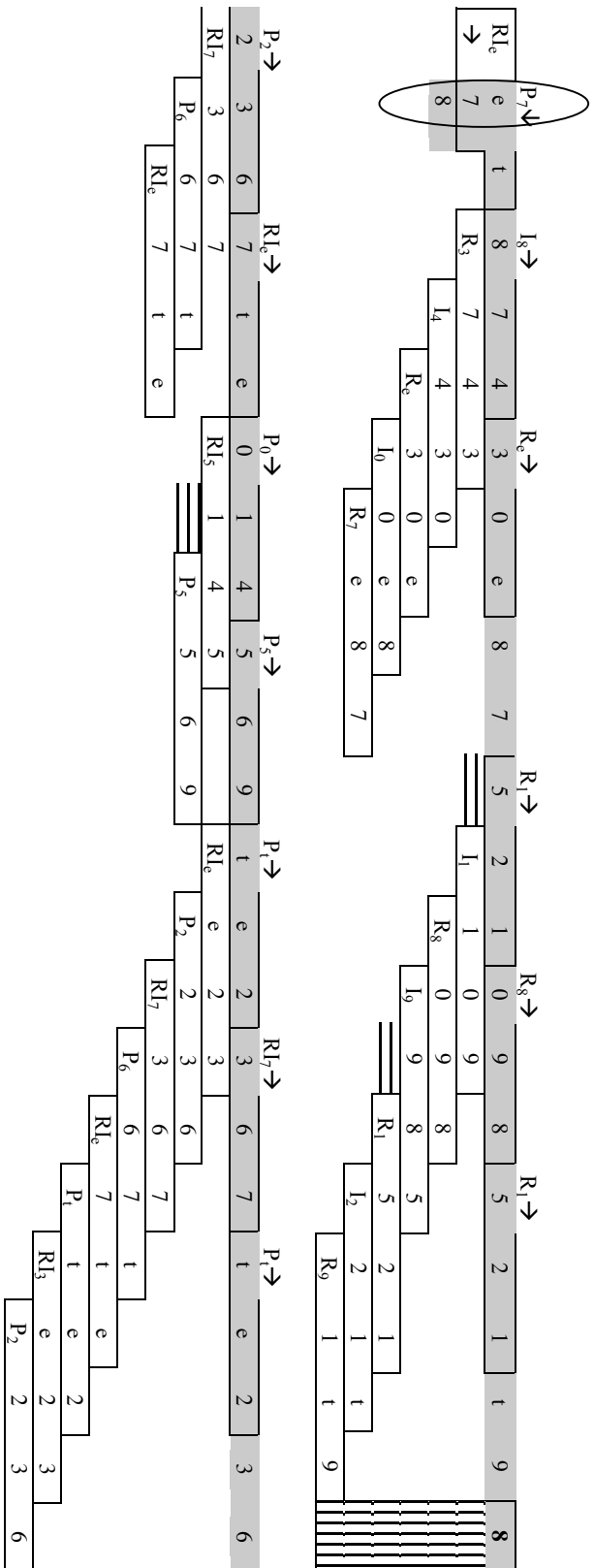
the rest of the opera.

The introduction closes with a cadenza, shared in the orchestral version of the opera by the flute, oboe, clarinet, and bassoon. Measure 42, shown in Example 4-12, contains all of the cadenza as well as closing material for the introduction, and begins with a vertically constructed 3-3 (014) trichord on G, G# and B under a fermata, and at

**Example 4.12** Measure 42, cadenza from the introduction to *Fortunato* with material not derived from 3-3 (014) outlined in rectangles.

The musical score for Example 4.12, Measure 42, is presented in two systems. The first system begins with a fermata over a vertically constructed 3-3 (014) trichord on G, G#, and B. The score is marked *mp* and *ad lib.* The second system continues the cadenza, featuring a section marked *molto cresc.* and *accel.* leading to a section marked *ff* with triplets. A box highlights a section of the score where material not derived from the 3-3 (014) trichord is present.

mezzo piano. The prelude to Gideon's malagueña included several permutations of 3-3 (014), and now the composer re-introduces that trichord as structurally significant. In fact, Gideon builds the entire cadenza on consecutive and embedded 3-3 (014) sonorities.



**Figure 4.3** Candenza in m. 42 of the Introduction to *Fortunato*. Pitch-class integers are used here to illustrate embedded forms of 3-3 (014) trichords and transformations of the three-note series <014>. Highlighted sections are musical notes in horizontal and vertical space as they occur in the cadenza. The horizontal lines indicate a half rupture in the pattern of embedding. The vertical lines under pitch class 8 indicate a full rupture in the pattern; no combination of 8 and adjacent pitches forms a (014) trichord. Permutations of P<sub>0</sub> <014> are indicated above the initial pitch of the trichord, while members of the trichord are indicated horizontally.

Figure 4.3 illustrates Gideon's complex enchaining of trichords, including transformations of the three-note series <014>. Gideon rarely composes ordered trichordal and tetrachordal motivic material, but here, she links transpositions of <014> that alternate with retrograde inversions, and inversions of <014> that alternate with retrograde transpositions. While Figure 4.3 uses pitch-class integers to illustrate Gideon's method of enchaining, Figure 4.4 provides the alternating transformational forms of these chains. All of the overlapped forms in the chains are related

**Figure 4.4** Transformational forms of <014> with alternations between I and R in the first two rows of the chart, and between P and RI in the second two rows. Each of these forms a retrograde inversion chain that draws upon the hexatonic collection. One set of four transformations repeats, as indicated by shading.

$I_8 \rightarrow R_3 \rightarrow I_4 \rightarrow R_e \rightarrow I_0 \rightarrow R_7$
$R_1 \rightarrow I_1 \rightarrow R_8 \rightarrow I_9 \rightarrow R_1 \rightarrow I_2 \rightarrow R_9$
$P_2 \rightarrow RI_7 \rightarrow P_6 \rightarrow RI_e \rightarrow P_0 \rightarrow RI_5 \rightarrow P_5$
$P_t \rightarrow RI_e \rightarrow P_2 \rightarrow RI_7 \rightarrow P_6 \rightarrow RI_e \rightarrow P_t \rightarrow RI_3 \rightarrow P_2$

by retrograde inversion, and all of these RI-chains produce forms of the hexatonic collection. The only tone that does not fit in with the 3-3 (014)-saturated cadenza is the G#, enclosed by a rectangle in Example 4.12. As we have already seen, G# carries considerable weight as a tonal center even at this early point in the opera. Gideon further emphasizes this pitch by placing a fermata over it. The end of m. 42 contains cadential material that connects it with the music of the opera's first scene; within the rectangle drawn around the closing material in Example 4.12 above, the only tones missing from the aggregate are D, A#, and B. These three pitch-classes, if they were present, would form another 3-3 (014)

trichord. Through Gideon's suppression of the three pitches that would complete the aggregate, she creates a sense of "lack"; a trichordal ghost of (014) that must be filled in and sated during the course of the opera. The triplet figure present in the highest register at the end of the introduction is a recurrent motive in the first scene of the opera, its dissonance denoting the harsh realities of life in economically depressed Spain in the first decades of the twentieth century.

The introduction to *Fortunato*, though brief when compared to typical operatic overtures, provides a window into the compositional language of Gideon's opera as a whole. Her emphasis on three of four important pitch collections, including the diatonic, octatonic, and hexatonic collections, prepares the listener with aural signposts for important material to be heard later in the opera, while emphasizing the first of three recurrent Spanish tunes, as well as on important individual pitch-classes, interval-classes, and trichords. Gideon's introduction serves as an analytical key to the compositional language of the rest of her opera.

### **Orchestrating *Fortunato***

Gideon first composed *Fortunato* as a piano-vocal score, and then proceeded to orchestrate the opera.<sup>14</sup> But the financial demands of taking the time to orchestrate an opera for which she did not have a commission may have prevented her from completing the

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<sup>14</sup> My archival research of *Fortunato* scores and edits within Gideon's papers makes it clear that Gideon's first compositional effort towards the opera was the libretto, followed by the piano-vocal score. Only then did Gideon orchestrate the first scene of the opera. The piano-vocal score was edited by Gideon before she began the process of orchestration.

orchestration.<sup>15</sup> Among Gideon's papers, only one act of the opera is present in full score. The orchestral score to Gideon's opera, though incomplete, nevertheless provides keys to the conception of her music and to important aspects of its construction. As with any opera, the piano-vocal score provides only a sliver of insight into the composer's hopes for the opera's realization. Yet, because the piano-vocal score was the first incarnation of *Fortunato*, Gideon's orchestration finds its basis in the stark, "no frills" style that Gideon employs in the smaller medium of the vocal score. Primary differences between the orchestral score and the piano-vocal score include more complex indications for instrumental articulation and the use of harmonics in the strings, and, obviously, a wider registral and timbral palette.

Gideon calls for a traditional chamber orchestra of flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn, trumpet (no lower brass), percussion, tympani, and 4-3-3-2-1 strings.<sup>16</sup> She takes advantage of the possibilities for varied articulation among the strings, using staccato pizzicato eighth notes to add emphasis to the first note of a wind player's line, as in m. 2, where the celli double the bassoon's first D. In m. 4, Gideon writes a harmonic double-stop note for the celli, so that the held Eb for the violas and celli on beat four is heard in not two, but three octaves, reinforcing its significance. Gideon's orchestration places particular emphasis on winds, calling on these players for a realization of some of the most important material in the opera, including the m. 42 cadenza of the introduction. Gideon also takes

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<sup>15</sup> In the early 1950s, both Gideon and her husband, Frederic Ewen, were requested to resign from their respective positions at Brooklyn College, CUNY, and Gideon decided—under some pressure—to resign from her secondary adjunct appointment at City College. For a detailed discussion, see Chapter 3.

<sup>16</sup> 4-3-3-2-1 strings denotes the composer's request for four first violins, three second violins, three violas, two celli, and one double bass.

advantage of the colors available through the percussion section, particularly for the Spanish tunes. Gideon calls for tambourines at m. 224 when she first introduces the raucous E-Ionian street tune outside Alberto's office window, contributing to the humor of the moment. Despite the increased range of dynamics and the vast expansion of timbral possibilities, the orchestral score, in pitch material, remains remarkably close to its piano-vocal roots.

### **Conclusion**

*Fortunato* possesses compositional elements that reflect Gideon's style more generally, but also stands out among her works as a piece in which she felt enough freedom to experiment with small series and aggregate completion. In particular, Gideon's Introduction to Scene I encapsulates the compositional techniques used in the opera as a whole. Her reliance upon the four pitch collections presented above creates a unified sound-world that pervades the opera as a whole, enabling the listener to perceive transitions from one sound setting to another, and thus to fully enter into the musical landscape Gideon establishes in her composition.

## CHAPTER 5

### *Fortunato*: A Music-Biographical Analysis

It's many years since I composed a piece without knowing who would perform it, except for a short opera I wrote just because I felt like it. That was a reckless sparring with Fate. It hasn't as yet been produced.<sup>1</sup>

—Miriam Gideon

Who can measure the heat and violence of a poet's heart when it is caught and tangled in a woman's body?<sup>2</sup>

—Virginia Woolf

This chapter will examine the music and libretto of *Fortunato* in relation to Gideon's writings and significant events in the composer's life during the opera's composition. I will argue that the musical language of the opera, detailed in Chapter 4, reflects Gideon's innermost thoughts during the tumultuous era that was the American 1950s, and that aspects of the composer's life are inscribed in the music and libretto of her opera. Gideon's personal writings help to establish her state of mind during the composition of her opera, illuminating her complex interior world. In this chapter, I explicitly connect musical analysis with biographical material in order to break down the boundaries between these two seemingly unconnected entities.<sup>3</sup> The connection of

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<sup>1</sup> Bernard Rosenberg and Deena Rosenberg, *The Music Makers* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), 67.

<sup>2</sup> Virginia Woolf, *A Room of Her Own* (Orlando: Harcourt, 1989 [1929]), 48.

<sup>3</sup> Previous musicological studies connecting biography and analysis have built the foundation upon which my study unfolds. These studies include in particular the music analyses found in Hisama, *Gendering Musical Modernism*; Kielian-Gilbert, "Of Poetics and Poesis"; Susan McClary, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, & Sexuality* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1991); and Judith Tick, *Ruth Crawford Seeger: A Composer's Search for American Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997). Although my analytical approach to *Fortunato* is particularly indebted to Hisama's work

biography to the musical score—here viewed as a primary source that can be read as an autobiographical text alongside Gideon’s personal papers—may elucidate musical meanings not apparent without an intentional connection to biography. Just as an understanding of the music is enriched by biographical material, in turn, Gideon’s biography may be enriched through an exploration of her opera.

George Perle and Milton Babbitt have characterized Gideon as a composer whose primary compositional technique lies in her extensive manipulation of small motives.<sup>4</sup> Gideon’s focus on small-scale events in her music results in a form of composition that reflects the composer’s heightened attention to details of her personal life, as documented in her journals and diaries. As she writes, “Often my interpretation of dreams bogs down in details—loses rhythm of whole. Do I not do this in other areas? In music I am aware of this danger and try to overcome it but in other situations not.”<sup>5</sup> Several pages later, she expands this line of thought: “Often I allow a clear point to remain unseen because I am so taken with some detail of a situation that I become blind to the whole.”<sup>6</sup> Instead of pursuing a chronological reading of the opera, I shall proceed thematically, exploring musical and biographical connections in detail rather than providing a comprehensive reading of the entire opera. Gideon’s treatment of the characters in *Fortunato*—both musically and textually—highlights important themes in the composer’s life: the search

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on Gideon’s chamber music, this chapter engages a composition that Gideon wrote because she “felt like it” and for which she had complete control over the libretto. Throughout the analysis, I also contextualize Gideon’s opera within the larger cultural frame within which it was written.

<sup>4</sup> Hisama, *Gendering Musical Modernism*, 152.

<sup>5</sup> MGP-NYPL.

<sup>6</sup> MGP-NYPL.

for Jewish female identity, the eroticization of the father-daughter relationship, the reversal of normative gender roles, and homoerotic desire. My method of analysis represents the multifaceted nature of its object; while deriving theoretical and historical meaning from the opera itself, in the next chapter I will also take into account the physical, bodily experience of the performers who sing this intensely personal work.

### ***Fortunato: From Play to Opera***

One of the primary characteristics of Gideon's compositional style is the creation of deep connections between text and music. Her letters and personal papers are filled with quotations from favorite poems, poetry she wrote herself, and poems written by friends and sent to her in letters. On several occasions in her compositions, Gideon actually re-worked complete poems written by other poets in order to create her own world of signification.<sup>7</sup> She likewise took considerable textual liberties when writing the libretto for *Fortunato*.<sup>8</sup> While maintaining the humorous aspects of the original farce, Gideon added several new aria texts that add emotional depth to her opera characters.

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<sup>7</sup> Judith Pinnolis Fertig, "An Analysis of Selected Works of the American Composer Miriam Gideon (1906- ) in Light of Contemporary Jewish Musical Trends" (M.A. thesis, University of Cincinnati, 1978), 59. One particularly compelling instance of Gideon's textual re-workings—her personal responses to the world—is her setting of a poem by a Catholic priest, Francis Thompson, as the text for a vocal chamber work about the Holocaust, "Hound of Heaven." Gideon's own version of the poem, according to Pinnolis, resembles the original in many ways, but endows it with meaning and symbolism befitting a Jewish composer writing in 1945.

<sup>8</sup> A plot summary appears in Chapter 1, and my transcription of Gideon's own plot synopsis appears in Appendix B of this dissertation, just before the edited score.

The format of the opera allows each principal character one aria, and in her libretto, arias often draw upon text written by Gideon herself, rich with personal and cultural meaning.<sup>9</sup>

The principal male characters, Fortunato, Alberto, and Don Victorio, maintain the same basic character traits from play to opera. Gideon does not miss the irony of Fortunato's name; the experiences of this character are equally as *unfortunate* in the opera as in the play. The composer does, however, write an entirely new aria for Fortunato that addresses his feelings of inadequacy as a father, husband, and provider in terms of his gender, ironically entitled "No luck for me." In regard to the female characters in the play, Gideon omitted one entirely, and completely altered the character traits of two others. Monica, a housemaid, is described by the playwrights as "tolerably self-satisfied upon all counts," taking the most pride in "her education and intelligence."<sup>10</sup> Through the course of the first act of the play, it becomes apparent that Monica has indeed little wit upon which to base her considerable pride. She is the most bumbling of servants and a source of both amusement and frustration to her employer. Significantly, Gideon removed Monica entirely from her libretto, leaving only one female character in Scene I of the opera. An original draft of the libretto, including Gideon's marginal notes, reveals that Monica was included in the composer's original plans for the opera.<sup>11</sup> In this draft, all of the lines for Monica have either been crossed out or integrated into the lines

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<sup>9</sup> MGP-NYPL. Upon first examination, *Fortunato* does not appear to be written in any kind of traditional operatic format. But in the full score—and not in the piano/vocal score—Gideon includes a list indicating particular solo and ensemble numbers, including arias.

<sup>10</sup> Álvarez Quintero, *Four Plays*, 175.

<sup>11</sup> MGP-NYPL.

of Constanza. The foolish character traits expressed by Monica mesh well with Constanza's excessive gullibility. In Álvarez Quintero's play *The Women Have Their Way*, which was also extremely popular in the United States and Britain in the late 1940s and early 1950s,<sup>12</sup> idle gossip from the mouths of women results in an unsuspecting lawyer's marriage to a small town beauty. Clearly, the Álvarez Quintero brothers were well versed in the antics of stereotypical female characters. Gideon's decision to combine the two characters has the twofold effect of reducing the number of singers required for the scene, and of limiting stereotypically feminine character traits to one woman, rather than allowing two female characters to reinforce tropes about housemaid and wife.

In Gideon's hands, two secondary characters, Inez and Conchita, are completely transformed for the purposes of her opera, particularly in terms of their sexuality: Gideon's Inez is a locus of homoerotic desire in the opera, and her Conchita, who is gender-neutral in the play, performs a seductive aria in *Fortunato*. If we regard these changes as emblematic of the composer/librettist's world view, the female characters as created by Gideon may provide insight into her own struggles with issues of identity and sexuality during the 1950s.

### **Constanza and Amaranta: Gideon's Search for Jewish Female Identity**

While Gideon's choice to re-write the characteristics of Inez and Conchita in the opera is significant, it is likely that her initial attraction to the Quintero brothers' play stemmed, at least in part, from the two female leads: Constanza, the architect's wife, and

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<sup>12</sup> The Gaslight site, named after the 1944 film and maintained by Mount Royal College, details performance locations of plays performed in North America during the early to mid-twentieth century. <http://gaslight.mtroyal.ab.ca/fortintro.htm> (accessed July 7, 2007).

Amaranta, the professional sharpshooter. At their core, these women remain very much the same from play to opera, and thus carry as much meaning as their altered counterparts. Through Constanza and Amaranta, Gideon negotiates her own identity as a Jewish woman writing opera in the tumultuous era of the 1950s. While American women's roles were shifting back into the private sphere, and a cold war U.S. emphasized marriage, children, and patriotism, Gideon was adjusting to her new marriage to Frederic Ewen and continuing to build her career as a composer and college professor.<sup>13</sup> Constanza and Amaranta, foils to one another in their modes of femininity, provide a creative space for Gideon's own multifaceted identity as composer, intellectual, and wife to take shape within her opera.

In September 1945, Bess Myerson (shown in Figure 5.1) won the Miss America pageant, making her the first, and still only, Jewish Miss America. Edward Shapiro, writing in *Modern Judaica*, describes American Jewish women's reaction to Myerson's victory in Atlantic City: "not only did it vindicate their pride in being Jews, but it was also reproach to those who questioned their status as Americans."<sup>14</sup> Jewish women in the postwar era were experiencing rapid shifts in their orientation as American Jews, and Gideon's identity in this era was certainly tied to her faith.<sup>15</sup> Although *Fortunato* has no

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<sup>13</sup> Chapter 2 provides a detailed biographical sketch of Gideon, including dates of her marriages and important career milestones.

<sup>14</sup> Edward S. Shapiro, "World War II and American Jewish Identity," *Modern Judaica* 10/1 (1990): 77-78.

<sup>15</sup> In her journal from Paris in 1939 (transcribed in Appendix B of this dissertation), Gideon often mentions whether or not friends or acquaintances are Jewish; upon meeting Darius Mihaud for the first time, she describes him as "fat, French, and utterly casual and charming" and then asks herself, "Is he a Jew?" (MGP-NYPL). By the time she was in the process of composing *Fortunato*, Gideon was teaching at the Jewish Theological

direct links to Gideon's sacred works, aspects of both the libretto and the music may be linked to her identity as an American Jewish woman. As cultural theorist Stuart Hall suggests, "cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything that is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialized past, they are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture, and power."<sup>16</sup> Constanza and Amaranta, the two relatively un-changed female characters in Gideon's opera, illuminate opposing aspects of womanhood that would resonate with both commonplace and transformational attitudes about Jewish women in 1950s society. I propose that these two characters in Gideon's opera may be read via the Jewish marriage contract (*ketubbah*) in order to gain fuller insight into the composer's identity not only as a Jewish woman, but also as artist and wife.

**Figure 5.1** Bess Myerson wins the 1945 Miss America pageant.




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Seminary, making her the primary income-earner in the Gideon/Ewen household. Gideon had, by this point, written many sacred works and received commissions from several Jewish Congregations. In a November 10, 2006 talk given at the Center for Jewish History in New York, Ellie M. Hisama related that in a phone conversation, George Perle had noted that in his opinion, Gideon wrote her Jewish works for her job at the Jewish Theological Seminary, and that he thought her sacred works were not as strong compositionally as her secular works. Hisama disagreed with Perle's assertion in her talk.

<sup>16</sup> Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora" in *Identity, Community, Cultural Difference*, ed. Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990), 225.

At the beginning of the marriage contract, just after the identification of the bride and groom, the text shifts to first person, representing the voice of the groom, stating, “Be my wife according to the law of Moses and Israel. I will work, honor, feed and support you in the custom of Jewish men, who work, honor, feed, and support their wives faithfully.”<sup>17</sup> Although Alberto and Constanza are not specifically Jewish in Álvarez Quintero’s play, their relationship as explicated in the first scene of Gideon’s opera bears a great resemblance to these first lines of the ketubbah. Alberto is first introduced to us as a hardworking architect; according to Gideon’s plot synopsis he is “in comfortable circumstances but not rich.” Alberto honors Constanza’s wish to grant Don Victorio his request for money, though Alberto must realize that she is easily taken in. Yet, in order to ensure their own security, they make a vow to reject any more beggars, no matter how sincere they may seem; Alberto saves Constanza both figuratively and financially. Words from Gideon’s dream journals suggest that she felt a similar sense of gullibility to Constanza. She writes: “When faced with an irrational story I am inclined to accept it as ‘magic’ without questioning source, or content. This has happened often in the past, where I fell in with outlandish proposals without questioning their validity (often tongue in cheek).”<sup>18</sup> Gideon statement strongly identifies with Constanza’s capacity to believe even the most fraudulent of beggars. In another entry, Gideon writes: “I expect my husbands to save me. Many people distort, deceive, and betray.” This statement bears striking similarity to Alberto and Constanza’s relationship, in which the husband serves

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<sup>17</sup> Aryeh Kaplan, *Made in Heaven: A Jewish Wedding Guide* (New York: Moznaim Publishing, 1983), 105.

<sup>18</sup> MGP-NYPL.

as disciplinarian to his wife; no children are present in the household to diffuse the wife's identity as a dependent in need of guidance.

While in the first scene, Constanza is the recipient of support and comfort, in the final scene of the opera, her foil, Amaranta, turns the marriage contract on its head, enacting the normative masculine role by working, honoring, and supporting faithfully the impoverished Fortunato. Amaranta, like Gideon, is an artist, working tirelessly at her profession despite its considerable personal risks. She seeks an assistant to enter into a contractual agreement, and Fortunato replies to her inquiry. Thus far, Fortunato has succeeded in obeying the Ten Commandments and in his own attempt to keep up his end of the marriage contract. But in the final scene, Amaranta has the last word. She is extremely direct in character, exerting power over Fortunato and providing him with the money he needs to support his family. She controls his capacity to fulfill his duty as a husband and father. In her journals, Gideon refers to a need for control over aspects of her life, including her music. "My imitation and rage when music is involved—here I am an authority in contrast to timidity in other matters—but am I authoritarian, too?" Many such questions of control arise in her journals. Gideon may have been attracted to Amaranta as a character because of her strength and her professionalism, having ultimate control not only over Fortunato, but also over the outcome of the entire drama. Yet, in spite of her extraordinary strength, Amaranta is a dynamic character that, at times in the opera, reveals her fear that her inner doubts will be the end of her career. Amaranta sings: "I know what everyone is saying about me. My nerves are shot, my hand is unsteady. I'm going to pieces. But by God, I'll show them!" Gideon writes: "[N]o matter how great the stress, I manage to keep going with a good front—waiting for a safe

moment to collapse.” Thus, Gideon’s strongest female character in the opera possesses the power to enact the male role in the marriage contract, yet occasionally reveals a poignant sense of doubt in her own abilities. Gideon may also have strongly identified with Amaranta’s role as provider of income for Fortunato, as she was the chief breadwinner in her household after Frederic Ewen’s resignation from Brooklyn College in 1952.

Gideon’s Jewish identity is also present in the musical landscape of her opera. In her sacred works, Gideon often drew upon the three main Jewish modes or “shteygers,” and employed them motivically.<sup>19</sup> Judith Pinnolis Fertig has explored Gideon’s use of these modes in the composer’s sacred works.<sup>20</sup> One of these modes serves as pitch-class set 7-22 (0125689) in *Fortunato*, saturating the musical language of Gideon’s opera with smaller pitch-class motives derived from the colors and sonorities of her cultural orientation. A Jewish mode employed by Gideon with relative frequency in her sacred works is *avahah rabbah*, the most complex of the three main modes. According to Jewish music scholar Eliyahu Schleifer, the *avahah rabbah* mode has historically been regarded as “an excellent means of expressing agitated emotions, both joyful and sad.”<sup>21</sup> What better words to describe Fortunato’s search for a means to support his family?

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<sup>19</sup> Eliyahu Schleifer believes that the cantors who were part of the commissioning process for many of Gideon’s sacred works may have specifically requested (and in certain cases, insisted) that she use the old Sephardic modes in composing pieces for synagogue. Personal conversation with Schleifer, New York, November 10, 2006.

<sup>20</sup> Pinnolis Fertig, “An Analysis of Selected Works,” 56, 185.

<sup>21</sup> Eliyahu Schleifer, “Jewish Music”, *Grove Music Online* ed. L. Macy, <http://www.grovemusic.com> (accessed November 8, 2006); see also Pinnolis Fertig, “An Analysis of Selected Works,” 175.

In the previous chapter, I examined the unique properties of the *avahah rabbah* mode and its construction. As a set of seven pitch-classes, the set can be divided up into a trichord and a tetrachord, a division that is not arbitrary when one takes into consideration that the fourth degree of *avahah rabbah*—A-natural if we begin on E-natural—can serve as a temporary tonic. Figure 5.2 provides a representation of *avahah rabbah* beginning on E natural, and divided into a trichord and a tetrachord. The trichord formed by the first

**Figure 5.2** Jewish mode *avahah rabbah* with integers, with e representing eleven.

E	F	G#	A	B	C	D#
4	5	8	9	e	0	3
(014)			(0134)			

three pitches of the mode is 3-3 (014) on E, F, and G#. This trichord possesses the defining sonorities of the *avahah rabbah* mode, and recurs throughout the final scene of the opera, and through other sections of *Fortunato* as well. The final syllable of sung text, on the word “children,” employs this sonority, and the final sound of the opera, the tetrachord 4-3 (0134), contains 3-3 (014). The following examples in the music begin to

show the large-scale importance of this trichord in *Fortunato*. In the Introduction of the opera, Gideon builds an entire cadenza by using exclusively 3-3 (014) trichords, as shown in Figure 4.3 of the previous chapter. In the last measure of the first scene (Example 5.1), Gideon outlines 3-3 (014) twice on D#, E, and G, emphasizing the trichord through a large shift in register, and letting its color ring until the next scene

**Example 5.1** Final measure of Scene 1, with two examples of 3-3 (014) on D#, E, and G.

begins. The final chord of Conchita's song, detailed in a subsequent section, is also a manifestation of 3-3 (014). *Avahah rabbah's* structure and defining sonorities bring Gideon's opera into line with her sacred works, and help to clarify our understanding of her musical language. In several of the subsequent music-cultural analyses, a recognition of *avahah rabbah's* importance in the opera brings the music into clearer focus, while reminding us subtly that Gideon's musical heritage in Judaism is not lost in her secular works.

### Staging Disability, Renouncing Masculinity

Within the complex web of gender dynamics Gideon weaves in *Fortunato*, the title character serves as the center around which all human relationships in the opera

revolve. Fortunato's aria, which occurs in the second of the opera's three scenes, exemplifies the kind of socio-cultural window Gideon opens in composing an aria. Just prior to his aria, Fortunato has learned that Don Victorio usurped his chance to obtain a loan from Alberto Hidalgo, the young architect from the first scene. To add insult to injury, Victorio does not spend the money on his rent or his family, but on wine, a glass of which he reluctantly offers to Fortunato. While Fortunato is in the wine shop with Victorio, Conchita sings a malagueña song to her father, the blind guitarist. As Conchita exits after her aria, the Blind Man—who has no name in the opera other than “Blind Man”—picks up his guitar and begins to play one of the three Spanish tunes Gideon interpolates into her opera. Gideon's stage directions for the Blind Man in the measures leading up to Fortunato's aria read: “[Conchita] runs off. Blind Man settles himself, puts tin plate on ground, takes up guitar.”<sup>22</sup> Apparently, from m. 311 to m. 325 he takes a bit of time to settle in and play. But by m. 325, the Blind Man is ready, and Gideon indicates that he should begin to play “somewhat savagely.”<sup>23</sup> The tune he selects is not new to the listeners' ears; we first heard it as “street music” playing outside Alberto's house in the first scene of the opera.

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<sup>22</sup> Miriam Gideon, *Fortunato*, (New York: American Composers Alliance, 1965), Scene 2, mm. 311-25; MGP-NYPL.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, mm. 325-27.

Gideon slightly alters the shape and harmonic context of each Spanish tune according to the dramatic and musical context of its use. This street tune is no exception. When, in the first scene, Alberto heard the tune playing in the street below his window, the architect closed the shutters in order to begin the day's work uninterrupted. In the offbeat chordal accompaniment Gideon composes for the tune, she indicates among the

**Example 5.2** Measures 234-244 of Scene I, the street tune heard outside Alberto's window.

The musical score for Example 5.2 consists of two systems of music. The first system, measures 234-240, is marked *lively, accented* and *p*. The melody is in the treble clef, and the accompaniment is in the bass clef, labeled *(Quasi guitarra)*. The second system, measures 241-244, is marked *sim.* and *pp*. The melody continues in the treble clef, and the accompaniment continues in the bass clef.

broken chords that the passage should be played “quasi guitarra.” The accompanying dissonant chords contain minor sevenths and major ninths, in keeping with the general harmonic language of the opera up to this point, but the use of frequent octave doublings and occasional open fifths lends a guitar-like sonority to the tune.<sup>24</sup> Open, clear, and consistent in this context, the melody of the street music is repeated three times; the

<sup>24</sup> The use of the term “dissonant” locates Gideon’s style along a spectrum of art music composers. Within the scheme of her compositional language, sevenths do not function in the same way they do in tonal music, and therefore cannot be considered “dissonant” in the sense that they would be within a traditional, tonal idiom.

second time, the melody and chords shift up an octave, and the third time, the tune modulates to a C-centered version of the same tune. Then Alberto closes his window, and the tune ends abruptly, not to be heard again until Scene II.

Although the opera audience and the characters onstage heard the street tune in the first scene, the musicians who played the tune were not visible. The tune, disembodied, floats in the consciousness of the listener until heard again in Scene II, this time played by a person with a disabled body: the blind street guitarist. The scene presents two assumptions about blindness: first, as Catherine Kudlick suggests, that “blindness is *the* defining factor in a person’s life”<sup>25</sup> to the exclusion of race, class, gender and other aspects of identity; and second, that the body of the blind man is corrupt and inferior, reflecting inner corruption and inferiority that mirror the exterior. Through the small window of the opera, the Blind Man’s life appears limited: he must beg for food because of his disability, one that defines his entire character. As he plays the guitar, even the music that emanates from his instrument is suspect, a corrupt version of a tune the audience already recognizes. In reality, the blind beggar’s economic situation is comparable to Fortunato’s: he is poor, the economy is exceptionally bad, and he has no money with which to feed his family. But while Fortunato can actively look for work, the Blind Man apparently has no hope of employment; his poverty is permanent. As Martha Saxton states, “a basic tenet of disability oppression [is] that disability causes the low

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<sup>25</sup> Catherine J. Kudlick, “The Outlook of *The Problem* and the Problem with *The Outlook*: Two Advocacy Journals Reinvent Blind People in Turn-of-the-Century America,” in *The New Disability History: American Perspectives*, ed. Paul K. Longmore and Lauri Umanski (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 209.

socioeconomic status of disabled persons.”<sup>26</sup> Although Gideon took many liberties in her libretto, she did not give names to the two disabled characters in the opera, the Blind Man and the Cripple, reinforcing disability as the most defining part of their individual identities;<sup>27</sup> Fortunato and Victorio also bear names that can be construed as symbolic.

The trope of the blind street musician is compounded by Gideon’s musical treatment of the tune that he plays. What the audience expects to hear is fulfilled by Gideon’s alterations to the melody: like its player, the tune is distorted, disturbed, violently corrupted.<sup>28</sup> Gideon has twisted the tune in order to reflect general conceptions about disabled bodies, including the body of the blind beggar. Instead of the perfect fourth that initiates the tune in Scene 1, Gideon writes a major third. The entire scheme of the melody is altered, resulting in a version that fits the indication to play “somewhat savagely,” as seen in when one compares the original statement of the tune in Example 5.2 to its Scene II incarnation in Example 5.3. In the Blind Man’s performance of the tune, chords are not strummed; rather, each offbeat chord is accented, creating a percussive sound that underlines the intensity of the Blind Man’s playing. The pedal tone

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<sup>26</sup> Martha Saxton, “Disability Rights and Selective Abortion,” *Disability Studies Reader*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., ed. Lennard J. Davis (New York: Routledge, 2006), 105.

<sup>27</sup> While Gideon’s interpretations of gender dynamics in the opera lean away from the conservative, normative practices associated with the 1950s, her interpretation of disability as interpreted through the Blind Man and the Cripple replicates the same ideologies of disability that were prevalent in the play, written four decades earlier. For an account of disability and masculinity in the 1950s, see Hugh Gregory Gallagher, *Black Bird Fly Away: Disabled in an Able Bodied World* (St. Petersburg, FL: Vandamere Press, 1998).

<sup>28</sup> For a detailed discussion of music as reflective of disability, see Joseph N. Straus, “Normalizing the Abnormal: Disability in Music and Music Theory,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 59/1 (2006); and Neil Lerner and Joseph N. Straus, eds., *Sounding Off: Theorizing Music and Disability* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

A#, present from the start of the tune at m. 325 through the fermata at m. 337 and seen in Example 5.3, foreshadows that tone's importance in Fortunato's aria, which follows. After the fermata at m. 337, Gideon marks the remainder of the tune *calando*, a performance indication that is reinforced by a decrescendo and finally a single tone at m. 341, unmediated by other sounds: pianissimo high C in the "guitar" part. The stage directions over the *calando* section reveal the dramatic reason behind the Blind Man's

**Example 5.3** Spanish tune played by the Blind Man in Scene II, mm. 325-341.

*fast* II (14)  
 (Blind Man begins to play, somewhat savagely.)

325

*f*

332 *slower* (Fortunato comes out of wine shop, dejected.) *p* *calando*

339 *mp* *slower* *rit...*

No luck for me! ——— I can't face it an - y - more.  
 (Blind Man stops playing.)

*pp* *mp*

suddenly quieter, slower playing: “Fortunato comes out of the wine shop dejected.”<sup>29</sup> The juxtaposition of Fortunato and the Blind Man in Scene II reinforces the impotence of both characters in the opera. Fortunato, though well in body, is as powerless in fulfilling his duty as a father and husband as his blind acquaintance is. The presence of the Blind Man during Fortunato’s aria suggests that Fortunato has become yet another “disposable” member of society, as the disabled are often considered to be. In the words of Ruth Hubbard, “It is not new for people to view disability as a form of pollution.”<sup>30</sup> Fortunato and the Blind Man are both portrayed as societal undesirables in the opera, and Gideon’s musical setting of the Blind Man’s guitar music as the introduction to Fortunato’s aria highlights the similarity of their socioeconomic status.

As with the text for Conchita’s aria in Scene II, Gideon wrote an entirely new text for Fortunato’s aria; no comparable poem or monologue occurs in the play. In this remarkable piece, Fortunato laments his inability to provide for his family, and his children in particular. The aria concludes with a resolution by Fortunato to do whatever he must in order to feed his five “little ones.” Gideon’s original text, and her musical setting of the aria, reveals much about her attitude toward traditional family roles and men as financial providers during the time of the opera’s composition. The text for Fortunato’s aria is in Figure 5.3.

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<sup>29</sup> Gideon, *Fortunato*, Scene II, m. 335.

<sup>30</sup> Ruth Hubbard, “Abortion and Disability: Who Should and Who Should Not Inhabit the World,” in *Disability Studies Reader*, ed. Lennard J. Davis, 93.

**Figure 5.3** Fortunato's aria with text by Miriam Gideon.

No luck for me!  
 I can't face it anymore.  
 How can I go home?  
 What door shall I knock at now?  
 Only silence and disdain do I find.  
 All doors are closed to me—  
 Empty promises, refusal—  
 The world has no use for me, no use at all!

How to face my wife, my children,  
 My little ones, my own....  
 How much can a man stand  
 Without trembling  
 Without breaking,  
 Without stumbling in the dark,  
 Without asking where he's going,  
 Or how, or why?

Is there an answer to the question?  
 Hear me!  
 Hear me, children, hear me!  
 My pride, ambition,  
 All that makes of me a man,  
 All things I once held dear I vow to forget,  
 All I once held dear, my hopes,  
 All my youth,  
 All my strength,  
 All my manliness,  
 I renounce them all,  
 I give them all, my darling children, for you,  
 For you, your father has become a beggar!  
 To the devil with self-respect!  
 I'll beg!

In the play, Fortunato's wife goes unmentioned, but Gideon gives her a presence in the aria, rather than erasing her. The text is also remarkable for its poetic features, in particular her use of anaphora in the second and third strophes, that lends a sense of realism the character's state of desperation. The most fascinating aspect of the aria's text

is Fortunato's renunciation of his masculinity. The first two strophes bespeak his despair and confusion through rhetorical questions. Then, in the third strophe, his poetic voice is steadier as he sings "My pride, ambition, / All that makes of me a man, / All things I once held dear I vow to forget, / All I once held dear, my hopes, / All my youth, / All my strength, / All my manliness, / I renounce them all . . ." <sup>31</sup> Fortunato, unable to help his family through socially acceptable means for a man, figuratively emasculates himself in order to empower himself to beg, thereby maintaining his status as breadwinner and therefore head of his household.

Fortunato's situation echoes Gideon's personal life in the mid-1950s, the period during which she wrote the opera. Between September 1952 and 1958, the Gideon/Ewen household was embroiled in the political turmoil associated with Ewen's resignation from Brooklyn College. <sup>32</sup> Unable to obtain a teaching job during the McCarthy years, Ewen continued his academic writing and kept up a schedule of lectures. <sup>33</sup> By virtue of the position offered to her in 1955 by Jewish Theological Seminary, Gideon became the primary income earner in her household. One can imagine Ewen feeling desperately depressed, useless, worthless, and emasculated—the same emotions Fortunato expresses in his aria. In addition, during a time when "normative" gender roles were at their zenith in American consciousness, many of the gender roles in the Gideon/Ewen house were

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<sup>31</sup> Gideon, *Fortunato*, 45-46.

<sup>32</sup> A detailed account of Ewen's resignation appears in Chapter 3.

<sup>33</sup> For a cogent discussion of universities and McCarthyism, see Ellen Schrecker, *The Age of McCarthyism: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: St. Martin's, 2002); and also by Schrecker, *No Ivory Tower: McCarthyism and the Universities* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

skewed away from the norm. Gideon, already engaged in a career ordinarily pursued by men, was the breadwinner and the public figure; Ewen earned little money and remained in the private sphere in order to write, though he did speak in public on occasion. Gideon, then, had experienced firsthand her husband's forced early retirement and its effect on his mental health, and hers. As she stated in retrospect, "Of course I felt it was an oppressive period."<sup>34</sup>

The music in Fortunato's aria parallels his textual transition from desperate questioning to resolution within Gideon's motivic style of composition. The aria is built almost entirely on vertical constructions of trichords and tetrachords. Only a handful of chords in the entire aria do not contain semitonal dissonance at either the minor second or major seventh, foregrounding dissonance as the norm in this piece—an allegory for Fortunato's life, where poverty is the norm. While Gideon does use motivic saturation as a compositional technique, she parses out her use of the primary sonorities until the climax of the aria has been achieved; only then does she write consecutive permutations of a single trichord or tetrachord. Gideon's text, with its undeniable gender commentary, reaches its climax on the word "man." Fortunato has renounced the personal attributes that "make" him a man, such as his pride, ambition, hope, youth, and strength—his "manliness." Without these qualities, he is feminized; by othering himself, Fortunato ironically empowers himself to beg for money. Gideon employs a wide variety of chords at the start of the aria, so many that the aria seems to float in confusion for the first page. Although 3-3 (014) is a prominent sonority, Gideon's use of it is sparing, and interspersed with many other chords. At the moment when Fortunato begins to sing the

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<sup>34</sup> A. Ewen, Miriam Gideon Interview (FEP-TLNYU).

text “Hear me!” in m. 393, the aria begins to gain a cohesive language, with frequent vertical statements of 3-3 (014) and 4-18 (0147) beginning to predominate, as seen in Example 5.4.

**Example 5.4** Musical language of Fortunato’s aria beginning to focus around 3-3 (014) and 4-18 (0147), mm. 393-97.

F.

The musical score for Example 5.4 consists of three systems of staves. The top staff is the vocal line in bass clef, starting at measure 393. The lyrics are: "Hear me! Hear me, child-ren, hear me! My pride, am bi-tion,". The middle staff is the piano accompaniment in treble clef, marked *f* (forte) and *mp* (mezzo-piano). The bottom staff is the piano accompaniment in bass clef. Harmonic annotations are provided for several measures:

- Measure 393: [C#, D, F] (014)
- Measure 394: [A#, B, D] (014)
- Measure 395: [D, F, G#, A] (0147)
- Measure 396: [C#, D, F, Ab] (0147)
- Measure 397: [C#, D, F] (014)
- Measure 398: [G, G#, B] (014)
- Measure 399: [C#, D, F] (014)

Other markings include *8va* (octave up) for the vocal line, *loco* for the piano accompaniment, and dynamic markings *f* and *mp*. Vertical lines connect the harmonic annotations to the corresponding notes in the piano accompaniment staves.

The word “man” is the turning point in the aria, at m. 400. Held for four beats on F#, “man” is given the longest duration of any word in the aria, and is also the aria’s registral high point. As seen in Example 5.5, the chord Gideon writes beneath “man” is a 4-7 (0145) tetrachord, a sound that is as yet unheard in the aria. Outlined with the pitch-

**Example 5.5** 4-7 (0145) in m. 400; 4-19 (0148) in m. 401.

The image shows a musical score for Example 5.5. It consists of three staves. The top staff is the vocal line in bass clef, 2/4 time, with lyrics "me a man". The middle staff is the piano accompaniment in treble clef, 2/4 time. The bottom staff is the piano accompaniment in bass clef, 2/4 time. A large oval highlights the vocal line and piano accompaniment for measures 400 and 401, corresponding to the word "man".

classes F#, G, A# and B, the chord’s axis of symmetry is between G# and A, two pitch-classes that continue to figure importantly in the opera. After Fortunato sings “man,” it is as though he has steeled himself in order to do whatever he must do to feed his family. Gideon’s palette of chords diminishes quickly, and 4-18 (0147) and 3-3 (014) are the primary sonorities between mm. 404 and 413. Finally, as Fortunato sings his vow, the musical language that surrounds his statement comes into its clearest focus yet, with every chord between measures 413 and 422 a permutation of 4-18 (0147), seen in Example 5.6. On the word “beg,” the final word of the aria at m. 425, he sings over a 4-19 (0148) tetrachord on D#, E, G, and B, a sonority heard only three other times in the aria, at significant moments. At mm. 397 and 399, 4-19 (0148) tetrachords frame a 4-18

**Example 5.6** 4-18 (0147), 4-19 (0148), 4-7 (0145) and 4-13 (0136) vertical tetrachords at the end of Fortunato's aria, mm. 413-32.

The image displays a musical score for Fortunato's aria, measures 413-32. It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line (F. Soprano) and piano accompaniment (piano).

- System 1 (Measures 413-418):** The vocal line begins with the lyrics "nounce them all, I give them all, my dar-ling child-ren, for you, for". The piano accompaniment features a prominent vertical tetrachord (0147) in the right hand, consisting of the notes D#, E, G, and A. The score includes markings for *cresc.*, *f*, and *allargando*.
- System 2 (Measures 419-425):** The vocal line continues with "you, your fa-ther has be-come a beg-gar! To the Dev-il with self-re-spect! I'll beg!". The piano accompaniment features a vertical tetrachord (0148) in the right hand, consisting of the notes D#, E, G, and A. The score includes markings for *(desperately)*, *f*, *a tempo: moderato*, and *espr.*.
- System 3 (Measures 426-432):** The piano accompaniment continues with a series of chords, including vertical tetrachords (0145)/(014) and (0136). The score includes markings for *mf*, *p*, *mf*, *p*, *accet...*, *p*, *sf*, *p*, and *sf*.

Annotations (0147), (0148), (0145)/(014), and (0136) are placed above the piano accompaniment staves, with lines pointing to the specific vertical tetrachords. The vocal line is also annotated with (0147) above measure 419.

(0147) D#, E, G, A chord on the important sung word "man," shown in Example 5.5 above. Gideon emphasizes the importance of Fortunato's character transformation by

leaving his final texted statement unaccompanied in mm. 423 and 424. As he “paces restlessly, overcome with despair” after his aria, Gideon alternates between 4-7 (0145) and 3-3 (014) chords, shown in Example 5.6, until the stage direction indicates that Fortunato should stop and look “fearfully around” him in search of an object for his newfound commitment to begging. With this change in attitude, Gideon’s chordal sonorities shift so that the ten closing chords of the aria are all derived from 4-13 (0136) tetrachords, also in Example 5.6.

Immediately after Fortunato’s aria, as if to seal his symbolic renunciation of his masculinity, he attempts to beg money from a “young woman stenographer” who is walking briskly through town. In the play, this young woman does not have a job—she is merely a young woman. Although the role she plays in the opera is not altogether different from her role in the play, the naming of this woman’s employment poignantly speaks to Gideon’s status as a woman with a job, while also foregrounding her husband’s politically based inability to work. This moment in the opera, at m. 433 in Scene II, is the gender axis of the entire opera. Before this measure, men are the characters in power; after the entrance of the stenographer, women continue to be in power through the end of the opera. As if to seal this gender axis musically, Gideon writes a significant trichord from Conchita’s aria, 3-5 (016), on C#, D, and G# to begin the new section.

### **Conchita and the Eroticization of the Father-Daughter Relationship**

The greatest change in character between the play and the opera is manifested in the character Conchita, who for her first appearance in the play is simply referred to in the neuter as “the child.” Conchita is the daughter of the blind violinist from whom

Fortunato steals a plateful of gold in the second act of the play; this relationship remains the same from play to opera, though Gideon converts the violinist to a guitarist. In the opera, however, Conchita is clearly an older daughter of the guitarist, perhaps twelve or thirteen. As she enters the opera at the start of Scene II, she is dancing as the blind musician plays a tune. Before any dialogue between characters begins, Conchita sings a seductive malagueña song with text (given in Figure 5.4) written explicitly for this section of the opera by Gideon; her text is loosely based on lyrics traditionally applied to another tune, “El Vito.”<sup>35</sup> I will argue that Gideon’s motivically saturated setting of this sexually charged text may reflect aspects of Gideon’s most privately held memories, as reflected in her diaries.

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<sup>35</sup> E-mail communication with Carol Hess, June 14, 2007.

**Figure 5.4** Text of Conchita's song, written by Miriam Gideon based on the traditional lyrics to "El Vito."

To Seville to see the bullfight,  
 Went a Malaguenian daughter.  
 She had gone to see the bullfight  
 When a handsome lad waylaid and caught her.  
 With a vito vito vito,  
 With a vito vito va!

At my face, they must not stare so;  
 To my cheeks the blood goes rushing;  
 At my face they must not stare so,  
 For it sets me all a-blushing.  
 With a vito vito vito,  
 With a vito vito va!

At my face don't look, don't dare, sir,  
 For it's color up you'll call, sir!  
 At my face don't look, don't dare, sir,  
 Or in love with me you'll fall, sir!  
 With a vito vito vito,  
 With a vito vito va!

All of gold are girls unmated,  
 All of silver those that married,  
 All the widows copper-plated,  
 All of tin the old who tarried!

The first strophe of text sets the scene for the entire aria: while on her way to a public event, a young woman finds herself delayed by a handsome young man, who quickly catches her. The two strophes that follow indicate the young woman's confusion: while she is embarrassed and uncomfortable with the attention given her by the young man and the crowd of onlookers, she also has a strong sense of her own power and sexuality. She understands that if the men stare at her, she will blush, but that men will fall in love with her, a dichotomy that sets up an opposition between innocence and

knowledge. The final strophe offers an epilogue drawn directly from the original “El Vito,” suggesting that women are only valued according to their age and marital status. In other terms, women’s real worth is determined within the private sphere. Thus, the the “Malaguenian daughter” in the poem should have expected trouble when she left home to attend a public event.

The malagueña is a type of flamenco music originating in southern Spain, and more specifically, a type of fandango characterized by its free rhythm.<sup>36</sup> A malagueña text traditionally comprises five-line octosyllabic strophes, which might limit the amount of rhythmic variation possible. While the composer is free to improvise in one sense, the text controls the overall structure of the piece. This seeming contradiction might be viewed as symbolic of Gideon’s sense of personal freedom or autonomy. Although she recognized her assertiveness in some situations, she also writes of her confusion in situations involving decision-making or politics, feeling a need to be “led by the hand” like a “little girl.” She writes: “Reporting on recent conversation with my father: I show by tone of voice attitude of little girl confronted by powerful, tho[ugh] unreasonable parent—instead of woman in full maturity and senile man with shell of former personality.”<sup>37</sup> The image of the little girl, not fully in control, recurs in her journals.

Because Conchita’s father is the only one present onstage for the performance of her malagueña song, the scene is particularly disturbing: an erotic song performed by an adolescent girl for her father and passers-by. He even participates in the song, adding a rhythmic refrain—“With a vito vito vito, with a vito vito va”—at the conclusion of every

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<sup>36</sup> Craig H. Russell, “Malagueña,” *Grove Music Online* ed. L. Macy, <http://www.grovemusic.com>, (accessed September 3, 2006).

<sup>37</sup> MGP-NYPL.

verse but the last. The blind guitarist cannot see his daughter's movements, but he is intimately involved in the production of the song. Gideon's assignment of sexuality to Conchita's character implicates Conchita's father in that sexuality by his proximity to and involvement in the performance. The guitarist's disability also complicates structures of power in the scene. As Russell P. Shuttleworth writes, "disabled men are not generally located in [American] society's images of masculinity."<sup>38</sup> Shuttleworth's study of disabled men's sexuality notes that often gender roles were reversed at the onset of these men's (heterosexual) relationships, thus inverting the hierarchy of power in favor of the woman. In a journal entry, Gideon refers to a "blind actor in dream who spoils performance for all." As I will demonstrate, the father's disability is only one way in which Gideon seems to strip him of power in the scene, perhaps a symbolic reflection of the complex relationship between Gideon and her own father.

Gideon's diaries are replete with references to sexuality in connection with her father, and also with her uncle Henry, with whom Gideon lived during the years before college. These entries thinly veil a frightening situation that Gideon had to endure during adolescence. She writes: "I am overly preoccupied with the erotic as a cover-up for other

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<sup>38</sup> Russell P. Shuttleworth, "Disabled Masculinity: Expanding the Masculine Repertoire" in *Gendering Disability*, ed. Bonnie G. Smith and Beth Hutchison (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004), 166. The counter-hegemonic argument that disabled individuals have been culturally constructed as asexual has been represented via the medium of photography at The Museum of Sex in Manhattan. The museum recently held an exhibit of Belinda Mason-Lovering's photographs entitled "Intimate Encounters" on the topic of disability and sexuality. The description from the Museum's website reads "*Intimate Encounters* debunks the myth that a person with a disability has no sexual identity or desire, an assumption that has led to the repression of discussion or expression of sexuality. This exhibition provides a forum in which the voices of people with disabilities can be heard; in which expressions of desire, need, love, affection can be seen." Sarah Jacobs, "Intimate Encounters," Museum of Sex website, <http://museumofsex.com/exhibitions/intimate/index.html> (accessed August 28, 2007).

problems. This may go back to my relation to father, where the ‘rat-tat-tat’ of the erotic was always present.”<sup>39</sup> This statement alone is powerful enough to merit discussion, but many more exist in Gideon’s 1950s diary, such as the following: “Dream shows that I sense guilt felt by father at sexual rousing—I take on some of it, feeling guilty for being part of it, tho[ugh] he initiated it.”<sup>40</sup> Gideon interprets another one of her disturbing dreams as “father’s disintegration—his wife (whore in dream) is me.”<sup>41</sup> And in yet another entry she writes about a “nightmare of men coming in window suggests horror which Father must have created—defying all laws—not merely conventions, but ethics—creating chaos.”<sup>42</sup> In light of the transformation of the character Conchita, from an innocent child in the play to a seductive performer in the opera, I will proceed to examine the connections between these journal entries and the music of Conchita’s aria in the opera. Connections between Gideon’s psychosocial history and her compositional life are crucial to a deeper understanding of Conchita’s song and its symbolic language.

The embodied experiences of a composer manifest themselves at some level in the cultural production put forth by that composer. Elizabeth Grosz suggests that “in a sense, one’s psychical life history is written on and worn by the body, just as, in turn, the psyche bears the history of the lived body, its chance encounters, its punctures, its

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<sup>39</sup> MGP-NYPL.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

transformations and extensions.”<sup>43</sup> Thus, Gideon’s compositions conceptually bear the imprint of her bodily experiences. Conchita’s aria enables the female character to musically and textually subvert her father’s power. As Gideon writes, “Father—he’s turned into a man with a man’s demands.”<sup>44</sup> Through Conchita’s music, Gideon is empowered symbolically to fight an oppressive situation that had clearly saturated her psychical space.

As Conchita winds her way through Gideon’s music and text, the sense of the erotic is heightened by the constant transformations of four trichords that predominate in Gideon’s version of this Spanish tune. Octave doubling, doubling of the vocal line, delayed aggregate completion, and large-scale statements of significant trichords are techniques employed by Gideon to emphasize important moments in the piece, both musically and textually. The aria begins with a nine-measure introduction that outlines all

**Example 5.7** 3-5 (016), 3-2 (013), 3-3 (014), 3-4 (015) established in the first two measures of Conchita’s aria, mm. 221-24.

The musical score for Example 5.7 shows the first two measures of Conchita's aria (mm. 221-24). The score is in bass clef with a treble clef for the vocal line. The music is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. Four trichords are identified with circled notes and labels: (013) D, Eb, A; (016) Eb, A, Bb; (014) F#, A, B; and (015) D, Eb, Bb. A fifth trichord (014) F#, G, Bb is also indicated on the right side of the score.

<sup>43</sup> Elizabeth Grosz, “The Body,” in *Feminism and Psychoanalysis: A Critical Dictionary*, ed. Elizabeth Wright (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1992), 270.

<sup>44</sup> MGP-NYPL.

of the key structural elements in the piece. Within the first two measures, found in Example 5.7, a 3-5 (016) trichord on E $\flat$ , A, and B $\flat$  is established as a significant sonority by the comparatively long duration of each of these pitch-classes. This specific trichord recurs throughout the aria at significant musical and textual moments, providing a large-scale structure for the work that goes beyond the structure provided by the text.

Along with 3-5 (016), permutations of trichords 3-4 (015), 3-3 (014), and 3-2 (013) account for every note in the first nine measures, before the entrance of the vocal line. Only two tones are missing from the aggregate by the time the introduction is complete: F and G#. Both of these tones are heard for the first time on the last syllable of the first line of text, on the word “fight” at m. 232, shown in Example 5.8.

**Example 5.8** Scene II, mm. 232. Missing F and G# from aggregate found on “fight,” a chord which is also a 3-3 (014) trichord on F, G# and A.

The image shows a musical score for measures 232 and 233. The vocal line is in 3/4 time and contains the lyrics "bull - fight, went a". The piano accompaniment is in 3/4 time. A 3-3 (014) trichord is circled in the piano accompaniment, consisting of notes A, G#, and F. A callout box points to this chord with the text "Missing F and G# from aggregate."

The addition of these two new sonorities heightens the already dissonant 3-3 (014) chord formed by A, G#, and F, and sets the scene for a veiled conflict between man (father) and

woman (daughter) in the aria. While each measure of the piece contains permutations of at least one of the four primary trichords, not until m. 238 do all four appear, creating a tangle of sound that highlights a rupture in the setting of the text. Not only does Gideon extend the poetic meter by two syllables on the line “When a handsome lad waylaid and caught her,” but she also brings together all four of the structural trichords on the measure with the text “caught her.” This is the only occurrence of a metric rupture in the text, and this twisting of chords, found in Example 5.9, heightens the violence of the scenario.

**Example 5.9** Scene II, mm. 237-8. Twisting of four primary trichords 3-2 (013) on G, Ab, and A#; 3-3 (014) on E, G, and Ab; 3-4 (015) on D#, G, and Ab; and 3-5 (016) on D#, E, and A#.

The image displays a musical score for Example 5.9, consisting of a vocal line (C. and BI. M.) and a piano accompaniment. The score is divided into two measures, 237 and 238. The vocal line in measure 237 contains the lyrics "HAND-SOME LAD WAY-LAID AND" and in measure 238 "CAUGHT HER." The piano accompaniment features complex chordal textures. Four callout boxes identify specific trichords: (016) D#, A#, E; (013) Ab, G, A#; (014) Ab, E, G; and (015) Ab, G, D#. Lines connect these boxes to the corresponding notes in the piano part. The piano part in measure 238 shows a dense cluster of notes, including D#, E, G, Ab, and A#, which are the notes of the (016) trichord.

Further, Gideon includes the primary structural tones of A-natural, A#, and D# in what was already a significant measure from musical and textual perspectives. The twisting of

trichords in m. 238 bears resemblance to the language Gideon uses in the following journal entry, where she writes of

a possible actuality in childhood, where father perhaps did come into mother's room and I overheard—or possibly into our room, saying something of the word-twisting type connected with sexual excitement. I feel terror in my dream—a reflection of the confusion made by such twists of language to conceal a shocking act—a fear of being trapped by such puns.<sup>45</sup>

In the *malagueña*, Gideon's musical emphasis on the words “caught her” brings to life the terror of her dream.

Not only do permutations of 3-5 (016) saturate practically every measure of the aria, but the pitch-classes B $\flat$  /A $\sharp$ , E $\flat$ /D $\sharp$ , and A—the same pitch classes used to introduce 3-5 (016) in the first two measures of the aria—occur individually as pedal tones for the refrain performed three times by Conchita's father, as shown in Example 5.10. The last pedal tone pitch-class occurs on B $\flat$  from mm. 265-67. But at the conclusion of this final refrain, the Gideon carries the B $\flat$  up two octaves, so that it serves as the bass note in mm. 268-70, also shown in Example 5.10.

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<sup>45</sup> MGP-NYPL.

**Example 5.10** Pedal tones on pitch-classes 3, 9, and 10, forming a composite of 3-5 (016) over the course of the three refrains in Conchita's aria, mm. 239-43, 252-55, and 265-70.

Refrain 1 with A-natural pedal tone, Scene II, mm. 239-43.

239

With a vi - to, vi - to, vi - to, with a vi - to, vi - to, va!

*mf*

Refrain 2 with D# pedal tone, Scene II, mm. 252-55.

252

With a vi - to, vi - to, vi - to, with a vi - to, vi - to,

*mf*

Refrain 3 with Bb pedal tone, Scene II, mm. 265-70.

265

*fast, accented* *mf* *Quite fast, spirited*

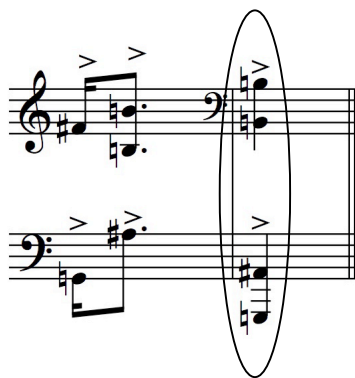
— sir! All of gold are girls un - mat - ed, all of

With a vi to, vi to, vi - to, with a vi to, vi to, va!

*mf* *mf*

The upward shift in register of the B $\flat$  pedal tone in the third and final refrain symbolizes a transfer of power from father to daughter. In addition, Gideon breaks the form of the malagueña through Conchita's melodic line: her closing quatrain begins in m. 269 by overlapping with the final tone of the previous stanza's refrain, as if she is interrupting her father, and thereby relegating him to the weaker position in the father-daughter pair. Significantly, her sung text at mm. 269-70, "All of gold," outlines the 3-5 (016) trichord on F, B $\flat$ , and B, as illustrated in Example 5.10. In the final notes of the piece in m. 280, 3-5 (016) has been dismembered, in a sense. The trichord, now symbolic of the father's truncated power, attempts to assert itself in the bass notes of the final measure on A and A $\sharp$ , but the would-be E $\flat$  or D $\sharp$  is missing, replaced by a B, as shown in Example 5.11. Yet, these final tones of the aria outline 3-3 (014), a trichord with large-scale significance for the structure of the opera as a whole.

**Example 5.11** Scene II, mm. 279-80. Final chord of Conchita's aria, G, A $\sharp$ , B, 3-3 (014).



Gideon's psychic landscape, which I interpret as embodied in the performer who sings the role of Conchita, would otherwise only be understood through Gideon's journals, a record of her period of psychoanalysis. Though it is unlikely that Gideon encoded her compositions with personal meaning in a conscious manner, the psyche—as

Grosz asserts—bears the imprint of bodily experience. In her opera, Gideon symbolically rewrites a confusing childhood and adolescence spent among demanding men such as her father and uncle.

### **Inez, Amaranta, and the Theme of Homoerotic Desire**

While Inez is a rather depressed and un-energetic “dressmaker’s assistant” in the play, in the opera she is the “adoring assistant”<sup>46</sup> to Amaranta, the world’s champion sharp-shooter; Inez attends to her employer with the utmost interest and physical devotion, creating a homosexually charged atmosphere within the last scene of the opera that is entirely absent from the play. Although this shift in one secondary character’s sexual orientation would seem insignificant, I contend that the re-characterization of Inez parallels an ongoing inner monologue present in Gideon’s dream journals, and that Gideon—consciously or unconsciously—creates musically significant moments for Inez in order to highlight the flexibility of her gender.<sup>47</sup> While sexuality in connection with men is a primary topic for Gideon in her journals, homosexuality and feelings of confusion about gender also pervade these writings. She refers to her “involvements with men” as “some testing out, some question to be answered.”<sup>48</sup> Further, she discusses homosexuality in connection with her career as a composer. Although Gideon publicly

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<sup>46</sup> Gideon, *Fortunato*, plot synopsis.

<sup>47</sup> Jean-Paul Sartre’s *Huis Clos*, published in 1944, was well known in the United States by 1958, and features three characters including a lesbian named Inez. It is conceivable that Gideon, with her deep interest in French literature, knew the play and spun a lesbian element into her own Inez via Sartre’s influence. Jean-Paul Sartre, *No Exit and three other plays* (New York: Vintage, 1989).

<sup>48</sup> MGP-NYPL.

denounced the label “woman composer”, in this journal entry, she seems to associate it with dualistic qualities in her gender identity. She writes: “Homosex. equated with sacrifice (self destr.) thru art—do I feel ~~this way abo~~ that as a woman composer this is a destr. element (as in Mme. Curie?).” Gideon’s re-writing of the character Inez may signal a desire to clarify her own feelings on the subject of homosexuality within the gender-flexible medium of opera, enacting the “sacrifice (self destr[uction]) [through] art” of which she writes. For Madame Curie, radium was literally a “destructive element” to which the female scientist had devoted much of her life’s work; for Gideon, what was the sacrifice through art to which she referred? Given that during the 1950s, homosexuality was viewed as a dysfunction, a “failure to adjust”<sup>49</sup> curable by psychoanalysis, perhaps Gideon’s characterization of Inez represents an attempt to exorcise—sacrifice?—any lingering feelings of homosexuality from her body through the creative act of composition.

In the journal written during her sojourn to Paris in 1927, Gideon writes several pages in English, and then succumbs to an urge to write in French<sup>50</sup> caused by reading the diary of a “Marie B.,” presumably the journals of the nineteenth-century artist Marie

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<sup>49</sup> Wini Breines, “The ‘Other’ Fifties: Beats and Bad Girls” in *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Post-War America 1945-1960*, ed. Joanne Meyerowitz (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), 383. See also Frank Caprio, *Female Homosexuality: A Psychodynamic Study of Lesbianism* (New York: Citadel, 1954).

<sup>50</sup> Because of the note on the cover of Gideon’s 1927 journal that reads “Destroy without reading in case of my death?” Miriam Gideon’s estate has stipulated that the journal must not be quoted. Only paraphrasing is permitted. The journal is available to the public in the Miriam Gideon Papers, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Box 21, Folder 5.

Bashkirtseff.<sup>51</sup> Gideon's writing in the French section of the journal indicates a new and earthier voice; the young Gideon spends several sentences describing how beautiful she looks. In her second entry in French, Gideon reflects upon contradictory feelings she has of both joy and confusion. A few lines later, we learn that she is in love with a beautiful woman. Gideon muses about homosexuality in her dream journals, but her most explicit allusion to her own homoerotic desire appears in her 1927 journal, and only in French. Gideon's 1939 travel diary chronicles a summer spent in Paris with her husband (at the time), Peter Rosoff. In an entry from June 24, Gideon describes her experience of a burlesque show: "[W]e went to a cabaret at Place Pigalle, where there were more tits to the square inch than I've ever seen before. Young and quite pretty, but all very dull."<sup>52</sup> Gideon's writerly tone brings across a studied blasé attitude toward the "young and quite pretty" women she saw at Place Pigalle that is echoed and amplified in her expressions of

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<sup>51</sup> Enid Zimmerman notes that Marie Bashkirtseff (1859-1884) was the daughter of Ukrainian parents who immigrated to France when she was eleven years old. Understanding that her parents had no plans to provide her with any formal education, Bashkirtseff taught herself Latin, Greek, along with several other languages. She excelled particularly in music, and was a proficient singer until the onset of tuberculosis, when Bashkirtseff turned to painting as an alternate mode of expression. A prolific painter, she studied at the Académie Julian in Paris. Bashkirtseff kept a journal from 1873 to 1884, the year she died. Her journals have since gained a cult following, especially during their initial distribution in France in 1887. Gideon may have read one of the many romantic novels based on Bashkirtseff's journals. A remark made by Bashkirtseff about the journal itself is reminiscent of Gideon's own journal-keeping: "To live, to have so much ambition, to suffer, to weep, to struggle, and in the end to be forgotten; as if I never existed. If I should live long enough to become famous, this journal will be interesting to the psychologist. The record of a woman's life, written down day by day, without attempt at concealment, as if no one in the world were ever to read it, yet with the purpose of being read." Quoted in Enid Zimmerman, "The Mirror of Marie Bashkirtseff: Reflections about the Education of Women Art Students in the Nineteenth Century," *Studies in Art Education* 30/3 (Spring 1989), 164-175.

<sup>52</sup> MGP-NYPL.

gender confusion in her 1950s journals. “In attempt to explain or make something appear logical I often manipulate first perceptions so that they become dull and meaningless.”<sup>53</sup> She also writes of an “early situation of father pointing out unfeminine traits—my being long, skinny, red, ugly—a girl instead of the desired boy. J [Gideon’s sister Judith] being dainty, white, pretty at birth... Uncle with ‘big feet’ teasing... Dream of impatiently waiting to move into girls’ dormitory.”<sup>54</sup> From the vantage point of Gideon’s journals from the 1950s, we read a self-analysis of her gender trouble as initiated by her father in early childhood; the mode of analysis in these journals parallels the dominant American view in the 1950s of sexual “deviance” as a disease curable through psychotherapy. Thus, her journals bring out a progression from open homoerotic desire in the 1920s through to a pathologization of this desire in the 1950s.

Inez, linked in the play to the strongest female character, Amaranta, is an outlet for the playing out of homosexuality in Gideon’s *Fortunato*. Although Heather Hadlock’s analysis of Mozart’s *Le nozze di Figaro* concerns the characters Cherubino and Susanna, her statement is equally applicable to Inez and Amaranta in Gideon’s opera: “The erotic energy that coalesces around Cherubino’s silent, ambiguous body... threatens to destabilize the whole economy of sexual difference.... We may feel a homoerotic current that momentarily distracts from the main plot of heterosexual marriage and its complications.”<sup>55</sup> While *Fortunato* attempts to feed his family throughout the drama, we

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Heather Hadlock, “The Career of Cherubino, or The Trouser Role Grows Up,” in *Siren Songs: Representations of Gender and Sexuality in Opera*, ed. Mary Ann Smart (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 71.

are similarly distracted by the sexual energy written into the interactions between Inez and Amaranta.

When considered in tandem with the homoerotic currents running through Gideon's journals, the score itself provides compelling information about the re-characterization of Inez. At the start of Scene III, Fortunato is at the circus. A brief instrumental interlude allows time for the members of the circus ensemble to perform their various tricks. At the top of the first page of the scene, Gideon indicates that "Inez, a young woman, dressed in tights and a full blouse, sits in front of the tent, sewing."<sup>56</sup> This image of a young woman in tights and a "full blouse" brings to mind operatic trouser roles, and places Inez in the grand tradition of women in opera who perform ambiguities of gender.<sup>57</sup> While her attire is reminiscent of both a castrato and androgynous turn-of-the-century circus performers, Inez is engaged in a traditional feminine activity: she is sewing.

Following a brief exchange between Inez and Fortunato during which Fortunato inquires about the position as assistant, Inez describes Amaranta to her new acquaintance: "Señora Amaranta, Amaranta the Strong, straight as an arrow, more keen, more infallible, more fair, more comely than all, Princess of women!"<sup>58</sup> Above the text "Princess of women," Gideon writes a ritard, and indicates that Inez should sing the phrase

<sup>56</sup> Gideon, *Fortunato*, 55.

<sup>57</sup> Recent studies of opera and gender ambiguity include Carolyn Abbate, *In Search of Opera* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Naomi André, *Voicing Gender: Castrati, Travesti, and the Second Woman in Early Nineteenth-Century Italian Opera* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006); and Mary Ann Smart, ed. *Siren Songs*.

<sup>58</sup> Gideon, *Fortunato*, 62.

“rapturously.” In Example 5.12, the high B $\flat$  sung by Inez on the first syllable of “Princess” is the highest note sung thus far in Scene III, and is therefore a registral climax within the vocal lines. Inez leaps a full octave to reach the high B $\flat$ , and the accompanimental chord for her high note is a permutation of one of the most important structural trichords in the opera, 3-3 (014), on D $\flat$ , D, and B $\flat$ . In addition, the overall importance of pitch-class 2 (D) underscores the importance of Inez as a locus of gendered meaning for Gideon.

**Example 5.12** Inez soars to a registral climax on “Princess of women” over 3-3 (014) trichord on D $\flat$ , D, and B $\flat$ .

The image shows a musical score for Inez's vocal line and piano accompaniment. The score is in 3/4 time and features a key signature of one flat. The vocal line is marked *p subito* and *rit. (rapturously)*. The piano accompaniment is marked *p subito* and *pp*. A large oval highlights the final chord of the piano accompaniment, which is a permutation of the 3-3 (014) trichord on D $\flat$ , D, and B $\flat$ .

The dialogue between Fortunato and Inez in the play contrasts with Gideon’s operatic dialogue between these two characters, bringing the scene’s sexual tension into full relief. In the play, Inez uses superlatives to describe the deceased Sabatino, former assistant to Amaranta: “Poor, poor Sabatino! So handsome... so good... so brave”<sup>59</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Álvarez Quintero, *Four Plays*, 208.

while in the opera, Inez repeatedly waxes arioso in regard to Amaranta.<sup>60</sup> Only two pages later, Inez continues her rapturous tribute to her employer, using an elaborated version of the same poetic and musical declarations of admiration. In Example 5.13, Inez surpasses her previous registral climax, singing Amaranta's name on high C, with an accent on each descending note.<sup>61</sup> This time, Gideon writes a 4-19 (0148) chord, both referencing Fortunato's aria from Scene II, and foreshadowing that chord's use in the Scene III chorus.

**Example 5.13** Amaranta's name again serves as a registral highpoint over tetrachord 4-19 (0148) on C, E, G#, and A.

The image shows a musical score for Inez's aria 'Amaranta!'. The score is in 2/4 time and features a vocal line and piano accompaniment. A circled section highlights a tetrachord (0148) on C, E, G#, and A. The vocal line includes a high C note and a triplet of notes. The piano accompaniment features a bass line with a 'sub' marking and a treble line with a 'rit.' marking. The score is marked with 'f' (forte) and 'rit.' (ritardando).

Another aspect of the opera absent in the play is Gideon's indication that Inez can serve as a substitute for the chorus in the opera. Rather than residing in a boarding house as they do in the play, Gideon's Inez and Amaranta share a circus tent. In Scene III of the opera, Inez retires to the shared tent only momentarily at Amaranta's request,

<sup>60</sup> Gideon, *Fortunato*, 62.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 63-64.

instead of retreating into the boarding house during Amaranta's interview with Fortunato. Thus, Inez "emerges from the tent, and stands listening raptly," participating fully in the audition. She is thus able to substitute for the chorus if necessary, taking the soprano part.<sup>62</sup> Inez casts her gaze, both literal and figurative, upon Amaranta throughout the final scene; her vocal lines, too, rest upon Amaranta's, and for the remainder of the scene (and indeed for much of the remainder of the opera) Inez mimics Amaranta's melody at either the upper octave or in unison imitation, reinforcing a homogeneity of desire between these two characters. Through a re-casting of Inez as a homoerotic foil to her heteroerotic counterpart in the play, Gideon maps her own gender ambiguity onto Inez, both textually and musically.

Gideon also composes gender ambiguities into Amaranta's music and words. After Amaranta emerges from the tent, in which she has been sitting during the entire scene up to m. 213, she asks Fortunato if he has come in answer to the advertisement. When Fortunato admits that he has never heard of her, Amaranta launches into a lengthy

**Example 5.14** Scene II, mm. 319-325. Melodic tritones and dotted rhythms as Amaranta interviews Fortunato.

319

*briskly*  
(to F.)

A. (in terror) *mf* LET'S GO! STAND THERE! BE CALM! BE QUI-ET!

F. *p* GOOD GOD!

*mf*

explanation of her descent from a “race of artists who die for their art.”<sup>63</sup> Amaranta proudly details the heroic deaths of her father and her brother, then concedes that for her mother to die of natural causes was also a heroic death. Fortunato, unable to ascertain from Amaranta the exact nature of her employment, eventually whispers to Inez, “this Amaranta, tell me, what does she do?” Finally Fortunato understands that Amaranta is a sharpshooter, and in a series of tritonal melodies as shown in Example 5.14, Amaranta establishes her authority in the scene. Gideon applies Inez’s rapturous triplets to Amaranta’s lines, but also applies a new and militaristic dotted rhythm to the sharpshooter’s material. Example 5.14 illustrates the dotted motive in the piano part. This rhythm, decidedly authoritative, contributes to the musical characterization of Amaranta as the most powerful figure in the opera. Gideon also combines the use of structural trichords and tetrachords derived from the hexatonic collection, such as 3-3 (014) and 4-19 (0148), to underpin Amaranta’s tritonal and trichordal melodies, as shown in Example 5.15.

**Example 5.15** Scene III, mm. 352-358. Amaranta’s bid with vertical sonorities grouped by chord type.

*faster: allegro*  
(angrily)

352 *mf* ARE YOU A - FRAID? DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM? FIVE HUNDRED TIMES I'VE SHOT AT MY OWN MOTHER...

(014) (0148)

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 242.

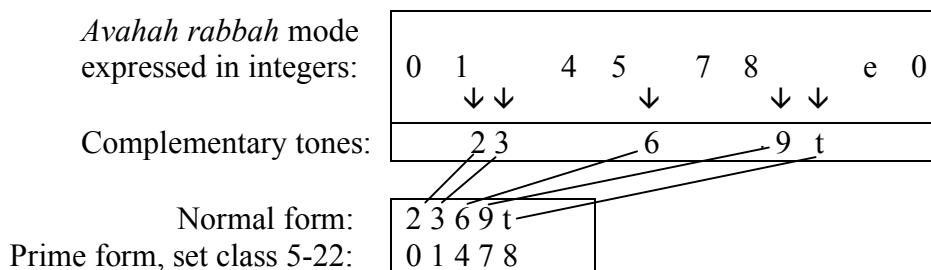
In Amaranta's aria "One False Step," she describes the thrill of danger that crowds pay for as they shiver with excitement. The 4-18 (0147) and 4-19 (0148) tetrachords that recur in the accompaniment recall the harmonies found in Fortunato's aria, as seen in Example 5.15, and also in Example 5.16; in a sense, Amaranta performs the masculinity that Fortunato has renounced. In fact, as Example 5.16 illustrates, significant tetrachords 4-18 (0147) and 4-19 (0148) combine in Amaranta's aria to form a 5-22 (01478) pentachord on E, A, B $\flat$ , D, and F, a kind of transgendered sonority within Gideon's established motivic language, symbolic of Amaranta's straddle stance between masculinity and femininity. The dramatic context in which pentachord (01478) appears—the moment just before Amaranta's aria—in addition to the gendering of other chords in previous scenes, establishes the chord as a location where masculine and feminine qualities meet and combine in a variety of ways.

**Example 5.16** Scene III, mm. 400-402 from Amaranta's aria, outlining 5-22 (01478).

The image displays a musical score for Example 5.16, consisting of a vocal line (A.) and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in treble clef and begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a tempo marking of *Slower*. The piano accompaniment is in treble and bass clefs, also starting with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The score includes two instances of the word "THAT" with exclamation marks. Two tetrachords are highlighted with vertical lines and labels: (0148) F, A, B $\flat$ , D $\flat$  and (01478) D, E, F, A, B $\flat$ . The piano accompaniment features complex harmonic textures with many chords and accidentals.

This pentachord also establishes Amaranta as a musical foil to Constanza, in that the five note complement of the *avahah rabbah* mode belongs to the same set class, 5-22 (01478), as shown in Figure 5.5.

**Figure 5.5** Complement of *avahah rabbah* in normal and prime forms.



Immediately following the 5-22 (01478) chord, all instrumental accompaniment drops out, indicating a structural break, and leaving Amaranta's impassioned whisper at the forefront of the aural scene. Gideon indicates that she should sing *piano*, "with an even greater intensity," as she delivers a line that is crucial to the way we as audience members understand Amaranta's expression of sexuality. As shown in Example 5.17, Amaranta sings: "Have you ever loved a woman who belonged to another man?" First,

**Example 5.17** Scene III, m. 402-406.

*moderato*  
(with even greater intensity)  
***p***

A. 

Have you ev - er loved a wo - man — who be - longed to an - oth - er man?

Fortunato replies, “No, I’ve always been a quiet man,” but he soon realizes that she is (as stated in Gideon’s performance indication) “ignoring him”<sup>64</sup> so Fortunato continues to repeat his line over and over, in the vain hope that Amaranta will hear him. Meanwhile, Amaranta continues, speaking as though from experience, “suddenly, her husband is there ready to kill both of you! Oh! The thrill of it!”<sup>65</sup> Amaranta and Fortunato continue to sing together in a duet of mutual ignorance: Amaranta repeats “Oh! The thrill of it!” while Fortunato reasserts that he is a “quiet man.” The scene is unquestionably erotic, and one wonders whether Amaranta would like Fortunato to fall at her feet, a victim of her wiles to follow in the footsteps of poor Sabatino, or whether she is so engrossed in the memory of being found with a female lover that she has forgotten about Fortunato altogether. In either case, the eroticism of the duet catches the interest of the chorus, which has been standing by silently during Fortunato’s appointment with Amaranta. Now, over and over, they chant “have you ever known the thrill of it?”

In the next operatic moment, the chorus of circus performers takes Amaranta’s text “Have you ever known the thrill of it?” and sings an ensemble piece that draws upon the text of her aria, “One false step.” In Stephen Lyng’s work relating the theoretical concept of edgework to thrill-seeking behaviors, he notes that “in abstract terms, edgework is best understood as an approach to the boundary between order and disorder, form and formlessness.”<sup>66</sup> The thrill-seeking behavior that is celebrated by the chorus finds a home at the carnival, where thrills and freakery are the stuff audiences have come

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<sup>64</sup> Gideon, *Fortunato*, 409.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 76.

<sup>66</sup> Lyng, “Edgework,” 858.

to pay for and to expect. In her diaries, Gideon often alludes to situations in her personal life and relationships that parallel the thrill-seeking, edgeworking persona that Amaranta epitomizes in the opera. Gideon writes of the “delirium of elation followed by blind vacuum,” a statement reminiscent of those made by individuals involved in edgework, or extreme risk-taking activities such as skydiving, search and rescue, even extreme drug use.<sup>67</sup> Gideon describes herself as “exhibitionistic,” alluding to love triangles, a tendency towards immediate gratification, and a penchant for challenging authority,<sup>68</sup> all of which resonate with Amaranta’s almost desperate search for excitement. Gideon notes of her relationships that “as common interests are touched, I set up a sexual fantasy. I set up situations where I become involved, establish authority, then demolish it....”<sup>69</sup> At issue in this entry is Gideon’s desire to take complete control, even in an imaginary scenario. In another entry, she describes “a ‘triangle’—other woman (Mrs. B.M., Belgian on boat) whom I get around.... Sometimes... I play a dynamic role, trying to get around some woman and seduce the man.”<sup>70</sup> Amaranta’s inquiry about an adulterous affair bears a

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<sup>67</sup> Stephen Lyng, “Edgework: A Social Psychological Analysis of Voluntary Risk Taking,” *The American Journal of Sociology* 95/4 (January 1990), 851-86; Jennifer Lois, “Peaks and Valleys: The Gendered Emotional Culture of Edgework,” *Gender and Society* 15/3 (June 2001), 381-406.

<sup>68</sup> In one entry, Gideon discusses her issues with authority figures, and how she attempts to transform relationships with these figures into “love relationships” in order to be able to control them more effectively. She writes: “Problem with authority—I test authority out e.g. doctors. Authority in my life has 2 emphases: the prosaic and the magical. I defy, challenge, test both. The pattern seems to have been to change the authority into a love relationship so that it could no longer command but rather obey.” MGP-NYPL.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

distinct resemblance to these statements by Gideon, revealing yet another connection between her composition, her libretto, and the details she poured into her journals.

Though the behaviors Gideon acknowledges in her diaries are limited to the realm of the emotional, these emotions become distilled within actions taken by Amaranta, whose occupation involves the daily risk of her own life and that of her assistant. Indeed, Amaranta's profession requires her to negotiate these boundaries, finding reasons to continue risking life and limb. Lyng notes that edgeworkers believe themselves to be possessors of a certain special skill, "the ability to maintain control over a situation that verges on complete chaos, a situation most people would regard as entirely uncontrollable."<sup>71</sup> The edgeworker views this skill as both cognitive, and as a kind of "mental toughness," ideas that connote the masculine gendering of thrill-seeking behavior.<sup>72</sup>

Amaranta's characterization links thrill-seeking and danger with sexuality, in her breathless, anaphoric interrogation of Fortunato, "Have you ever known the thrill of it?" Lyng's research, too, weds risk-taking with sexuality, and specifically, with feelings of arousal brought about by the risk-taking activity, particularly for male participants in that culture.<sup>73</sup> Gideon writes: "Dream of bull shows 'conflict' in my relations to men. Struggle to the death, in which skill and respect for adversary are involved—sadism."<sup>74</sup> The final word of Gideon's entry solidifies a connection between thrill-seeking behaviors

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 859.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 853.

<sup>74</sup> MGP-NYPL.

involving possible injury or death, sexual arousal achieved through these behaviors, and the sadist and masochist pairing as reflected in the Amaranta/Sabatino sharpshooting duo.<sup>75</sup> Gideon understood the servant/master relationship to be a universal theme in opera; the first listed among seven other themes she explored in the opera courses she taught at Brooklyn College from 1951 through 1954, the theme of servant and master comes across with the added twists of sexuality and risk-taking behavior in *Fortunato*.<sup>76</sup> Through Amaranta, however, Gideon complicates the stereotypical gendered pairing of sharpshooter and assistant/target, where a scantily clad young woman—like the one shown in Figure 5.6—is strapped to a board while the sharpshooter endangers her life to show his shooting prowess.

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<sup>75</sup> For a cogent discussion of feminism, risk-taking, and the sex wars, see Lynn S. Chancer, “From Pornography to Sadomasochism: Reconciling Feminist Differences,” in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 571 (September 2000), 77-88; and Ann Ferguson, “Sex Wars: The Debate Between Radical and Libertarian Feminists,” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 10/1 (Autumn 1984), 106-12.

<sup>76</sup> The full list of operatic themes according to Gideon is: “Servant/Master Relationship; Freedom; Madness; Seduction; Jealousy; Duels; Planned Murders; Bereft Lover.” Gideon taught an opera course at Brooklyn College in spring 1951, 1952, and 1954 as an adjunct professor. MGP-NYPL.

**Figure 5.6** A young woman serves as the assistant to a knife thrower in a demonstration of “impalement art” that parallels the job sought by Fortunato.<sup>77</sup>



In Figure 5.6, the knife-thrower is a man and his target—traditionally called an assistant—is a woman; Amaranta performs masculinity by taking the role of sharpshooter. Inez, described as Amaranta’s “adoring assistant,” literally assists Amaranta by handing the target (formerly Sabatino, and finally, Fortunato) lit matches. Thus, Amaranta’s multivalent edgework involves reversal of gender roles, the playing out

<sup>77</sup> “The Great Throwdini throwing knives around target girl Astrid Schollenberger as she spins on the “Wheel of Death” at *Monday Night Magic* on Broadway in New York in August 2002” (image courtesy of Rev. Dr. David Adamovich), [www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Impalement\\_arts](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Impalement_arts) (accessed July 4, 2007).

of sexual fantasy to which Gideon alludes in her diaries, and the performance of alternate gender identities within a servant/master relationship.

The music that begins with Amaranta's hushed, too-personal question at m. 402 (Example 5.17), "Have you ever loved a woman who belonged to another man?" increasingly balances on the edge between two of the important pitch collections employed by Gideon in the opera as a whole: the hexatonic and octatonic collections.<sup>78</sup> In this scene, the most crowded of the opera in terms of sheer numbers on stage, Gideon's music negotiates that space between "order and disorder, form and formlessness" to which Lyng refers with regard to the concept of edgework. The composer makes extensive use of triads and seventh chords in a post-tonal context, emphasizing the triadic resources found in both hexatonic and octatonic collections, and the triadic set-class 3-11 (037) shared by both collections. The harmonic motion of the passage may be understood via a shift from the octatonic to the hexatonic. In addition, Gideon employs vocal imitation as a compositional technique, adding contrapuntal depth to the choral passage.

In mm. 422-65, the chorus of thrill-seeking circus performers attempts to persuade Fortunato to audition for the job as Amaranta's assistant.<sup>79</sup> The text of the chorus, given in Figure 5.7, is drawn from the text of Amaranta's aria.

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<sup>78</sup> While a general shift from the use of trichords and tetrachords drawn from the octatonic collection to those drawn from the hexatonic occurs within the choral material, this shift also highlights the blending of hexatonic and octatonic collections present within the pitch organization of the *avahah rabbah* mode.

<sup>79</sup> Although Gideon does not indicate that the principal characters should sing the chorus, she does stipulate that the opera can be performed without a chorus; the passage in Example 19 may be sung by Amaranta, Inez, and Fortunato, using an arrangement Gideon provides as an appendix to her opera.

**Figure 5.7** Text of Scene III chorus in *Fortunato*, “Have you ever known the thrill of it?”

Have you ever known the thrill of it? [repeated and fragmented]  
 One false step on the tightrope,  
 One false step, and her father is no more.  
 Have you ever, have you ever known, ever known? [repeated and fragmented]  
 One false step, one step in the panther’s cage,  
 And her brother is no more.  
 Oh, the thrill of it! The thrill! [repeated and fragmented]

As Gideon states in the notes she used to teach her opera courses, she perceived the “chorus as background for crises.”<sup>80</sup> Here, the crisis is both dramatic and musical: Fortunato must decide whether or not to risk his life by working for Amaranta, an interior struggle manifested in the negotiation between two pitch collections in the music. A symbolic battle between Fortunato’s fear and Amaranta’s insistence occurs during this tug of war between collections. The chorus begins at m. 422, a suddenly soft and hymnodic—possibly hypnotic—moment that contrasts with the *forte* duet previously sung by Fortunato and Amaranta. The initial 4-27 (0258) tetrachord, spelled vertically using D, E, G, and B $\flat$  in the choral parts, and the second tetrachord, 4-25 (0268) draw upon pitch-class sets from the octatonic collection. Example 5.18 shows an alternation between 4-27 (0258) and 4-25 (0268), with the occasional intrusion of 4-18 (0147). When isolated, 4-27 (0258) would seem to have some harmonic function due to its other identity as a dominant seventh chord, but its primary function in *Fortunato* lies in its aural significance as a subset of the octatonic collection. Figure 5.8 outlines the movement of 4-27 (0258) tetrachords through the passage from mm. 422-427; octatonic

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<sup>80</sup> MGP-NYPL.

**Example 5.18** Scene III, mm. 422-27. Initial statement by the chorus with (0258) outlined in rectangles, (0268) in shaded rectangles, and (0147) circled.

The image shows a musical score for Example 5.18, Scene III, measures 422-27. It features three staves: a vocal staff (CHOR. (OR TRIO)), a vocal staff with lyrics, and a piano accompaniment staff. The tempo is marked *moderato* and *poco cresc.*. The lyrics are "HAVE YOU EV-ER KNOWN THE THRILL OF IT?". The piano part includes annotations for pitch-class sets: (0258) in rectangles, (0268) in shaded rectangles, and (0147) circled. The piano part also includes dynamics *p* and *poco cresc.*.

subsets are outlined by rectangles. The tetrachords in Figure 5.8 have been arranged to emphasize a pattern of repeated pitch-class sets.

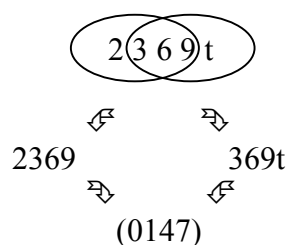
**Figure 5.8** Vertical tetrachords in mm. 422-27, Scene III, *Fortunato*.

mm. 422-4	<span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0258</span>	<span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0268</span>	<span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0358</span>	0147	<span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0258</span>		
	⇕	⇕		⇕			
mm. 425-7	<span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0258</span>	<span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0268</span>	<span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0258</span>	<span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0268</span>	<span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0258</span>	0147	<span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0268</span>

Only one set, 4-18 (0147), cannot be derived from any octatonic collection, but is a familiar sonority from the opera as a whole. As shown in Figure 5.8, (0147) appears in both incarnations of the tetrachordal pattern as the penultimate sonority, first in m. 424 on G, B $\flat$ , C $\sharp$  and F $\sharp$ , and then in m. 427 on D, F, G $\sharp$  and C $\sharp$ , creating a sense of cadential

motion as the ear perceives a return to the established aural landscape of octatonicism. Though 4-18 (0147) does not find a home in either the octatonic or the hexatonic collection, this tetrachord is a subset of the Jewish mode *avahah rabbah*; in addition, the complement of the pitch collection *avahah rabbah*, (2369t) in normal form and 5-22 (01478) in prime form, is composed of two 4-18 (0147) tetrachords which overlap as shown in Figure 5.9. Thus, the use of (0147) as a penultimate, contrasting sonority clarifies the octatonic language of the passage in question, while simultaneously linking the passage to one of the operas major referential collections.

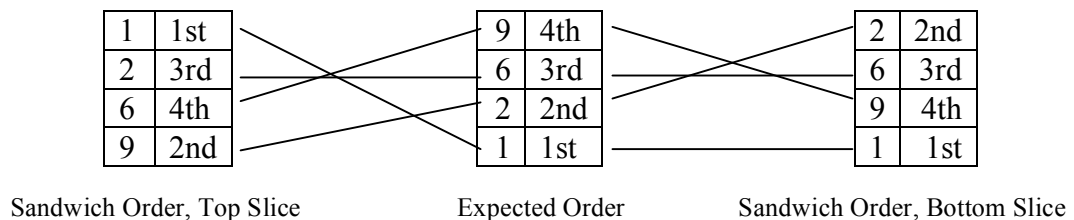
**Figure 5.9** The complement of the *avahah rabbah* mode forms two (0147) tetrachords



Following the path of tetrachord 4-27 (0258) through the chaos of the Scene III chorus not only helps to establish where the octatonic language begins to shift to hexatonicism, but also brings new insight into Gideon’s unique method of composing ordered vertical sonorities. The large-scale movement of the chorus can be encapsulated by the movement of two tetrachords: from octatonic 4-27 (0258), on which the chorus begins, to hexatonic 4-20 (0158), the insistent final sonority of the passage. As the chorus progresses, Gideon’s mode of serially ordering vertical chords comes into clearer focus. For lack of a better term, I have called this method “sandwich” ordering, because the outside tones, like slices of bread, come first in the vertical ordering of each 4-note series.

Gideon consistently orders her vertical tetrachords with either the top slice of bread (in tonal music, the soprano tone) first, or with the bottom slice (the bass) first. The alto and tenor come third and fourth, respectively, as seen in Figure 5.10. By employing this method of consistent ordering of vertical sonorities, Gideon can firmly establish serial order within a chordal texture.

**Figure 5.10** Sandwich order (top and bottom slices) as compared with expected order using (1269), a member of set class 4-20 (0158) to demonstrate ordering.



In the chorus's initial statement in mm. 422-27, the (0258) tetrachords are sandwich-ordered (all bottom slice first) with permutations as follows:  $P_2, P_2, P_7, P_7, P_7$ . By repeating  $P_2$  and  $P_7$  and establishing a method of ordering, the journey through disorder back to order comes into clearer focus. The next appearance of (0258) on C, D, F and G# in m. 443 occurs out of any established mode of vertical ordering; the final two manifestations of this chord (shown in Example 5.19) at m. 446 on C#, E, G, and A, and on C#, D#, F#, and A respectively, return to Gideon's method of sandwich ordering, first with  $I_9$  and then returning to  $P_2$ .

**Example 5.19** Scene III chorus, mm. 446-7, with (0158) in rectangles and (0258) in ovals.

Measure 446 is a pivotal measure in the chorus, where the focal tetrachord 4-27 (0258) gives way to a new focal tetrachord, 4-20 (0158), and thus to hexatonicism. As though to seal the “end” of (0258), the text at m. 446 reads “And her brother is no more.” Octatonic sonorities remain in the picture, however, through the persistent presence of the minor seventh chord, or 4-26 (0358), but the path of (0158) edgeworks musically where the circus performers do their edgework within the drama. Evolving from the hexatonal trichord 3-4 (015) that competes with octatonal 3-5 (016) for prevalence in the contrapuntal section of the chorus, 4-20 (0158) occurs as  $P_1$  and  $P_8$  in m. 446 on C#, D, F#, A, and on C#, E, G#, and A, respectively. After appearing in permutations  $P_9$ ,  $I_4$ ,  $I_1$  and  $I_4$ ,  $P_8$  returns for the final phrase of the chorus. The return of  $P_8$  as an important permutation of (0158) is reflected in the re-establishment of sandwich order, but this

time, with the top slice first. As seen in Example 5.20, the chorus ends with an alternation between  $P_8$  <8914> and (0358), a set that Gideon does not order consistently.

**Example 5.20** Scene III, mm. 459-465. Finale of chorus in the carnival scene alternating between  $P_8$  <8914> of set class (0158) and (0358). (0358) chords are indicated by \*.

The musical score for Example 5.20 consists of three systems of staves. The top system is for the vocal line (marked 'R.'), the middle system is for the piano accompaniment, and the bottom system is for the piano accompaniment. The score begins at measure 459 with the instruction 'senza rit.' and a forte dynamic 'f'. The lyrics are: 'THRILL OF IT, THE THRILL, THE THRILL, THE THRILL, THE THRILL, THE THRILL, THE THRILL, THE THRILL!'. The piano part features a complex harmonic texture with many accidentals. Below the piano part, set class annotations are provided for each measure:  $P_8$ , \*, \*, \*,  $P_8$ , \*,  $P_8$ , \*,  $P_8$ , \*,  $P_8$ ,  $P_0$ ,  $P_8$ . The score concludes with a fortissimo dynamic 'ff' and accents on the final notes.

Thus, the hexatonic tetrachord 4-20 (0158) prevails not only because of its return to consistent order and to its initial permutation, but also because of the subtle changing of the established order and a penultimate re-assertion of the set in its prime form at m. 464.

Gideon's compositional negotiation of the boundary between "order and disorder, form and formlessness" manifests itself richly in the chorus of Scene III through the primary tetrachordal actors 4-20 (0158), 4-27 (0258), and 4-26 (0358). The minor third present in each of these tetrachords signals the presence of another important pitch set that can be derived from both hexatonic and octatonic collections: 3-11 (037), or the major or minor triad. Gideon makes extensive use of this trichord as a kind of no man's land between 3-4 (015) and 3-5 (016) mentioned above. Example 5.21 shows the

imitative section of the chorus, which serves as the textural backdrop for play between these trichords. The first two measures of imitation, mm. 428-29, exemplify the kind of motivic writing that typifies Gideon's compositional style. A tangle of trichords, all permutations of 3-4 (015), 3-5 (016), and 3-11 (037), saturates musical space, despite the change in texture.

**Example 5.21** Scene III, mm. 428-30. Trichordal saturation in the contrapuntal section of the chorus.

428

CHOR.  
(OR  
TRIO)

*mp*

HAVE YOU EV - ER KNOWN THE THRILL OF IT?

ONE FALSE STEP ON THE TIGHT - ROPE, ONE FALSE STEP,

(016)  
C#,G#,G

(015)  
C#,D,F#

(037)  
C,D#,G

(037)  
G,A#,D#

(037)  
D,F#,A

(016)  
D#,A#,A

Gideon employs word painting, each voice musically tiptoeing through the passage, eager not to take “one false step” as stated in the text. Basing his argument on Marx, Lyng links risk-taking behaviors to extraordinary creative ability. He writes, “Free, spontaneous, creative activity arises . . . when workers possess the power to organize the work process

in a way that reflects their own human needs.”<sup>81</sup> Gideon strikes this balance between spontaneity and organization in the Scene III chorus, while meeting a personal need to express the risk-taking aspects of her persona as expressed in her diaries. She writes of a “dream of improvising interrupted by undergarments: my creativeness distracted by the erotic.”<sup>82</sup> In composing her opera, Gideon could dramatically infuse her characters with personal qualities that related to her personal struggles, in this case, eroticism and thrill-seeking. In the grand operatic tradition, Gideon chose a chorus of circus performers to play out some of the many disturbing dreams and realities that recur in her personal writings.

I have argued that Gideon’s cultural identity, as well as her professional identity as a woman composer, deeply informed her compositional choices, complicating the public image she so carefully maintained. The interpretations in this chapter have their basis in Gideon’s extraordinary body of personal writings, which supply rare insights into her state of mind and personal concerns near the time of the opera’s composition. As with the paintings of Frida Kahlo, one cannot separate the life of the artist from the art itself in Gideon’s case. An exploration of her innermost thoughts enriches our experience of her compositions, reinforcing the need to balance biographical and cultural detail with musical analyses.

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<sup>81</sup> Lyng, “Edgework,” 869.

<sup>82</sup> MGP-NYPL.

## CHAPTER 6

### Performing “Bodily Confessions”<sup>1</sup>

No evidence of any performance or recording of *Fortunato* has been found.<sup>2</sup> Thus, all of the musical analysis in Chapters 4 and 5 is based upon readings of the score, uninterrupted by audible interpretations, and unfettered by the sound and image of costumed, vocal bodies upon the operatic stage. Indeed, this aspect of the opera as “pure,” un-interpreted by directors, set and costume designers, and singing actors, lends a sense of disembodiment to the process of analysis, in contradistinction to Gideon’s very embodied personal writings. In this chapter, I will address meaning derived from the bodily experience of singing *Fortunato*, both from the perspective of my own experience

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<sup>1</sup> “Bodily Confessions” refers to the title of Chapter 8 in Judith Butler, *Undoing Gender* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

<sup>2</sup> Archival documents reveal that Gideon sent the score for *Fortunato* to the director of the NBC Opera Company. In a letter dated October 22, 1958, from Samuel Chotzinoff, general music director of the National Broadcasting Company to Miriam Gideon at her address in New York city, Chotzinoff states: “I have your letter of October 3<sup>rd</sup>. I remember you very well. As for your opera, I would suggest that you submit it to Dr. Peter Herman Adler, who is the NBC-Opera Musical Director, and generally, he is the first to look over scripts” (MGP NYPL). From this letter, we obtain the only documentary evidence found within Gideon’s personal papers that pertains directly to her opera. With its one act format and Gideon’s addition of optional character doublings and triplings for economy of operatic forces, *Fortunato* meets the time and personnel constraints for televised opera, a phenomenon which, by 1958, had entered the homes of Americans for seven years. The first opera written for television was Gian Carlo Menotti’s *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, performed by the NBC Opera Company and televised on December 24, 1951. A condensed version of Leoncavallo’s *I Pagliacci* was the first opera to be performed on television, broadcast on W2XBS on March 10, 1940 with the cast from The Metropolitan Opera Company. TV Acres website, [http://www.tvacres.com/broad\\_opera.htm](http://www.tvacres.com/broad_opera.htm) (accessed July 7, 2007). Since no record of *Fortunato* exists in NBC’s in-house opera archive, we know that Gideon’s bid to have her opera performed on television was unsuccessful.

performing a scene from the opera for an audience, and from the vantage point of an analyst at the piano, singing through excerpts in order to envoice them in my mind's ear. Applying Judith Butler's concept of speech acts and utterance as gendered, bodily confessions, I will explore Gideon's opera as an atemporal, corporeal locus of gender construction.

The performance of an operatic role involves mental, physical, emotional, and even psychical immersion in the work of the composer. Unlike an instrumental performance, where speech does not generally enter into the performer's equation, operatic speech is at once musical and rhetorical, constructed from both speech and song, breath and body. Operatic training focuses intensively on the breath as the basis for singing in the most efficient manner possible; but a centered breath is also the site of emotion in singing, and therefore links directly with verisimilitude and authenticity of performance. A singer who performs a passage marked "breathlessly" with evenness of tone and technique—in other words, filled with breath—erases elements of the composer's intent. Gideon's performance indications repeatedly call for emotionally charged ways of breathing, and therefore ways of being that are agitated, eroticized, and gendered by the performers themselves. The persistent and specific directives to the performer are key to Gideon's construction of gender and power, controlling the ways in which the body that sings the notes on the page performs femininity, masculinity or gender ambiguity.

The socio-political forces that link gender and emotion are too vast to explore here, but the analysis at hand merits an explanation of the connections between American culture and emotional display as integral to gender construction during the post-war era

and beyond. As Robin Simon and Leda Neth find in their sociological study of gender and expressive behavior in the United States, “U.S. emotion culture contains beliefs that women are more emotional and emotionally expressive than men and that men and women differ in their experience and expression of specific emotions.”<sup>3</sup> Simon and Neth assert that when women express emotion, they forfeit power, becoming vulnerable and malleable in the eyes (and in the case of singers, ears) of their male counterparts. In a 1951 article in *The Musical Times*, Franklyn Kelsey links breath to emotionality in the role of the operatic singer. He writes: “the breathing muscles... constitute the physical center of the emotional process.”<sup>4</sup> Kelsey continues his analysis of emotion in opera singers by establishing that particular emotions, such as anger, directness, and sexuality on the operatic stage are the province of male singers, while others such as hysteria, fear, and weeping, belong to female characters. Yet, from his 1951 vantage point, Kelsey finds that singers—gendered male in the article—have dislodged themselves from the emotional world of performance: “[The] whole trend is towards a ‘rationalistic’ emasculation of the emotions, the effect of which is to persuade an over-civilized man to detach himself, to an ever-increasing extent, from his own physical roots.” Symptoms of this “emasculation” include anger giving way to “chilly emotional resentment,” and physical passion turning to “a calculated assuagement of the sexual appetite.”<sup>5</sup> Kelsey

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<sup>3</sup> Robin W. Simon and Leda E. Nath, “Gender and Emotion in the United States: Do Men and Women Differ in Self-Reports of Feelings and Expressive Behavior?” *The American Journal of Sociology* 109/5 (March 2004), 1137.

<sup>4</sup> Franklin Kelsey, “The Singer and the Song,” *The Musical Times* 92/1302 (August 1951), 348-349.

<sup>5</sup> Kelsey, “The Singer and the Song,” 348.

concludes that “the singer’s craft lies in balancing the air-supply demands of the larynx against the emotional reactions of the respiratory muscles.”<sup>6</sup> Through a subtle shifting of the discussion from the importance of emotion in performance to the anatomical science that underlies the actual enactment of the human voice, Kelsey divorces the male singer from the act of vocal “emoting,” and establishes him as the master of his feelings, powerful and utterly in control of his performance.

Kelsey’s singer falls in line with 1950s models of gender roles in America as played out in emotional display. The physical experience of breathing one’s way through Gideon’s opera challenges Kelsey’s establishment of gendered emotional codes in opera. In fact, Gideon’s performance indications establish a flexibility of emotion among men and women in the opera, and often allocate power to women rather than to men. Unperformed, the emotions in the opera remain two-dimensional. Utterance, which requires breath, brings to life the emotional signifiers in Gideon’s opera, in a triangulated transference of interpretive power from the composer to the performer to the audience member. Butler suggests that

[T]he speech [in this case, the singing] act in the context of the transference thus might be said to attempt to communicate a content, but also to display or enact another set of meanings that may or may not have a relation to the content that is said [sung].... The content, the intended meaning, cannot be fully overcome or transcended, since how one utters that content, or what the uttering of that content does, will probably

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 349.

comment on the content, will probably comment on the intention that bears the content along.<sup>7</sup>

Gideon, through her very specific performance indications to the singers in *Fortunato*, asserts control over the emotional circumstance of the singing utterance. The content of the opera when performed by bodies onstage is therefore more true to Gideon's intention than what may be read in the score. Performing bodies breathe in emotions and exhale them in singing, following Gideon's directives explicitly and therefore enacting the gendered emotional meanings she so carefully wrote into her libretto and score.

As the opera progresses, opposing emotional gender roles become more and more apparent. At the opening of Scene I, Don Victorio begs Constanza for some money to help his unfortunate relations. Despite her secondary—and therefore conventional—position in relation to Alberto in terms of gender power in the scene, Constanza's class trumps Don Victorio's gender. His utterances are punctuated by stereotypically feminine emotional outbursts, as dictated by Gideon in her stage directions at m. 104 “breaking into sobs” and m. 137 “Don Victorio continues to sigh and sob as he follows Constanza out.”<sup>8</sup> Gideon has written copious rests into Victorio's lines, in order that an appropriate amount of sighing and sobbing may take place. Constanza, sympathetic to Victorio's cause, finds herself “breathless” (m. 152) in anticipation of Alberto's reaction to Don Victorio's plea. Don Victorio is feminized in the scene through his repeated emotional outbursts, but is re-masculated in Scene II. Constanza, though in power over Don Victorio during their interactions, is still subordinate to Alberto, for whom Gideon

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<sup>7</sup> Butler, “Undoing Gender,” 171-2.

<sup>8</sup> Gideon, *Fortunato*, 5-6.

writes indications such as “angrily” (m. 165), “with finality” (m. 167) and “somewhat impatiently” (m. 218). Gideon underlines Constanza’s image of gullibility through repeated indications that her manner and tone be “breathless” (m. 152 and 219); the thinly veiled eroticism of a breathless woman relaying messages between two men keeps sexuality just under the surface in Scene I.

Constanza’s feminine characteristics do, however, provide her with some power of persuasion in Alberto’s direction. In measures 200-201 (Example 6.1), Constanza sings “always, always, always, always!” on a sighing vocal line that reaches the registral climax of the entire scene, referring to the assertion she has just made that with each beggar’s tears, her heart always weeps, too. Her mode of repetition, bordering on anaphora, and persuasion succeeds with Alberto, who sings “Very well...” under Gideon’s performance indication, “relenting” (m. 202). Constanza is not an equal in this decision to give away money; rather, Alberto must give in if he is to have any peace. Constanza, with her sighing repetitions of one word at ever-higher pitches, speaks to Alberto as though he is an adult and she is a child, and he reciprocates this treatment.

**Example 6.1** Scene I, mm. 200-201. Constanza’s heart “always” breaks.

200 *pp* *rit...*

C. AL-WAYS, AL WAYS, AL-WAYS, AL - WAYS!

*pp*

8<sup>va</sup>

8<sup>vb</sup>

Like a child asking to keep a pet she has brought home, Constanza is made to promise that “this will be the last one.” Miriam Gideon writes in her 1950s diaries that she often felt “helpless, like a little girl.”<sup>9</sup> Insecure about her own worth, she often found “shells of other people I have tried to move into,” then, “There has been a pattern of consulting people—getting their advice about important steps.... I must learn to see and think for myself.”<sup>10</sup> In a sense, Gideon’s opera characters represent “shells of people” that she has created, each one encapsulating an aspect of her own persona. As the opera progresses and the female characters gain progressively more control over their mode of existence, Gideon herself gains control. Her performance indications for Constanza in the scene color the mode of vocal performance but also reinforce the type of gender performance Gideon envisions for the only female character in Scene I. The body that sings Constanza must therefore enact both sexual and childlike qualities, a pair of (ideally opposed) traits that Gideon revisits in the second scene of *Fortunato* in Conchita’s aria.

When Fortunato enters Alberto’s residence after the exit of Don Victorio, Gideon establishes his character as emotionally erratic and unstable. Within just the first few measures of his scene, Fortunato experiences a host of emotional states, and sings in a manner “embarrassed,” (m. 343), then “explosively” (m. 347), “frantically” (m. 361), “dully” (m. 372), “hesitatingly,” (m. 373), and finally, “with despair” (m. 448). As Fortunato begins to realize that Alberto has no money to lend, his despair transfers onto the instrumental accompaniment in m. 443; Gideon indicates that the instruments should

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<sup>9</sup> MGP-NYPL.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

play “fast (violently),” sounding out the inner turmoil that Fortunato cannot reveal to Alberto. The instrumental passages that follow Alberto’s refusal foreshadow tetrachords, seen in Example 6.2, 4-13 (0136) and 4-18 (0147) from Fortunato’s Scene II aria, establishing a musical language of violently opposed emotions that lie beneath the vocal surface of the title character.

**Example 6.2** Scene I, mm. 443-446. Alberto refuses to lend money to *Fortunato*.

Fortunato’s aria in Scene II is strangely devoid of emotional indications for the singer, but immediately following the aria, in Fortunato’s scene with the stenographer, Gideon indicates that his “speech” (singing) should be performed “haltingly” (m. 442), “hesitatingly” (m. 448), “feverishly” (m. 455), and “mumbling” (m. 457). The scene’s importance lies not in what is said in the stilted dialogue between Fortunato and the young woman he encounters—for they merely discuss directions to the city hall—but rather in *how* it is uttered. Fortunato, having renounced his masculinity in the preceding aria, seems also to have renounced his capacity for speech. Only when directly (and musically) imitating the Stenographer’s vocal lines can he produce more than four

syllables together. Butler suggests that “speaking is a sounding forth of the body, its simple assertion, a stylized assertion of its presence. I am saying what I mean: but there is a body here, and there can be no saying without that body—a potentially humiliating and productive fact of life.”<sup>11</sup> Although Fortunato has renounced his manliness, he cannot get rid of his body any more than the performer can. The living, breathing baritone performer mumbles and stutters his way through the awkward scene, unable to “sound forth” Fortunato’s lines without sounding forth his gender, as well—a gender that does not align with the actions of begging from women and stealing from the disabled. Left with a man’s body but without the gendered characteristics of a man, Fortunato’s speech (song) cannot say what he means. Another entry in Gideon’s 1950s diary reveals concern about her own ability to put her ideas across: “I express myself ambiguously—at the end of a statement I find I have thrown emphasis somewhere I didn’t mean to.”<sup>12</sup> The ambiguity of which Gideon writes reflects this opposition between the body and the gendered characteristics that it may or may not express within any given utterance.

Fortunato’s difficulties with communication continue into the third scene, as he negotiates his way through a job interview with Amaranta and Inez. As soon as he comprehends Amaranta’s occupation and his potential job as her assistant, Fortunato begins a cycle of terrified emotional responses that culminate in hysteria. If we view Fortunato’s aria as the “gender axis” of the opera, Fortunato’s indications of terror fall directly in line with his figurative emasculation. The title character’s progression from

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<sup>11</sup> Butler, *Undoing Gender*, 172.

<sup>12</sup> MGP-NYPL.

“shuddering” (m. 265) and “in terror” (m. 319) to “hysterical with fear” (m. 329) brings the gender dynamics in the scene to a new level. While Amaranta sings “briskly” (m. 320), “commandingly” (m. 340) and “angrily” (m. 352), Fortunato’s hysteria turns operatic tradition on its head. While mad scenes are paradigmatically attached to female operatic roles, here Gideon provides an example of a mad scene that is enacted by a man, going so far as to feminize even his state of madness by using the term “hysterical.” In a 1948 article titled “The Suffocation of the Mother,” Carroll Camden explores the literary roots of hysteria and their relationship to breath: “Until late in the nineteenth century, it was thought that hysteria was confined to females, and was caused by the uterus moving to various sections of the body.”<sup>13</sup> Though the medical theory in this model is inaccurate, the gender construction is clear: physical realities of the female body cause madness. Fortunato’s hysteria effectively completes his feminization by enabling him to fully engage with the messiness, the madness of the female body. His final indications in the opera, “wildly” (m. 586) followed by “with controlled frenzy” (m. 589), symbolize Fortunato’s re-assumption of at least one element of masculinity: his ability to financially support his family. Thus, as soon as Amaranta fires her first shots at him, Fortunato can begin to “control” the madness and frenzied emotions that have overwhelmed him during the last scene of the opera. Nevertheless, Amaranta pays his wages, a fact that ends the opera on a counter hegemonic note.

Although the reader of Gideon’s score can certainly make the connection between performance indications and music, without bodies, breath—read emotion—is absent. Gender relations established by Gideon’s indications, which often refer directly to ways

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<sup>13</sup> Carroll Camden, “The Suffocation of the Mother,” *Modern Language Notes* (1948): 392.

of breathing, cannot be fully understood without the text that is a performance. All singing utterances in the opera must travel—like the breath itself—through the messiness of the body, inseparable from its portrayal of gender. As Butler writes, “The spoken [sung] word is a bodily act at the same time that it forms a certain synecdoche of the body. The vocalizing larynx and mouth become the part of the body that stages the drama of the whole.... We might see this as the confession.... We hand this unknowing part of ourselves to another to return to us in ways that we cannot anticipate in advance.”<sup>14</sup> Gideon, through her extensive use of specific performance indicators, endows her opera with physical, bodily presence that must be enacted in order to grasp the full meaning of her work. As voices engage in singing her opera, they also envoice Gideon’s own emotions as evidenced by the writing in her journals. Performing bodies must be present in order to grasp fully the depth of gender dynamics in *Fortunato*, a synecdoche for Gideon’s emotional life during the 1950s.

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<sup>14</sup> Butler, *Undoing Gender*, 173.

## CHAPTER 7

### Conclusions, Links, Future Projects

This study has examined Miriam Gideon's opera, *Fortunato*, from a variety of analytical perspectives—from music analysis to an exploration of the performer as part of the composer's projection of meaning—but with particular regard to possible connections between Gideon's life and her opera. *Fortunato* is unique among her works, in that she wrote it not because she would receive a commission, or because she had been guaranteed a performance, but because she simply wanted to write an opera.<sup>1</sup> *Fortunato*, therefore, is particularly important as an articulation of Gideon's personal sentiment and history, and as a statement of her musical style, which she herself admitted was largely based upon emotional connections with sounds that she felt during the process of composition.<sup>2</sup>

This dissertation has also brought to light aspects of Gideon's biography that directly relate to her libretto and also to the music of the opera. Biographical work on Gideon exists in published documents; the most significant published explorations of Gideon's life are interviews. Sketches of Gideon's life in print are just that: sketches, lasting three or four pages at most. Chapter 2 of this dissertation has brought Gideon's life into clearer focus through its reliance on archival and documentary materials, and

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<sup>1</sup> Bernard and Deena Rosenberg, *The Music Makers* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), 67.

<sup>2</sup> George Perle, "The Music of Miriam Gideon," *Bulletin of the American Composers Alliance* 7/4 (1958): 2.

Chapter 3 has focused on the 1950s as a particularly formative yet tumultuous time in Gideon's life as a composer and a teacher.

From an analytical perspective, this study has attempted to clarify Gideon's musical language, continuing analytical work established first by George Perle in the 1950s, and by Ellie M. Hisama in 2001.<sup>3</sup> Both Perle and Hisama base their analyses of Gideon's chamber music on her extraordinary use of motivic saturation as a compositional technique. While my work begins and ends with recognition of Gideon's capacity to use every possible coloration of a particular trichord or tetrachord, I also explore Gideon's application of serial techniques to these small sonorities, and her unique method of embedding trichords.

In addition to its biographical and analytical work, this dissertation brings feminist theory to bear on highly personal texts penned by Gideon in her diaries of the early 1950s and in her writings from other periods. The 1950s represent a unique coming together of events in the world, events in New York, and, on the smallest scale, events that took place within the geography of Gideon's life and body. In a Cold War era reverse of a second-wave feminist manifesto, for Gideon, the political became personal in the 1950s. The combination of Gideon's difficult childhood, the stress of unemployment thrust upon her and upon her husband, and the loss of both her parents, made this decade both an enormously productive and yet excruciating period of self-examination and psychoanalysis. Although I have chosen not to include full transcriptions of Gideon's dream diaries, the excerpts from them that I have employed in my musical analyses in

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<sup>3</sup> George Perle, "The Music of Miriam Gideon," *American Composers Alliance Bulletin* 7/4 (1958); Ellie M. Hisama, *Gendering Musical Modernism: The Music of Ruth Crawford Seeger, Marion Bauer, and Miriam Gideon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 139-80.

Chapter 5 reinforce the necessity for feminist scholars to include sexuality—not just gender—as a theoretical category in our exploration of music texts. As Sherrie Tucker has written, “[s]exuality is topic and nontopic, messily present and urgently denied.”<sup>4</sup> Much of Gideon’s opera can be accessed through her conception of her own sexual persona and her deep-seated desire to understand the difficulties and abuses in her past.

*Fortunato* represents a unique departure from Gideon’s established compositional sphere, which never before or after included operatic repertory. She valued and sought to understand opera, as evidenced by the detailed notes she made for the opera class she taught at Brooklyn College in the early 1950s. But was Gideon alone in composing a subversive opera that presented different, more flexible ways of enacting gender and sexuality during the 1950s? As mentioned in the introduction, several of Gideon’s female colleagues composed operas in the middle decade of the twentieth century, between the first and second waves of feminism. In particular, Julia Perry’s 1953 opera, based upon Edgar Allen Poe’s *The Cask of Amontillado*, and Louise Talma’s *The Alcestiad*, composed in 1960 on a libretto by Thornton Wilder, present fertile ground for future study. Like Gideon’s opera, neither Perry’s nor Talma’s operas have been adequately discussed in print.

These three operas each deserve a closer examination, as do the women who wrote them, whether in the form of a specific and detailed analysis of each opera, or in longer biographical writings. The urgency of these future projects lies in the fact that those who knew Gideon, Perry, and Talma best were their contemporaries. As for

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<sup>4</sup> Sherrie Tucker, “When Subjects Don’t Come Out,” in *Queer Episodes in Music and Modern Identity* ed. Sophie Fuller and Lloyd Whitesell (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois, 2002), 293-310.

Gideon, I have only begun to touch upon the tremendous possibilities for academic work that acknowledges her personal writings, especially where her opera is concerned. A production of *Fortunato* in 2008, fifty years after its composition, might spur other scholars to pursue analyses of Gideon's chamber works and other compositions. This dissertation opens yet another window for scholars and historians who have asked, "Where are the women?"<sup>5</sup> In a post-feminist moment, the uncovering of these three operas reinforces the need for scholarship that embraces in-depth analysis of works by women composers, and calls for a continued search among musicologists for the "books that are not there."

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<sup>5</sup> Tucker, "When Subjects Don't Come Out," 293-94.

**APPENDIX A.**

Journal kept by Miriam Gideon in Paris, 1939. Transcription by the author with no abridgements. As much as possible, I have left all of Gideon's punctuation, abbreviations, and spellings intact, with the exception of extremely unclear cases where I have put the full word or correct spelling in brackets. Gideon wrote in fountain pen in a three by five inch square-ruled, loose-leaf notebook.

Hipais - Royal Marceau

Unk<sup>1</sup> - Hotel Clark- Los Angeles

Frinden - au point d'orgue -Trouville Calvados

May 25 – June 2

Crossed on the “Champlain”, which stopped at Cobb, Plymouth, and then Havre. Beginners luck: the calm, the sun, French cooking superbe, the luxury of first class travel, —M. Vogels, who has made the ranks of those very, very few select ones whom you feel you have known longer than you can count. One can say anything to him, even in my present French, and yet one need not say anything at all—and it all adds up the same...

June 2 – Friday

We arrived at Gare St. Lazare after a brief and efficient session with the French customs officers, who were so intrigued with our Silex that they passed quickly from an official interest to a personal one. But no duty on it. Were met by a contingent from the

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<sup>1</sup> “Unk” refers to Gideon's uncle, Henry Gideon, who had moved from Boston, Massachusetts to California during the 1930s. For further information on Henry Gideon, see Chapter 3.

J. D. C.<sup>2</sup> who took us to the Hotel California, where Thank God they speak English. Forty-eight hours ago I would have scorned any such place but after having been cast adrift on the streets of Paris for the first day alone, and having succeeded in getting only dry bread, black coffee, bad steak, and just plain lettuce, I am grateful for a few moments when I can give up on the French business. (This is the next day.) Had lunch with the contingent and then felt like the days when I was taken regularly to a new school every fall and left inevitably by my mother to endure the first day alone. Mrs. Troper invited me for [the first day], so I went...! What a gal! I forgot my sense of desolation and excitement in complete incredulity at her lack of interest in a newcomer to Paris and her hysterical self-absorption, covered over as it is with a pseudo-generosity and concern for others. Met at her house Mrs. Ceronovici, who had come to sympathize with her boss' wife, and we had a mad three-cornered conversation in French, German, and English, each one putting his worst foot forward. Then I managed to escape for a walk—my first alone in Paris. Crossed back over the Seine, thru les Champs Elysées, to la Place de la Concorde, then down Rue Royale, past beautiful shops and vistas, and back to 3 Rue Cognacy-Jay. I played Alembert Marches<sup>3</sup> while Mrs. T. analgesiced herself, and then the men, etc. arrived. We had a bad supper, served by René, black from Guadaloup, and his wife Poldine, white, Czecho-Slovakian. The evening was spent with Mrs. D and her

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<sup>2</sup> The Jewish Distribution Committee, founded in 1914, “has served as the overseas arm of the American Jewish community. [Their] mission is to serve the needs of Jews throughout the world, particularly where their lives as Jews are threatened or made more difficult.” [http://www.jdc.org/who\\_mission.html](http://www.jdc.org/who_mission.html) (Accessed 10/06/07).

<sup>3</sup> Here, Gideon refers to marches by Jean le Rond D’Alembert (1717-1783), a French composer, philosopher, and mathematician who was also an assistant to Diderot in the collecting and writing of materials for the latter’s *Encyclopédie*. Don Michael Randel, *The Harvard Biographical Dictionary of Music* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 192.

reminiscences, with Mrs. T and the others getting a word in edgewise now and then. Finally we left, Pete getting his first walk and his first real glimpse of Paris.<sup>4</sup> Sat at Le Triomphe a little while.

June 3 –Sat.

This day has been spent so far in looking for David Diamond's street—Avenue de Saxe. En route I acquired a bad breakfast (see above), a small dictionary which so far has none of the words I want, a guide book of Paris, an equally bad lunch, and a futile trip to the American Express which of course was closed over the week-end. I talked to as many polite French cops as possible, and a few shop keepers. Some fun! Then back to the hotel, where I found Pete waiting impatiently. A nap while he went back to the office, then an expedition to find supper, ending inevitably at La Maison de Berri, where I had already suffered thru breakfast and lunch. My feet were so swollen I couldn't walk, so we "found ourselves" at "Irene and Vernon Castle" in English with French subtitles. I found myself watching the translations more than the picture. Lemonade at a café and then back to the hotel.

June 4 –Sun.

Pete had to go to the office, after all, so that is that. We had breakfast in our room with American coffee, which begins not only to look and act like the real thing, but almost to speak with authority. I had lunch with Beckelman, later met Pete. Walked by

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<sup>4</sup> Peter Rosoff, Gideon's second husband, came with her to live and work in Paris.

the Bois, then to the Tropers house where we escorted Dotty Speiser to the train for London. Walked to the Café de la Paix.

June 5 –Mon.

I went to the Amer. Express at last! Walking past the Café de la Paix I met the Glankhoffs. Went to the Madeleine at high noon, where they were dusting off the virgins with featherdusters. Lunch with Mme. Troper, then on an apartment hunt—straight to 4 Rue Alfred de Dehodencq, which of course I fell in love with. Sent for Pete, and so did he. We decided to take it. Visited with the Senolar then supper, a glace with Beckelman at le Superbe, and bed.

June 6 –Tues.

I am looking over our letters of introduction.... Went again to Amer. Epr.- à pied, of course—then thru the Tuileries & the Louvre, where I looked at but not in, then past the Pont Neuf & La Samaritaine (!), then over the next bridge to l’Ile de la Cité, and across—past the Luxembourg gardens to the Boul. Montparnasse, where at l’Hotel des États-Unis I found Rudi Raphael.<sup>5</sup> Gave him David’s letter and made a date for Thursday evening. He is a darling and is willing to suffer me to talk to him in French. Then up the Rue de Rennes to la Maison Hamm, where they talked to me very slowly, and in return I rented a piano. Taxi home. In the evening we went to la Salle Gaveau and heard the

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<sup>5</sup> Günter Albert Rudoph “Rudi” Raphael (1903-1960) made his name as a German composer who began composing in a late Romantic style, but whose later music employed serial techniques. Randel, *Harvard Biographical Dictionary*, 726-7.

début (I think) of “Loisirs musicaux de la jeunesse,”<sup>6</sup> honorary Pres.: Darius Milhaud, who is fat, French, and utterly casual and charming. Is he a Jew? The room was unbearably hot and the concert worthy but a little frazzled as to performance and absence of some of the reading lights. Evidently a working-class group, alive with intelligence, vitality, and taste, but not beautiful. I practically undressed in the hall, it was so warm, and left soon. We strolled downstairs to the coolth and aristocracy of the real Maison Gaveau. Listened to a Debussy group by an excellent evidently German pianist—Schwelb. Then to a Pam-Pam and home.

June 7, Wed.

This morn I was wakened by a Germ. Laundryman. French is bad enough before coffee, but German! Lunch with Mrs. Troper, and shopped for beautiful linens at Bon Marché.

June 8 – Thurs.

Moved to 4 Rue Alfred Dehodencq! Had dinner with Raphael at Chez Roalde and went to Café Dome and P. came afterward. Felt gay after a period. Talked and listened in French till I was exhausted.

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<sup>6</sup> Paul Arma (1905-1987) founded “Les Loisirs Musicaux de la Jeunesse” in 1936 as a community music initiative; Darius Milhaud assumed the directorship/ “presidency” in 1939. Vera Lampert, “Paul Arma,” *Grove Music Online* ed. L. Macy, <http://grovemusic.com> (accessed 10-6-07).

June 9 – Fri.

More official conversations with the telephone and electric company. In evening Mort and Jill came over, and we had dinner nearby.

June 10 – Sat.

Evening at the Troper's to welcome Irving Rosen. Conversations dampened by cables and telephones from everywhere re the St. Louis.

June 11 – ~~Sat~~ Sun.

Went to Fontainebleau with the Franks. Dinner in a little café, and then buzzed thru the town and into the forest. It was not what I expected, but strangely appealing. Low vegetation, level, narrow paths, unusual rock formations in the forest. Too short a trip. Disposed of our bikes, had chocolate, and went to the chateau. Walked thru the gardens worthily but inaesthetically shaved by the French hoi polloi, and were shown through the rooms Napoleon I and Marie Antoinette.

June 12 – Mon.

A negro maid has arrived. Left her to scrub. Shopped for knives, forks, etc. Went to the Opéra – Scarlatti: Elvire; Ravel: L'Enfant et les Sortilèges; Florent Schmitt: Oriane. Marvelous sets and costumes, ballet superb, voices and orchestra fair. Scarlatti was enchanting; so was Ravel; Schmitt had some weak moments musically but was very lovely.

June 13 – Tues.

Walked down the Rue de Rivoli for the first time. In evening played Handel and Corelli with Pete.

June 14 – Wed.

Walked to Sacré-Coeur, thru the winding streets up near the top! Went in and made the tour—there was a large group of young boys chanting on one tone. Outside and all down the terrace children played. What voices, and manners, even among the distinctly “lower classes.” In evening saw “Midnight” – a punk Hollywood movie about Paris.

June 15 – Thurs.

The Siegel family – 2 sisters and mama – visited all afternoon. Walked down to meet Pete. Had dinner and walked thru the Rond Point (!) past the Amer. Embassy, down to the Opéra, stopped at the Café de la Paix, and then home.

June 16 – Fri.

Lunch at the Katz! Zowie, what an apt. and what a gal. I like Mr. K., and Mrs. K. too, in spite of & etc. etc. Went to La Boîte à Musique and heard some records for Chick. Dinner in the Paris Jewish Quarter—met Hipais and his wife—darlings. She an Amer. He is delighted with N.Y. audiences. Evening at the Schweitzers, where I tried out my French on the long-suffering females.

June 17 – Sat.

Today we are going to the country. –Nope – they couldn't make arrangements for today so we are going tomorrow. Pete was all for seeing the tennis matches at Stade Rolland Garros this aft. – but we had lunch for such a long time, and confusion at Auteuil for such a long time that we got to SRG too late to make it worthwhile to go in. Pete was very triste. Instead we took a bus to Clignancourt to the flea-market, which we finally had to locate, much to my chagrin, by resorting to English. A fascinating place withal. We bought some little Quimper bits. In the eve. to the Opéra to see *La Flûte Enchantée*. It was beautiful in every respect. We got the libretto but I didn't have a chance to read it till afterward. Pete was so exhausted that we left just before the end....

June 18 – Sun.

Met Beckelman and Rosen early, and drove to Versailles where we had breakfast and then saw the chateau, gardens, and interior of the chateau. It is much more magnificent than Fontainebleau. The gardens and vistas before the chateau are on a grand scale. Altho not furnished for the most part, the rooms have all the paintings and tapestries of autrefois (I think). Then on to Chartres, which is the most beautiful cathedral I shall ever see, I am sure, and the village is the most appealing and picturesque. We had an enormous dinner, and then went inside the Cathedral. With the aid of Beckelman's field glasses we saw more of the detail of the windows and sculptures than we would have otherwise. Then back to Paris, where on the way we saw the old Roman via duet.

June 19 – Mon.

The tel. co. was here at 8:30 A.M. Worked all morning, and then didn't finish. Promised for tomorrow. We shall see! I went back to the Boîte à Musique and got Chick's records. In eve. we played violin and piano.

June 20 – Tues.

I began a piano sonata, at last!<sup>7</sup> It feels different to be working again.... The telephone men came and still didn't put in the phone! I shall go over there this aft. and bawl hell out of them!.... Well, I did, working up to a hesitating climax with "Je suis furieuse!" whereupon the lady at the desk said "Comment?" the repetition didn't add to the effect... Went to the Louvre—inside—for the first time, but got into the furniture wing by mistake and saw of interest only a few 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Cent. Painters—Corot, Delacroix, Daumier, especially, also Rousseau. The oldness and the simplicity of the walls and stairways—there is nothing like it where I come from. Had some pastry which made me so sick I couldn't eat supper!

June 21 – Wed.

And had to stay in bed all day. The phone arrived at last, as well as the Friga-Lux, and the rug we wanted changed. Felt so punk I didn't want to go out in the eve., so we listened to Broadcasts from Liège and other Belgian composers. Very good.

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<sup>7</sup> The "piano sonata" to which Gideon refers most likely ended up as her "Suite No. 2" or "Sketches," written between 1937 and 1940. Linda Ardito, "Miriam Gideon" *Grove Music Online* ed. L. Macy, <http://grovemusic.com> (accessed 10-6-07).

June 22-Thurs.

Went to Fontainebleau with the Siegel clan, after first being taken through their strange museum at home—an enormous private collection of ivories, furniture, paintings, silver, enamel, china, etc. Drove in their big car. With us was a young Hunter College grad., Violet Hellman, who was in Paris for the first time, and spoke French like a whizz. My French crumbled badly. Had dinner at Au Grand Veneur in the forest. Wonderful food but too buttery. Then the Amer. Conserv. where I asked about study and Siegel girls looked for rooms. Fascinating old crumbling dwellings and hotels. Then we rode thru the forest, had tea at Barbizon, and home.

June 23 Fri

Went thru la Musée Cognacq-Jay with Leila Siegel. Beautiful things. Went to see De Creus, old tottering man, who shuttled me back to the dames at Fontainebleau. In eve we saw “Mon Mari fait de l’enquete”—Amer. movie, pretty good. After it we bumped into Berstein and a movie dame who came home with us and visited for a while.

June 24 – Sat.

Worked some more on my piano sonata till my head whirled. And this Sat. when Pete had to work all day. I went to le Chatelet, then met Pete, read “Three Novels”—Sholem Asch—for hours in his office—then we went to a cabaret at Place Pigalle, where there were more tits to the square inch than I’ve ever seen before. Young and quite pretty, but all very dull.

July 25 – Sun.

A rainy day, and we were supposed to go to Fontainebleau biking with Raphael. Peter had to work till 2 anyway, so I met him after that, and we walked thru the Tuileries to the Louvre just as it was closing; saw a lovely Egyptian cat and decided to collect sculpture and paintings of the cat family. Probably will turn out to be an expensive hobby! Then walked to Notre Dame and around the Montparnasse section.

June 26 Mon.

More work on the piano sonata. Wanted to go to a matinee at the Odéon and went there but they were having a relâche.<sup>8</sup> Browsed around the Panthéon, Luxembourg gardens, and Bocel et Michel bookstores till I was picked up by a soulful Frenchman who was also a book dealer and lured me to his shop, where he sold me a dictionary and Walt Whitman. He turned out to be a mystic, and he talks too fast and won't let me talk. Bought violin music for Pete at the Seine. In evening Pete had his first French lesson from Mlle. Saligné.

June 27 – Tues.

I rewrote a commentary for Pete on the St. Louis victims newsreel and took it to Pete, who didn't seem too well impressed with it. Shopped all afternoon for a bag which I finally got which I finally got—a beautiful one of porc. english. In eve. we went to the

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<sup>8</sup> A “relâche” can be translated as a momentary interruption of proceedings associated with a theatrical production.

Katz's and they all played poker while I slept and ate. Pete drank so much and was so exhausted

June 28 – Wed.

that he slept till noon and so did I. Worked all aft. on my sonata till the hammering upstairs made me stop (they are taking the house to pieces and putting it together again). It is raining assiduously, which is a relief, because at least it can be depended upon to continue for a little while—not like their other weather. Subscribed to the Amer. Library—what a nice place! In eve. went to dinner at the Katz' in evening clothes, and then to the evening of the dance arranged by Lifar for benefit of Nijinsky.<sup>9</sup> A very exciting evening. Beautiful and distinguished audience. All sorts of dancers—ballet, spanish, Hindu, modern. Lifar is magnetically beautiful. The music by the opera orchestra was punkish; by the piano alone it was loosay.

June 29 – Thurs.

Today I go to “L'Avare” with Leila Siegel (and of course the inevitable family). They talked fast and it turned out to be “Tartuffe” anyway, but I understood in a general way, and it was fun. In the eve we met Raphael, had supper and went to the Dome, where we met some of his friends, and the Bays dropped by later.

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<sup>9</sup> Serge Lifar (1905-1986) danced under Diaghilev's direction in the Ballet Russe, later becoming a choreographer himself; Vaslav Nijinsky (1890-1950), also a dancer with the Ballet Russe, was considered the leading male dancer at the time, partially because of his rare skill in performing *en pointe*. Clement Crisp, “ICARE: Remembering Serge Lifar” *Dance Research: The Journal of the Society for Dance Research* 20/2 (Winter 2002) 5.

June 30 – Fri.

Registered at the Sourbonne [sic] for French. Ran into the Bays again. In eve. met Freddy Mangin, a friend of Marjorie Hirsch. He was a wet flop.

~~June 31~~ July 1 – Sat.

Went to a Breton rest for supper and had the usual French stuff, being unable to comprehend or pay for the national dishes.

July 2 – Sun.

Was all set for Fontainebleau but it rained, as usual—and gave Pete a good excuse for suggesting the tennis matches at the Stade Rolland Garros, to which we went. Saw Budge and Vines, Tilden and Crocket, etc. Quite exciting and a beautiful stadium. In eve. went to the Tropers where the Troper offspring were being welcomed home. Sweet kids.

July 3 – Mon.

Saw “Rigoletto” and “Adelaïde” (Ravel) at the Opéra. Quite well done, the first, but I felt for the most part the way I always do about Italian opera. A few moments were beautiful. “Adelaïde” enchanted me, but Lifar always does.

July 4 – Tues.

I discover that the Eng. & Russian embassies are never open when you want them to be. It is July 4 but one would never know it. In eve. we met M. and Mme. Cantoni

(thru Marjorie Hirsch). They're nice and he is full of S.A., but they are too doggedly aristocratic in their point of view: the masses and me.

July 5 – Wed.

I was supposed to go to Fontainebleau but couldn't get a train that would get me there in time, so went to the Russian embassy to get a visa, but after waiting half the morning was told that they "hadn't come in yet." What the hell that means I don't know. I realized later that they thought I had already applied and the visa had not yet been granted. In eve. we met Jill and Mort for dinner, heard about their wonderful trip to south of France and Switz., walked around Montparnasse, and home.

July 6 – Thurs.

Began classes at the Sorbonne. Very good indeed. Interesting, alive, and practical. There are 9 students, 3 of which are Amer., the rest Norweg., Swedish, Swiss, and Chinese. I think it will be fun and certainly helpful for the "language." I am reading Turner's "Mozart."<sup>10</sup> An amazing picture of Mozart thru his letters—a gay, childlike, slightly mad, anal, and devout musician, marvelously attractive and lovable. In eve. met Mrs. Rosette for supper and saw "Les Noces de Figaro." Long and tedious if one doesn't understand the details of the plot, but shot thru with marvelous melodies and all strung together with ingratiating charm, delicacy, and nuance.

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<sup>10</sup> W. J. Turner, *Mozart: The Man and His Works* (Berkshire, UK: Tudor Press, 1938).

July 7 – Fri.

Zowie! How much I've forgotten of French grammar! Norman Dellagioio showed up, having tracked Pete down very cleverly. Had dinner together and walked a bit.

July 8 – Sat.

Went to the Flea Market with La Rosette.

July 9 – Sun

To Fontainebleau with Norman and rode bikes thru the forest. Went to the Golf Club but Pete wasn't there.

July 10 – Mon.

Missed the train again to Fontainebleau. There is a destiny separating me from Boulanger.

July 11 - Tues

Went to the Cluny Museum with Norman. Wonderful old crumbling place, full of sarcophagi and Roman bath tubs. In eve. had dinner with Mort and Jill, who are leaving tomorrow for England. Had a nice fight with Pete in the evening.

July 12 – Wed.

Made my first “conversation” in class today. A telegram from Mlle. Husson that she is arriving at 6:30 P.M... She arrived and talked about French left politics to me till Pete came—whereupon they were both terrified of each other. She’s very nice. Saw “Magic Africaine” (Dark Rapture) in the eve.

July 13 – Thurs.

The eve of the 14<sup>th</sup>. Went to the Dome (with Beckelman and Norman), the Bastille and L’Etoile in the eve. Saw Paris dance in the streets. Rode home in a carriage and horse, with the Champs Elysées lined with people waiting for the morrow, who cried “Vive la Reine” and gave the communist salute.

July 14 – Fri.

Missed le fil. Walked about town in aft., along Boul. Poissonniere. In eve. went to Dome again. Met Manny Katz and the mad mystic at Montparnasse.

July 15 – Sat

Shopped with the awful Rosette woman and her awfuller friend.

July 16 – Sun

Chantilly with Norman and Pete. Vast and beautiful green land. Cut hedges in the lawns, and a magnificent luxurious forest.

July 17 - Mon

Fontainebleau with Mort and Jill. Heard Boulanger for the first time. Inspired and inspiring with her passionate love of music, her endless flow of associations musical and literary; too frequently she winds up to the Holy Spirit, however... Went to Opéra and saw *L'Araignée* (Roussel) and *Daphnis and Chloe*. I'm beginning to find Lifar soapy and the ballet an inconsistent pot-pourri of stylised and modern dancing.

July 18 – Tues

Had a date with the crazy Rosette which she and the French hotel system balled up, so no two pianos. Went to the Jardin d'Acclimation with Norman. Spent eve. with him and Pete at home—music.

July 19 – Wed.

Heard Marian Paschal.... Went with Jill, Mort having departed, to the Zoo at the Bois de Vincennes. There is a marvelous place! Synthetic cliffs, pits, gardens—animals and birds all mixed together. Lions, leopards, monkeys—uncaged, merely separated by pits from the public. Had Morton and Jill for dinner at home.

July 20 – Thurs.

Played 2 pianos at Salle Gaveau with la Rosette. Heard the Nat. Orch. Rehearsing the Mozart g min. symphony. In eve. saw Charles Laughton in “Jamaica Inn.” Very swell.

Friday it is – le 21 juillet

Found Haydn and Mozart sonatas at a bookshop on the Seine, and purchased. Finished Turner's Mozart—a sad moving and irritating book, pious and reactionary, but moving all the same. Met Norman and Jill for supper and went to Chez Ton Ton! There was an experience for you. Pete turned his face resolutely to the wall and whinnied with horror. He refused to dance with a Congo creature who took me instead—for which we had to pay thru the nose. He sat himself beside us the rest of the evening and drank on us as well. A wonderfully quaint neighborhood, however.

Sat. July 22

Walked to l'Ile St. Louis. There is the place I want to live in Paris. Old, clean, heavy with atmosphere, and beautiful with trees and the Seine shining thru every street. In eve. went to Luna Park with Norman. Saw the "Jip eye let of bed" girls that nobody tipped and the dish-breaking booth that everybody loved.

Sun – July 23

Early to Vincennes and beyond for golf at the American club. We left soon to go to Montreuil to Mlle. Husson but God, France, and the bus system were against us and we got to our 12 o'clock dinner at 3:30. They were wonderfully gracious and cordial. We went to the chateau at Vincennes, and to the Musée de la Guerre where I found especially interesting the German official notices during the last war, and the means of smuggling in propaganda at that time—sardine cans, etc.

Mon – July 24

A villainous weather! Shopped all aft. with Jill and bought nothing. Met the Perlman and Rosen in the eve. Went to another night club at Place Pigalle...

Tues. July 25

Went to Univ. Cité with Norman. Great windy expanse of lawn and trees, with the buildings all along one side. Went into the two modern ones—the Swiss and the Netherlands—knockouts. In eve. Norman, Rosette, and Leonard Elliot came over. Met the Georges for lunch. They seem very nice.

Wed. July 26

Went to the cemetery of Montmartre with Jill. It was raining and dismal. Saw the tomb and bust of Zola.

Thurs – July 27

Again wandered around the Seine at Pont Neuf. Such streets! Bought some Auric and Milhaud little piano pieces at the music shop.

Fri – July 28

Went to the Cimetière de Père Lachaise with Jill. Saw the grave of Oscar Wilde, with a monument by Epstein, and a paper containing a four-leaf clover, and the strange inscription on the back of the tomb “all you mourners, who are at least man”.... Also the graves of Sarah Bernhardt, Corot, Daubigny, Molière, La Fontaine, Daudet, Chérubini,

Chopin—most touching of all, with its plaque, and the many pathetic little bouquets of fresh flowers—Héloïse and Abelard,<sup>11</sup> and the Jewish Cemetery. In eve. went to the Cherechevsky's for supper and evening. Long discussions of refugee problem.

Sat—July 29

Went to le Donjon de Vincennes with Jill. Ascended and saw rooms with writings of prisoners on the wall. Climbed to top and saw le Bois de Vincennes and view of Paris.

Sun. – July 30

Went to Zoo at Bois de Vincennes with Itch. Saw wonderful bears, seals, monkeys, etc. Ascended to summit of cliff. Had dinner at a place on the Seine near Notre Dame with duck and chicken!!

Mon. July 31

The end of my cour at “L’Institut du Panthéon.” I am sorry and glad. I feel now like really getting to work on French, but on my own—digesting what I took in like a school-girl. We shall see.

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<sup>11</sup> Tragic lovers from the twelfth century, both Héloïse and Abelard were well educated and exchanged a series of famous letters that epitomize the tradition of courtly love in medieval French literature. Albrecht Classen, “Abelard and Heloise’s Love Story from the Perspective of Their Son Astrolabe: Luise Rinser’s Novel ‘Abelard’s Love’,” *Rocky Mountain Review of Language and Literature* 57/1 (2003): 9.

Tues. Aug. 1

Worked again at the piano sonata, and like it better. Went with Jill to the Eiffel Tower and suffered agonies with ascending, but the view at the top was superb. You get all of Paris laid out like a living map and the environs radiating out for miles beyond. The Sacré-Coeur was the high spot—white and sinister, while the Etoile and the Panthéon came next. The lay-out of the streets was clear and fascinating. Houses were looked at with all their guts exposed. One gets a new sense of values at seeing the city from such a height... Had dinner later with Norman, who just came back from England and is leaving tomorrow for Italy.

Wed. Aug 2

Went to Napoleon's tomb and the Invalides. A great palace of War and death. Then to the Conciergerie at the Palais de Justice. The passageways, courtyards, and cells where all the prisoners of the Reign of Terror had to be—over 2000 of them. The cells of Marie Antoinette, Danton, and Robespierre. The Women's Courtyard, where the women walked, washed, and were executed. A more gruesome and vivid sight I have never seen.

Thurs. – Aug 3

I rained. Spent evening at home of Hammer, and heard his excellent gramophone—recordings of Hipais, Anderson, Chaliapin.

Fri. Aug 4

Met Violet Hellman. It rained again. Stopped.

Sat. Aug 5

Marian Paschal is back, and called me.

Sun – Aug 6

Walked around Paris in the rain.

Mon. Aug. 7

Left on early train with Jill for Switzerland! Lucerne by late afternoon. Clear sunny weather. Lucerne a beautiful, compact, picturesque city. We took a room facing the lake (a sort of bay) with a covered bridge, the mountains in background. In evening heard Casals at the Festival, Boult conducting.<sup>12</sup> Haydn D Maj. Concerto, Williams Fantasy on Tallis; Beeth. 4<sup>th</sup>.

Tues – Aug 8

Rain all day. Went up Dietschiberg in railway. Golf course. Wonderful hotels, walks, and tennis courts on way home. Jill bought watch, bracelet, and earrings. Went to Wagner museum at Tribscheu. Walked all over Lucerne. What a town...

Wed. Aug. 9

Zurich exhib. saw homes, chemistry, electricity, ceramics, Swiss folk music, art, theatre. Süssmoat, boats thru canal thru fair. In eve. to city of Zurich.

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<sup>12</sup> Sir Adrian Cedric Boult (1889-1983) conducted orchestras and ensembles to acclaim throughout his native England and Europe, most famously conducting the premiere performance of Holst's *Planets*. Randel, *Harvard Biographical Dictionary*, 98-9.

Thurs – Aug. 10

Looked around city and decided to move on to Interlaken. I was constipated. Afternoon train to Interlaken thru magnificent country. I very sick and feverish. To bed at once at hotel and slept thru till morning.

Fri – Aug 9 11

Now the fun begins. Biked all day up toward Grindelwald. Some up. Down was better. In eve. concert at Kursaal.

Sat. Aug 10 12

This is the day! By funicular to Schynige Platte. All day climbing around, cowbells, snow-covered peaks.

Sun – Aug. 13

Walked around Interlaken. Took boat trip on Thunersee, but it was cold and cloudy.

Mon. Aug. 14

Train home by Lucerne, where we stopped for one more look and coffee, then Bale where we sat in a park, counted our money, and had lunch; finally, last lap to Paris, in compartment with dumb American and delightful English man [illegible] on animal breeding. Sensitive face of boy in corridor during entire trip... Home: Pete at station. Saw Rosens, Mrs. having just arrived.

Tues – Aug 15

This is Jill's last day in Paris—a fête day, and everything is shut up and dead. Paris is deserted and ours. We walked from the Opéra to Remy's, then down the Rue de Rivoli to the Louvre (also closed), across the Pont Neuf to the Flore, and then down Boul. St. Germain to St. Michel, down to Montparnasse, and up again along Raspail. Met Pete, had dinner, and then bade Jill goodbye.

Wed ~~Thurs~~ Aug 16

Roamed around town. Met M. Alfred Levy. In evening to the Irwin Rosens, where again saw the nice Cherchevsky's, and others.

~~Thurs Fri. Aug 18~~

Thurs. Aug 17

The Bois. La Muette. Rue de la Pompe.

Fri. Aug. 18

La Conciergerie.

Sat. Aug. 19

La Conciergerie. The American Embassy. I am out by 4:30. The most excruciating agony a human being can go thru, I think. A crisis for me. After this, my sense of values is permanently changed. In evening to a wonderful restaurant where I had food again and then saw "Three Smart Girls."

Sun. Aug. 20

Went to St. Germain-en-Laye. Walked down cobbled streets where Victor Hugo once lived (?). Saw chateau and gardens, and Pavilion Henri IV. In evening to the Georges. Saw their house and studio.

Mon. Aug. 21

I am still recovering. Spent the day in bed till afternoon. Then went to Amer. Embassy and saw and thanked Murphy and Betts. In eve. found a letter from juge d'instruction setting a time for final investigation—which I had been told about—but it set me going again. Saw "Stagecoach."

Tues. Aug. 22

A lot of mail! Two from the Rosoffs, one from David Crystal, and a long swell letter from Roger.<sup>13</sup> (One from Bisco, one from Florence.) I am in bed again this morning. Writing and recuperating. Went to the Louvre and saw the war-horses: Mona Lisa, Venus de Milo, and Victory of Samothrace, also Greek sculpture and Italian painting. Think I saw every massacre and crucifixion in the Louvre. In eve. the Georges came over and we spent a merry evening going over the Russian-German pact which is reported to be underway, and the whole gloomy outlook. George himself is optimistic. They are darling people.

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<sup>13</sup> Roger Sessions.

Wed. Aug 23

Again the morning in bed, recuperating. In aft. I went to see Mr. Loeb and had a long talk with him. He says I have nothing to worry about in the session next week. But how I hate to go near that place again! In eve. to a bum Ritz brother movie.

Thurs. Aug 24

The Soviet-German pact has been signed and its terms made public! A terrible blow, and a terrible day. We were fitted for gas masks and spent the day in tense waiting and listening for news broadcasts.

Fri. Aug 25

A letter from the Amer. Embassy advising us to leave... the weather, the neighborhood, the people—everything is so sinister and calm. I stocked up on candles, chocolate, and other supplies in case of a raid and our being house-bound. In aft. went to Amer. Express and found everybody black and terror-stricken. Digging all over town, espec. around Place de l'Opéra. All museums closed, incl. Musée Rodin, where I went. Unable to bear the tension, I finally went to Amer. Library, near Pete's office, where I stayed and read Faulkner's "Wild Palms" until time to meet Pete. Got finally in touch with Loeb, who says in case of hostilities I will not be bound to appear on Wed. Otherwise, of course, yes. Well, that is a great relief. Had dinner at a wonderful Jewish place. Back to the office, where they are packing, got our masks and first aid kits, and home, where Mr. Emmanuel Rosen and his son and later Mr. and Mrs. Charles...? joined us. War talk and argument. Much discussion about how or whether we should cable Judy on board the Queen Mary.

Sat. Aug. 26

The day dawned clear, and we have not been bombed! Somehow the tension has lifted. Word from Pete at the office seems to be encouraging. In aft. went to Argenteuil, a refugee shelter, with Mrs. Rosen, Mr. Cherchevsky, and a German lady refugee who was seeking aid for her brother who had escaped to Belgium. The plant was a former factory converted by the men into a dormitory and training quarters (mechanics). Head of it was a former Austrian banker; his wife a Czech Aryan who had gotten to him by swimming across the frontier. While we were there Mr. Cherchevsky got word that he had been mobilized.... In eve. to the Schweitzers where we discussed the whole situation and listened for bombs. Spent the night at the Rosens since Irwin had not yet returned from his hunt for quarters for the office in the country, and Mrs. R. was afraid to stay alone.

Sun. – Aug. 27

Norman D. turned up! The Conte de Savoia had turned back to Naples from Genoa and he had to come to Paris to try to get passage to the U.S. In aft. drove with the Rosens and Mrs. Cherchevsky to see Mr. C. who was at the barracks and was to be released that evening till the next day. A sorry sight – the French soldiers. In eve. started out with Norman who was going to his hotel, but it was so dark that we were all frightened (no street lights at all) and he came back with us and spent the night.

Mon. Aug. 28

Judy and Etta are to arrive today. Pete has told Troper he wants to leave. Met J & E at station. Things look bad today. We are waiting in suspense.

Tues. Aug 29

Walked about Paris with J & E. Everything sinister, I in great suspense about tomorrow.

Wed. Aug. 30

Le Petit Parquet once more. M. Loeb and Chevalier were there. A session in the judge's chamber and then out! Met Rya.

Thurs. Aug 31

Went to Notre Dame with J & E. Saw Richard Rosen. Had final talk with Loeb and Chevalier. In eve. to Café Dome with Rya and her husband. Everything looks bright.

Fri. Sept 1

Wow! Hitler has marched into Poland. We are packing and leaving Paris at once. Rya has been here, frantic about her family in Poland and her husband, who will be mobilised. No trains, taxis, or cars to be had! The Gare Montparnasse!! Finally grabbed a taxi, leaving our luggage at the Gare Montparnasse, and drove as far as possible—to Montlery.

Sat. Sept 2

From Montlery all day on the train to Orléans. A train wreck ahead of us. Judy got sick.

Sun. Sept 3

Train to Tours. Met the Cohens who were schlepping a brown suitcase.

Mon. Sept 4

An alerte in the station at Tours! Train to Angers.

Tues Sept 5

Drove back from Angers to Paris. Stopped at Hotel California—an alerte from 2 to 5—our first alerte.

Wed. Sept 6

Another alerte from 10 to 11... Collected baggage, got boat reservations. Private car to Havre. Stopped at Vernon overnight.

Thurs. Sept 7

Havre. Another alerte. Found L'Auberge de la Mère Pinot & the Gauberts. Stayed there till

Thurs. Sept 21

Special train to Bordeaux and Le Verdon for the Manhattan. Sailed Sun. Sept 24 arrived N.Y. Sat Sept 30.

**APPENDIX B.**

Cast of Characters for *Fortunato* as typewritten in the American Composers Alliance score, 1965; plot synopsis written by Miriam Gideon; transcription of the piano-vocal score.

F O R T U N A T O

a chamber opera in three scenes  
based upon the tragic farce  
by

SERAFIN AND JOACHIN ALVAREZ QUINTERO

music by  
MIRIAM GIDEON

## Cast of characters

Don Victorio, a panhandler.....tenor  
Cripple.....baritone  
Alberto, a young architect.....baritone  
Blind Beggar.....baritone  
Fortunato, a clerk, down on his luck.....baritone  
Constanza, wife of Alberto.....soprano  
Conchita, a child, helper of Blind Man.....soprano  
Inez, assistant to Amaranta.....soprano  
Stenographer.....soprano  
Amaranta, a champion sharp-shooter.....contralto/mezzo

Chorus parts have alternate arrangements for soloists.

There are 10 characters in the cast. These may be reduced to 5, since many of them appear in only one scene. The chorus parts may be taken by the principals. Necessary changes are indicated in the score.

**Plot synopsis of *Fortunato* as written in the ACA score by Miriam Gideon.**

This is a story of early 20<sup>th</sup> century Madrid – a period of hard times and lavish living, when the rich or generous were sought out on all sides by the needy, among them many a scoundrel and fraud.

Scene 1: Alberto, a young architect, in comfortable circumstances but not rich, and Constanza, sympathetic and easily exploited, fall victim to Don Victorio, an ingratiating scoundrel who begs from everybody and makes a good living at it. Caught up at last by caution, Alberto and Constanza vow not to give any more money to anyone. At this point Fortunato comes along. He is a sensitive man who has fallen on hard luck, and is desperate for support for his large family. Because of his recent vow Alberto refuses to give him money, and dismisses him with a vague promise of trying to find him a job. As Fortunato leaves in despair, and Don Victorio exits in a burst of effusive gratitude as the last recipient of their generosity, Alberto and Constanza suspect that they have given their alms to the wrong person: that the scoundrel has triumphed over the honest man.

Scene 2: Fortunato is driven at last to begging. Even in this he does not succeed. In despair he steals coins from a sleeping blind beggar, but returns them when he realizes that the blind man has a large family, too. A cripple, coming on the scene just in time to see Fortunato's apparently generous gesture, begs from him, and the two beggars find themselves confronting each other.

Scene 3: Finally Fortunato answers an ad for the circus. He is called on to be a human target for Amaranta, a female champion sharpshooter, attended by her adoring

assistant, Inez. After much hesitation, Fortunato accepts his fate, and submits to repeated shots as the crowd watches in breathless suspense.

Fortunato has become “not a hero – just a man, facing life as he has to...”

# FORTUNATO

Music and Libretto by Miriam Gideon

## SCENE I: Introduction

Piano

Moderato

*f* *p* *poco cresc.*

5 *mf* *decresc.* *p* *poco cresc.* *mp* *p* *allegretto un poco marcato*

10

15 *mp* *cresc.*

21 *mf* *p sub.*

28

*poco cresc.*

33

*rit.* *a tempo*

*8va* *loco*

*p* *pp (Quasi guitarra)*

37

*poco cresc.*

42

*ad lib.*

*mp* *molto cresc.*

*accel.* *8va* *ff*

(Curtain rises.)

[The studio of Alberto Hidalgo, a young Madrid architect. Door on right, admitting to the drawing room. Another door on the left, opening to the outer hall.]

(As the curtain rises, a doorbell is heard. Constanza enters right, from the drawing room. She opens door on left, admitting Don Victorio. Although it is winter, he is wearing a straw hat, and he is shivering.)

43 *briskly* Cons. (Opening door. Don Victorio enters.)

*mp* Come in, Don Vic - to - rio.

51 D. V. (*effusively*) Cons. (*surprised*)

*mf* Thank — you, dear la - dy! Oh, how co - zy and warm in this room! *mf* Warm, you say?

56 D. V. (*with interest*)

This room is quite chil - ly! The draw - ing room — is ve - ry much warm - er. Real - ly?

62 (D. V.) *(casually)*

Well, then, let's go where it's warm-er. Can we vis-it in the draw-ing room?

*p sub.*

68 Cons. (D. V.) *(becoming rapturous)*

Yes, there we can talk. Oh an - gel, an - gel, heav - en - ly an - gel,

*mf* *sf* *p sub.*

72 *andante*

heav - en ly, heav en ly, heav en ly an - gel of mer - cy, oh an - gel of

*8va* *p* *p*

76 *sempre p*

love, you have shel-tered me, pro - tect - ed me, oh heav'n - ly an-gel! My

*sempre p*

81 (D. V.) *poco cresc.*

earth - ly Prov - i - dence, my — Prov - i - dence! Boun - ti - ful, gen - er - ous, ev - er

*poco cresc.* *pp* *pp* *pp*

86

kind - ly to all. *mf* Gra - cious de - liv - rer, my — pro - tect - or and — my —

*mf* *pp*

91

ref - uge, my ha - ven in dis - tress, my ev - er rad - iant, shin - ing phan - tom, pro - tect me, pro -

*pp subito* *pp* *pp* *pp*

96

*poco rit.* *a tempo: andante*  
tect me! An - gel of mer - cy, Oh an - gel of love, you have

*mp*

shel-tered me, pro - tect - ed me, Oh heav'n - ly an - gel, heav'n ly,

*cresc.* *mf*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 101 through 104. The vocal line starts with a *cresc.* marking and a *mf* dynamic. The piano accompaniment also features a *cresc.* marking and a *mf* dynamic. The music is in a minor key with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature. The piano part consists of chords and moving lines in both hands.

105 (breaking into sobs) *Cons.* *slower*

heav'n - ly, an - gel. Don't cry - come with me. —

*mf* *mf* *mf*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 105 through 108. Measure 105 is marked with a fermata and the instruction '(breaking into sobs)'. A box labeled 'Cons.' contains the instruction 'slower'. The vocal line has a *mf* dynamic. The piano accompaniment features a *mf* dynamic in the right hand and a *sf* dynamic in the left hand. The music continues in the same key and time signature.

109 (D. V.) *faster: allegretto* (Goes to stove.)

*mp* Just a mo-ment! I'm so cold — my teeth are chat - ter - ing! Look here!

*mp* *mf*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 109 through 112. Measure 109 is marked with a box labeled 'D. V.' and the instruction '(Goes to stove.)'. The tempo is marked '*faster: allegretto*'. The vocal line starts with a *mp* dynamic and includes a triplet of eighth notes. The piano accompaniment also starts with a *mp* dynamic and includes a triplet of eighth notes. The music continues in the same key and time signature.

113 (shivers) *Cons.* (impatently)

Four de-grees a-bove ze-ro, and me in a suit of tis-sue pa-per! Br-! *mf* Please, Don Vic-

*mf* *mf* *sf*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 113 through 116. Measure 113 is marked with a box labeled 'Cons.' and the instruction '(impatently)'. The vocal line has a *mf* dynamic and includes a triplet of eighth notes. The piano accompaniment features a *mf* dynamic in the right hand and a *sf* dynamic in the left hand. The music continues in the same key and time signature.

118 (Cons.)

D. V. *slower* 205

tor - io, — we'll have to hur - ry — be - fore my hus - band comes, and finds you here! *mf* Ve - ry well!

124

*p sub.*

Very well! But please do not mis - un - der - stand me. I don't want to a - void your hus - band. All I

130

*andante*

(becoming rapturous again)

*mf*

*dim.*

*pp*

want is to see my heav'n - ly an - gel, my an - gel, that an - gel of mer - cy and

136

(Don Victorio continues to sigh and sob as he follows Constanza out R.)

good - ness!

141 *accelerando*

*f* *ff* *rit.*

147 *fast*

*p* *f*

(Constanza enters R, breathless.)

150

*p* *mf* *rit.* *dim.*

*moderato*

153 Cons. Alb. (*sarcastically*)

*mp* *sf*

Poor Don Vic tor-io! If you had seen him, shiv' - ring with cold! What an act - or!

157 Cons. (*reproachfully*)

Don't make fun of him. It's e-nough to break one's heart!

160 *fast* *cresc.*

Two of his child-ren have meas-les, the house is top-sy tur-vy, his sis-ter was bit by a

163 *moderato* (*angrily*) Alb.

cat, and the cat is mad!— Hum-bug! This ci-ty is a nest of im-

(Holds up several letters.)

167 *mf* Cons. (*with compassion*) Alb. *mf*

pos-ters. See here! In this morn-ing's mail! How dread ful! Ev'-ry-bod-y wants

172 (Alb.) 208

some-thing! There's not e-nough mon-ey to go a-round, and I'm on-ly a poor ar-chi-tect.

*mp*

177 (with finality)

Not an oth-er penny, to an-y-one! You're right! *mp* On-ly once

*f* *p* *mp*

*rit.* Cons. (sadly) *slower: moderato* (pleadingly)

181

more, be-cause poor Don Vic-tor-io was crying so bit-ter-ly, so bit-ter-ly,

*mp*

185

*poco cresc.* and when peo-ple cry I al-ways be-lieve them, I

al - ways be-lieve them, al - - - ways, al - ways be-lieve them.

*espr.*

191 *mf* With their tears — my — heart, my heart cries, too. *p* With their

*mf* *p*

194 tears my heart cries, too. With their tears my

*8va*

*sempre p*

197 heart, — my heart cries, too, my heart cries, too.

*(8va)*

200 (Cons.) *rit.* *faster*

*pp* Al-ways, al-ways, al-ways, al-ways! *mp*

Alb. (relenting) *mf* Ver-y well, but it's the last, the ver-y last for him!

*pp* *mf*

8<sup>va</sup>-----  
8<sup>vb</sup>-----

204 *slower* *faster*

prom ise!

And re - mem - ber: not a pen - ny more from ei - ther of us to an - y - one — for the

*mp* *mf* *f*

207 *slower: moderato*

I prom - ise, I prom ise, I prom ise, I

rest of the year! and re mem - ber, not a pen - ny, not a pen - ny,

*f* *mp*

210 (Cons.) (Both raise their hands.) *rit.* (They embrace.)

*prom-ise, I prom-ise, and now we prom-ise, we prom-ise, we prom-ise!*

(Alb.)

*I prom-ise, I prom-ise, we prom-ise, we prom-ise, we prom-ise!*

*p cresc. dim. p*

*8va-----*

*a tempo*

214 (Constanza exits R.) (She returns.)

*mf mp cresc. f*

218 *allegro*

Alb. (somewhat impatiently) Cons. (breathlessly)

*Well, what is it? My dear, there is some-one at the door! What shall I say if it is the*

*mf mp*

221 *slower* *faster*

Alb. (surprised) Cons.

*man who was here yes-ter-day! The man who was here yes-ter-day? Don't you re-mem-ber, dear, he left his*

*mp mf*

225 (Cons.) Alb. *slower* *briskly* 212

card, it was full of grease spots! Oh yes! I remember! Well, if it is that gentle man,

*mp* *mf*

228 *slower*

tell him... that I am bus-y to-day, and can-not see him, but I will write him...

*subito p* *pp*

231 (Cons.) *slowly* (Constanza exits left. Alberto settles down to work again. Street music is heard through the window.)

Ver-y well, my dear, I'll tell him.

*mp* *p* *p* (Quasi guitarra)

*rit.* *lively, accented*

238

*sim.* *pp*

246

*mp*

255

*pp* *poco cresc.*

262

*mp*

(Alberto, irritated by the music, goes to the window and shuts it impatiently. Then he returns to his desk.)

(He settles down again and begins to work.)

266

*slowly* *faster: allegretto*

*p* *mp* *cresc.*

272 (Constanza reappears)

Cons. *faster* *mf* Alb. *(rises, angrily)*

The man who was here yes - ter-day! My God!

*f* *mf* *sf*

279 (Alb.) *slower* Fort. (meekly) Alb. (muttering)

Have n't I just told you... Good morn-ing... Good morn-ing...

*sf* *p* *mf* *pp*

284 Cons. *faster*

(plaintively) *p* *mp*

And is there an-y-thing else, my dear?

291 Alb. (angrily, aside to Constanza)

Lis-ten! Why can't you un-der-stand that this is the man I do not want to see!

*p*

296 Cons. *slower* (gently)

Oh — yes, I — know ver-y well, — but I felt so sor-ry for him...

*mp*

300 (Alberto stares at her furiously.  
She returns his look blandly.)

**faster**  
Alb. (sarcastically)

A ver-y ten-der heart! E-nough to drive me cra-zy!

*mf*

304 (loudly) **slower** Fort. (startled) **faster** Alb. (to Constanza)

Now go a - way, please! Who? Me? — No! You, my dear, and

*p* *f*

309 (hesitatingly)

fur ther-more, if an-y-one calls, say... I've gone... to pick... huck - le-ber-ries!

*sf sf*

313 Cons. (Constanza exits. Alberto looks at Fortunato.)

*mp* *p* **andante con moto**

Yes, Al - ber-to, I un-der-stand, my dear.

319 Alb. Fort. 3 Alb. 216

Now, please, what is it? I am a - fraid, — Señ - or, — you do not want to see me... As you

*poco cresc.* *p* *mp*

326 Fort.

see, — I have some work to do, just at this ver-y moment. Well, then, — would it be

*p*

332 Alb. Fort.

bet-ter to - mor-row? *mp* No, — as long as you are here... That's

*mp*

337 Alb. *rit.* (Fortunato sits.) *faster: allegro* 3 3

ver-y kind of you, but real-ly... Please sit down. Now, what can I do for you?

*p* *mf*

343 (Embarrassed,  
Fortunato is silent.) (Alb.)

(beginning again)

Fort. (explosively)

Well, then, what can I do for you? I need work!

348 Alb.

Fort.

What kind of work? An-y kind! I'm a clerk, book-keep-er, but there's

351

p sub.

nothing, nothing I would-n't try! I was a brick-layer for a while. — I had to climb up on a ladder,

355

cresc.

slower

but it made me diz-zy, ter-ri-bly diz-zy with fear! — I fell

358 (Fort.) *faster* (frantically) Alb. (soothingly)

down, — and almost killed myself! You weren't used to it... No! It was fear! I'm a

363 *f* cow ard! But how could I let my fam - i - ly starve?

367 Alb. *slower* (somewhat moved)

Let me think it ov-er. I'll see what I can do.

372 (Fort.) (dully) *a little faster* (hesitatingly) (sadly) Alb.

Thank you, sir. Ex-cuse my ask-ing, but do you have an-y child-ren? Then you can't un-der

*mp* No.

377 (Fort.) Alb. rit. con moto: andante Fort.

stand, sir. Have you? Five lit-tle ones. Night af-ter

espr. mp

386

night I lie and won - der, cease - less - ly, think - ing on - ly how I can find bread for them.

393 (with growing intensity) cresc.

I love my child - ren... They're all I have in the world, but what right had

cresc.

400

I, what right had I — to bring them in - to the world — and let them

molto cresc.

407 (Fort.) (with despair) *ff* (He wipes away a tear.)

starve, \_\_\_\_\_ and let them starve, \_\_\_\_\_ yes, starve! \_\_\_\_\_

413 Alb. (moved) *faster*

*p* For-give me... Don't give up hope. I'll try to find some-thing for you as soon as I can.

*subito p*

419 (flatly) (Alberto rises. Fortunato remains seated.) Alb. (surprised) Fort. (embarrassed) *rather fast*

Let it be soon, I pray, sir. Yes? You see, I'm not used to

*p* *mf* *p*

427 (Alberto reaches into his pocket, then withdraws his hand, remembering his promise to his wife.)

begging, but could you give me a few cen-ta-vos, for now?

*espr.* *p* *molto cresc.*

434 **Alb.** (*resolutely*)

No, I can't give you an-y-thing now. I will do all I can to find work for you.

*mf*

440 *rit.*

Come back... next week...

*p* *f* *ff* *p sub.*

*fast (violently)* *15<sup>ma</sup>* // *slowly*

447 **Fort.** (*with despair*)

Thank you, sir. May God bless you. I'm ver-y grate-ful. In a week, sir.

*pp*

(Fortunato exits.)

454 *rit.* *calando*

*fast (violently)* (Alberto has an impulse to call him back, but resists it.)

*sf* *cresc.*

460

Alb.

*slower*

No, a promise is a promise, but by

*ff* *mf*

467

God, I'm a-fraid that this time we have punished the honest man instead of the scoundrel!

*f* *p sub.* *espr.*

(Reflecting, Alberto moves to his desk, absent-mindedly arranging objects on it. Street music is again heard very faintly in the distance, a little louder as it approaches, then fainter again as it moves away.)

*moderato*

*pp* (*Quasi guitarra*) *p*

481

*poco cresc.*

490

*mp*

501

*mp*

512

*decresc.*

(Street music is no longer heard.)

523

*rit.* *pp* *slowly* *faster* *briskly* (Constanza enters with Don Victorio.)

*pp* *mp* *sf* *sf*

531

Cons. *moderato*

Don Vic-tor-io has come to thank you, my dear.

*sf* *mf*

535

D. V. (*effusively*)

How could I leave this house with-out kiss-ing the hand of my ben-e-fact-or?

*sf*

540 (He tries to kiss Alberto's hand. Alberto retreats.)

Alb.

*f* *f* *mf* *f*

That's all right. None of this, please!

545

*mp* *mp* *mf*

Don't be ang - ry. You are ang - ry — with me. Smile at me, on-ly smile at me!

551

(Alberto gives him a sickly smile.) *faster* *(impatiently)*

Alb. *faster* *(impatiently)*

Just one smile! *(with exaggerated expression)* Now will you please leave?

*dim.* *mf*

558

D. V.

*(feverishly)*

*slower: andante*

*(again rapturous)*

My pro - tect or, my ben e - fact or, my no - ble guard ian, heav'n - sent to

*mp* *mf*

me, you have shel-tered me, pro-TECT-ed me, Oh no - - - ble guard-ian,

Oh no - ble guardian, and my pro-TECT - tor, boun-ti-ful, my pro-TECT - or,

boun-ti-ful, my sal - va - tion, my sal - va - tion, my sal - va - tion!

581 Cons. *faster: moderato*  
Please, Don Vic-tor-io, you can see my husband is ver-y bus-y... D. V.  
*p* For - give me, gracious

587 (D. V.)

la - dy, I go. — Alb.

And I hope you under - stand that this is the ver - y last you can ex - pect from us.

594

*rit.* (Don Victorio bows.) (He leaves.)

*f* *mp* *cresc.*

(Suddenly reappears.) *slower: moderato* (fawning)

602 D. V.

And if I ev - er come back... Ev - er come

608

Cons. *f* *mf* *mf*

(D. V.) *f* *mf* *mf*

Goodbye, good - bye, ——— good - bye!

back, don't even o-pen the door! Alb. And if I ev - er

Goodbye, good - bye!

615

(D. V.) *f* *mf* *f*

beg — an - oth - er pen - ny, please throw me down the stairs!

*allegretto*

(He leaves again, bowing, taking Alberto's umrella.)

620

Cons. *mf* *mf* *faster*

Good - bye, — good - bye, good - bye, good - bye!

Alb. *mf* *mf*

Good - bye, good - bye! Just a mo-ment!

625 (Don Victorio returns.) **D. V.** *p* (feigns surprise)

Yes, señ - or?

*(Alb.)* *mf* *f*

Don Vic-tor-io. That um - brella... That um brella that you took by mistake, it

*p* *mf*

631 **D. V.** *slower* (Slaps his forehead.)

happens to be mine! Why, to be sure, — you're right! — How — could I — have

*mp* *sf* *p*

636 *andante* (with passion) *poco cresc.*

done such a thing? — My heart's ov - er - flow - ing, my head's in a whirl. —

*p*

642 (D. V.)

Par-don me, oh par-don me, most gra-cious ben - e - fac-tor!

*mf* *f* *pp*

648 *fast* (Don Victorio bows again, gives Alberto the umbrella, and leaves for good.)

*f* *mf*

654 *moderato* Alb.

There's a real scoun-drel \_\_\_ for you! Now what do you think of him?

660 Cons.

I'm a - fraid \_\_\_ you're right! List-en to me! Be-cause of him \_\_\_\_\_ I have

*p* *f*

667

(Alb.)

Cons.

230

turned a - way an hon - est man! How dread - ful! How do such things hap - pen?

673

Alb.

It's the way of the world, my dear. — Half the

679

world wakes up in the morn - ing de - ter - mined — to cheat the oth - er half

685

— by eve - ning. De - ter - mined, de - ter - mined to cheat, to

(As Constanza and Alberto busy themselves straightening the room, Chorus offstage is heard.)

690 (Alb.) *faster: allegretto* Chorus

cheat the oth-er half! *mp* How dread-ful, how dread-ful,

*subito mp*

695

oh how can such things be? Oh how can such things be? How can such things be?

701 *cresc.*

Chorus How dread-ful! *cresc.* Oh— how

My dear, \_\_\_\_\_ it's the way of the world. Yes, it's the way of the

*cresc.*

706 *p*

dread - ful! Half the world. Half the world looks on - ly to cheat.

(Chorus)

world. *p* Half the world. Half the world. looks just to cheat.

*mf* *p*

713

Half the world, half the world looks on - ly to cheat,

Half the world, Half the world, looks on - ly to cheat,

719 *cresc.* *mf*

on - ly to cheat. The world is full of scoun - drels, scoun - drels. The

on - ly to cheat. Scoun - drels, scoun - drels.

*cresc.* *mf*

726

world \_\_\_\_\_ is full of cheats and rogues and scoun - drels,  
(Chorus)

The world is full of scoun - drels, full of cheats and rogues and scoun - drels.

730

is full of scoun drels, scoun-drels, my dear, the world is full of scoun-drels,  
scoun-drels, scoun-drels, my dear, the world is full of

*f*

733

is full of scoun - drels, scound-drels, is full of scoun-drels.  
scoun-drels, scoun-drels, scoun-drels, is full of scoun-drels.

*sva*-----

*ff*

736

The world \_\_\_\_\_ is full of scoundrels, is full of cheats and rogues. We

The world is full of scoundrels, is full of cheats and rogues. We

8<sup>va</sup>

15<sup>ma</sup>

p sub.

740

do not dis - cov - er their wiles \_\_\_\_\_ un - til is is too late. But as for the hon - est

do not dis - cov - er their wiles \_\_\_\_\_ un - til is is too late. But as for the hon - est

(Constanza and Alberto, having put things in order, exit the stage.)

*allargando*

745

man, the honest man... **ff** This world is not made for the honest man!

man, the honest man... This world is not made for the honest man!

8<sup>va</sup>

**ff**

**f**

5

8<sup>vb</sup>

(Curtain)

SCENE II  
A street in Madrid

[Shabby shops and bill-boards. A little wine-shop at one end.]

(Sound of a guitar is heard in the distance.)

1 **Moderato**

Piano *p*

(Curtain rises slowly.)

7

(Blind man appears, playing guitar.)

13 *cresc.*

(He leans against a wall, continuing to play.)

20 *mf*

31 (People pass by now and then, giving him a glance.)

*p* *cresc.*

41

*mf* *p*

50 *rit.* *a tempo* (Don Victorio strolls past, whistling.)

*rit.* *a tempo*

61 D. V. (He walks toward a wine shop.) (He disappears into the shop.)

*(whistle)* *mf* *decresc.*

71 (Whistle gradually becomes inaudible.) (Conchita enters, carrying stool and tin plate for Blind Man.)

*p* *pp* *lively* *f*

79

88 **D. V.** *slower* *p* (whistle) *lively* (He walks to corner.) *slower* *rit.* (whistle)

99 *mf* *morendo* (Fortunato walks in, forlorn.) *faster: allegretto* *mf* It's For-tu-na-to, my

106 **Fort.** *mf* (bitterly) friend! Well, Don Vic - tor - io, how — did it go?

111 D. V. *p* (Breathes into his face.) Fort. *mf* (*dryly*)

You can see for your - self! Ah! There's no-bod - y like you!

116 (Don Victorio struts.) D. V. *p*

I am Mos - es him - self. I draw wa - ter from

121 (Don Victorio shakes bag with coins.) Fort. *mp*

stones! Don Al ber - to? How much? —

125 D. V. Fort. (*sarcastically*)

*mf* Fif - teen pe - se - tas! *f* Gen - ius, man, gen - ius! We'll have to drink to this! —

129 D. V. (backing away) (They move toward the wine shop.)

*mp* Mind — you, just one!

133 (Each waits for the other to go in.) Fort. *mp* D. V. *p*

Af - ter you, — sir! Af - ter you. —

(They continue to hesitate. At last they enter the wine-shop, arm in arm.) *slower*

137 *mf* *f* *f* *p*

142 *f*

(Blind Man begins to play again. Conchita now arranges the stool, and the tin plate for coins. He sits down.)

*allegretto*

(She begins to dance.)

159

*mp*

Blind Man (spoken): "Who were those people?"

167

*p*

Conchita: "One of them was quite an important-looking gentleman." Bl. M.: "I was afraid they were policemen."

176

*cresc.*

*mf* *mp*

Conc.: "Oh no, that one looked more like a congressman... or even a senator..."

185

*mf*

(Conchita dances with more abandon)

193

*cresc. molto* *cresc.*

201

*f*

208

*mp* *cresc.* *f* 8va

216

*ff* *f* *rit.*

(Blind Man stops playing. Conchita stops dancing. As she arranges his stool, tin plate, etc., she sings a song.)

*allegretto* *poco rit.*

*p*

*a tempo: allegretto*

230 Conc. *mp*

To Se-ville to see the bull - fight, went a Ma - la-guen-ian daught - er. She had

*mp*

*p*

235

gone to see the bull - fight when a hand-some lad way-laid and caught \_\_\_\_\_ her.

*p*

239 *fast, accented* Conc. *p* *slower: moderato*

Bl. M. *mf* At my face they must not stare so; to my

With a vi-to, vi-to, vi-to, with a vi-to, vi-to, va!

*mf* *p*

*poco rit.*

246 (Conc.)

cheeks the blood goes rush - ing; at my face they must not stare so, for it sets me all a -

*sempre p*

*slower: moderato*

251

*fast, accented*

blush - - - - ing. At my

Bl. M.

With a vi-to, vi-to, vi-to, with a vi-to, vi-to, va!

*mf*

257

*poco cresc.*

face don't look, don't dare, sir, for its col - or up you'll call, sir! At my face don't look, don't

*poco cresc.*

262 (Conc.) *pp* *fast, accented*

dare, sir, or in love with me you'll fall, \_\_\_\_\_ sir!

Bl. M. *mf* With a vi-to, vi-to,

*pp* *mf*

267 *quite fast, spirited* *mf*

All of gold are girls un - mat - ed, all of

vi - to, with a vi - to, vi - to, va!

*mf*

271 *allargando* *f*

sil-ver those that mar - ried, all the wid-ows cop-per plat - ed, all of tin the old who

*f*

(Conc.)

276

tar - - - - - ried! *fast*

*8va*

*ff*

(Blind man is now settled in his place)

281 *a little slower: allegretto* Bl. M. *p*

Now go, child, \_\_\_\_\_ to Do-na De

*p*

289

me-tri-a's shop, and see what she has for me to - day... a bowl of soup...

*p*

(Bl. M.)

She might have some-thing for me, too... *mp*

a bit of meat... Well, run a-

I'll be back before you know it.

long, \_\_\_\_\_ but don't be too long.

(She runs off. Blind Man settles himself, puts tin plate on ground, and takes up guitar.)

*pp*

*cresc.*

(Blind Man begins to play, somewhat savagely.)

*f*

329

*slower*

247

(Fortunato comes out of the wine shop, dejected.)

(Blind man stops playing.)

335

*calando*

**Fort.** *slower*

342

*mp*

, *rit...*

*moderato*

No luck for me! \_\_\_\_\_ I can't face it an - y - more.

How \_\_\_\_\_ can I go

351

home? What door shall I knock at now?

On-ly si-lence or dis - dain do I find.

359 (Fort.) *cresc.* *mf* *f* *p subito* 248

All doors are closed to me... emp-ty prom-is-es, re - fus-al... the

366 *cresc.* *f*

world has no use for me, \_\_\_\_\_ no use at all! How \_\_\_\_\_ face my wife, my

372 *dim.* *mp* *p*

child-ren, my lit-tle ones, my own... How much can a man stand—

379 *cresc.* *mf* *p subito*

— with out tremb-ling, with out break-ing, with-out stumb-ling in the dark, with-out

386

*cresc.* *molto cresc.*

ask - ing where he's going, or how, or why? Is there an an - swer to the

392

*f* *mp* *pp*

question? Hear me! Hear me, child-ren, hear me! My pride, am - bi-tion, all —

*8va-* *f* *mp* *pp* *loco*

398

*rit...* *mp*

— that makes of me a man, — all things I once held dear I

404 *a tempo*  
(Fort.)

vow to for - get, all I once held dear, my hopes, all my youth, all my strength, all my

*mp*

411 *poco cresc.* *cresc.*

man - li - ness, I re - nounce them all, I give them all, my dar - ling child - ren,

*poco cresc.*

417 *allargando* *f*

for you, for you, your fath - er has be - come a beg - gar! *f* To the Dev - il with self - re -

424 *(Fort.)* **a tempo: moderato** (He paces restlessly, overcome with despair.)

spect! I'll beg!

*espr.*

*p mf p mf p*

431 *accel. . .* **brisk** (A young woman stenographer appears, walking briskly.)

*p sf p sf mf*

(Fortunato follows her, without daring to speak.)

436

*mf*

442 **Fort.** (*haltingly*) **Sten.** (*curtly*) (Fortunato tries to speak.)

I beg your par-don... Are you speak-ing to me? What is it?

*p sf mp*

447 (He gesticulates.) **Fort.** **Sten.** (*impatiently*) **Fort.** **Sten.** **mf**

La-dy... Well? Could you... Could I

452 (He tries again to speak.) **Fort.** (*feverishly*)

what? — Have you lost your tongue, man? Listen, listen,

456 (*mumbling*) **Sten.** (*surprised*) **slower**

please... could you... could you... could you tell me the way to Ci-ty Hall? — Ci-ty

462 **allegretto** **mp** **Fort.** **mf**

Hall? That's a long — way from here! First you go right, No, you go left...

467 Sten. *slower*

Yes, you're right, then you go left... You're No, — you go right!

471 *p* *allegretto*

right! Then past the Stock Ex - change, past the jail, past the Post Of fice, past the Hall of Past the Post Of fice,

477 *poco a poco cresc. ed accel.* *mf*

Rec-ords, past the Li-brar-y, past the State Depart ment, past the docks, past the Mu-se-um of past the Li-brar-y, past the State Depart ment, past the docks,

482 (Sten.)

*slowly* *mf* *allegretto*

Art. (quickly) That's right... Well, if you knew all the time, you — knew all the

(Fort.) *f* *p*

and there you are! all the time, I knew all the

*mf* *p* *mf*

491

*f* *f*

an-swers, then why, why did you ask me? Oh, is that so?

*mp*

an-swers, I want-ed to be sure...

*f* *mp* *f*

498

*ff* (furiously)

Are you sure — you weren't look-ing for a pick-up? Scare crow! Shame onyou! A

*p*

Me?

*sf* *sf*

503 (Sten.) (She goes off in a huff) *slower*

man of your age! (dejectedly)

(Fort.) No, it's no use... I can't do it!

*calando*

*ff* *p subito* *mp*

8va

511 *moderato* (People have meanwhile been passing by.)

*p*

515 *cantando* (From time to time they drop coins into the plate of the Blind Man, who has fallen asleep.)

*mp*

521

*p* *rit.*

Well, \_\_\_\_\_ what now? \_\_\_\_\_ What's left?

*p* *f fast*

(He turns and catches sight of the Blind Man, whose plate is now quite full of coins.)

533

(He moves toward him, now resolutely, now hesitantly.)

539

*p* *cresc.* *8va*

(He tip-toes up to him.)

(He snatches the coins.)

(He puts them in his pocket, but they fall out through a hole.)

545

*pp subito* *sf*

(He picks them up frantically, then laughs nervously as the Blind Man wakes up.)

Bl. M.

*slower*

*moderato*

553

*mp* *mp* *p* *pp* *espr.*

Con-chi-ta! Where are you?

(He feels for his plate. Finds it empty. Fortunato notices this, and is torn with guilt. He approaches the Blind Man.)

561 (Bl. M.)

Ah, yes! Hard times, hard times for all! No luck to day!

*fp* *mp*

566 Fort. (urgently)

My friend, do you make much with your gui - tar? No, Señ-or, it's a

*mf* *mp*

Bl. M.

571

Have you child-ren?

*p* *p subito*

hard life, but thank the Lord it's e-nough for us all.

577 (Fort.)

258

*mf* *pp*

(Bl. M.) *mp* Three? I have five! *mp*

Yes, — Señ - or, — three! But I am

*pp* *mp* *p subito* *pp*

582

(confused, mumbling)

*pp* That's right...

sure you don't have to wor-ry a-bout them.

*mp* *f*

*8va* *8va*

586

(Conchita has meanwhile returned, and watches in amazement as Fortunato takes the coins from his pocket and puts them in the plate.)

*f* Here, my friend... take this for your child-ren. *mp*

May God re - ward you, kind sir!

*f* *f* *mp*

*8va* *8va*

(Concita makes her way over to the Blind Man, and touches him on the shoulder.)

590 *8va* *ff* *rit.* *moderato* *mp*

596 *8vb* *Conc.* *mf* *espr.* *mf*

Hel - lo! I'm back!

603 (He gets up.)

Don-a De-me-tria says ev'-ry-thing's read - y. Come a-long.

(Turns to Fortunato.)

609 *Bl. M.* *mp* *mf* *p*

Thank you, my child. God be with you, my good friend.

616

Fort.

(Conchita and the Blind Man exit.)

And with you... *a little faster: allegretto*

*sf* *sf* *pp*

*calando*

*pp*

628

*moderato*

(Cripple makes his way toward Fortunato.)

*cantando*

*mf* *p*

(Cripple comes up behind Fortunato, holding out his hat.)

634

*mf*

(Hearing this, Fortunato takes off his own hat.)

642 **Fort.** *sf* *p subito* (They stare at each other.)

Cr. *mf* Broth-er... Could you give me...

Broth-er... Could you give me... (distantly)

G. P.

*mf* *sf* *p*

(The curtain falls slowly...)

650 *pp*

657

*calando*  
*ppp*

# SCENE III

[Carnival grounds on the outskirts of Madrid. Sounds of a calliope, barkers, laughter, etc. A tent in the foreground, and near it a strange-looking board, punctured with many holes. At the top of it a large sign reading: "Amaranta the Invincible." Inez, a young woman, dressed in tights and a fall blouse, sits in front of the tent, sewing.]

(Clowns, acrobats, jugglers, tumblers perform during the following Introduction.)

## Introduction

**Clowns**

**Piano**

*Moderato* *pp* *8<sup>va</sup>* *8<sup>va</sup>* *accel.* *a tempo: moderato* *poco cresc.* *mp* *8<sup>vb</sup>*

*6* *faster* *cresc.* *sf* *p* *8<sup>vb</sup>* *loco* *loco*

**Acrobats**

*13* *rit.* *broadly, with movement* *pp* *mp*

*20* *pp* *mp* *poco cresc.* *mf*

The musical score is divided into three main sections. The first section, labeled 'Clowns', begins with a piano introduction in 4/4 time, marked 'Moderato' and 'pp'. It features a complex rhythmic pattern with eighth and sixteenth notes. The piano part includes a 'poco cresc.' marking and a 'loco' instruction. The vocal line for the Clowns is written in a soprano clef (8<sup>va</sup>) and includes an 'accel.' marking. The second section, labeled 'Acrobats', starts at measure 6 and is marked 'faster'. It features a more rhythmic piano accompaniment with 'cresc.', 'sf', and 'p' markings, and a 'loco' instruction. The vocal line for the Acrobats is written in a soprano clef (8<sup>va</sup>) and includes a 'rit.' marking and the instruction 'broadly, with movement'. The third section, starting at measure 13, continues the 'Acrobats' vocal line with 'pp' and 'mp' markings. The piano accompaniment includes a 'poco cresc.' marking and a 'mf' marking. The score concludes with a final measure in 6/4 time.

Jugglers

27 *rit.* *a little faster: allegretto*

*pp* *mp*

8vb

36

*piu f* *cresc.* *f*

8vb loco 8vb 8vb loco 8vb loco 8vb

44

*pp subito* *cresc.* *accel.*

(8vb) loco

Tumblers

51 *fast*

*f*

8vb loco 8vb loco 8vb loco

58

*p subito*

*cresc.*

65

*f*

71

*p subito*

*cresc.*

*sf*

77

*sf*

*p > cresc.*

*ff*

(The performers merge with the crowd. The carnival activity continues.)

*slower*

83

*p*

*ritardando*

*dim.*

8<sup>vb</sup>

90

*pp*

*calando*

*faster: allegro*

*mf*

98

8<sup>va</sup>

*sf*

*sf*

*sf*

103

*p*

*cresc.*

*sf*

108

8<sup>va</sup> ---

*sf*

8<sup>vb</sup>

*pp*

*slower*  
(distantly)

8<sup>va</sup> ---

8<sup>vb</sup>

8<sup>vb</sup>

(Fortunato enters, looking about.)

114 *calando* *a little faster: moderato*

*pp* *p espressivo*

8va----- 8vb-----

(He carries a newspaper. He looks at the board with its sign, then back at the newspaper.)

121

*mf* *p*

*cresc.*

(Inez watches him.)

(He notices her, and approaches her hesitatingly.)

129 *accel.* *allegretto*

*cresc.*

134

(As he draws closer, she decides to help him.)

139

*p*

144 *Inez* *mf* (Fortunato looks at her, then back at the newspaper.) 267 *slower*

Musical score for measures 144-150. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line starts with a rest, then has the lyrics "Look-ing for some-one?". The piano accompaniment features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. Dynamics include *mf* and *pp*. There are triplets in the vocal line.

150 *Fort.* (Reading from the paper.) *mp* *cresc.* *mf*

Musical score for measures 150-154. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has the lyrics "Wanted: An as - sis-tant. Ap-ply at the carn - iv - al grounds. Ask for Señ - or - a \_\_\_\_\_ A-ma". The piano accompaniment has a bass line with chords. Dynamics include *mp* and *cresc.*. There are triplets in the vocal line.

155 *Inez* (*graciously*)

Musical score for measures 155-160. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has the lyrics "ran - ta. Señ - or - a A - ma - ran - ta? Ve - ry well, I'll tell her you're here." The piano accompaniment has a bass line with chords. Dynamics include *mf* and *mp*.

161 *Fort.* *faster* (*fearfully*) *slower* *mf* *somewhat faster: allegretto* *Inez* (*archly*)

Musical score for measures 161-166. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has the lyrics "Wait! Just a mom-ent! Who is Señ - or - a A ma - ran - ta? Señ". The piano accompaniment has a bass line with chords. Dynamics include *f* and *mp*. There are triplets in the vocal line.

169 (Inez)

or - a A - ma - ran - ta, A - ma - ran - ta the strong, straight as an ar - row, more keen, more in -

*cresc.*

175

*f* fal - li - ble, more fair, *p subito* more come - ly than all, *rit. (rapturously)* prin - cess of women!

*f* *p subito* *pp*

*slower*  
(Interrupting, timorously)

179 **Fort.** *mf* Ex - cuse me, please... What kind of as - sis - tant does Señ - or - a Ama - ran - ta want?

*mf* *mp*

184 Inez (casually) *mf* (startled) **Fort.**

Some-one to take Sa-ba - ti - no's place. What hap-pened to Sa-ba - ti-no?

*mf*

*sf*

188 Inez (sadly) *mp* **Fort.** *mf* *allegretto*

Poor Sa-ba - ti - no! He shot him-self! Good heav'ns, what for?

*mp* *sf* *mf* *p*

193 Inez (archly)

For love, for love of A-ma-ran-ta the strong, proud as an eagle, more

*mp*

199 *poco cresc.* (Inez) *mf* *p subito*

fal-li-ble, more fair, more come-ly than all, prin-cess of wom-en!

*poco cresc.* *mf* *p subito*

203 *cresc.*

More come-ly than all, match-less, in-vin-ci-ble, A-ma-ran-ta!

*cresc.* *f*

*8vb* *8vb* *8vb*

208 *faster* (She goes to the tent and calls:) (Amaranta emerges from the tent.)

Señor-a A-ma-ran-ta! Here is some-one to see you!

*mp* *maestoso*

216 Amar. (to Fort.) *mf* (Turns to Inez) (Inez goes into tent.) (Fort. sits)

Good morn-ing! I-nez, leave us — for a moment. Please sit down.

*faster: allegretto*

223 (Amar.) (*vehemently*)

Have you come in an - swer — to my ad - ver - tise - ment? Are you read - to be - gin work at

227

once for the great — A - ma - ran - ta? Who is the great A - ma - ran - ta?

(Inez emerges from tent, and stands listening raptly. She is thus able to substitute for chorus if necessary, taking soprano part.)

233 (Amar.) (*indignantly*)

What? You do not know me? What? — You do not know I am an ar - tist, de -

239

scend - ed from a race of ar - tists who die — for their art! My fa - ther,

245 (Amar.) *cresc.* *f rit.* (proudly)

*cros-sing the might-y Ni - ag - ra — on a tightrope, fell, — and found a wa - ter - y*

(Carnival crowd has gathered, and joins in admiration of Amaranta and her noble family. Inez may substitute for chorus, taking soprano part, while other parts are taken by accompaniment.)

(Amaranta continues.)

251 *a tempo: allegretto*

grave! My brother,

CH. *pp* Crowd *A* he-ro's death, a he-ro's death, what a no-ble end, what cour-age!

256 *p* *slower espr.* *a tempo*

hand some and proud, a ver - i - ti - ble A - pol - lo, was

*mf* *8va* -----

*mp* *p subito* *p*

260 (casually)  
(Amar.)

eat-en by his panthers.

*pp* A he-ro's death, a he-ro's death, what a no-ble end, what a no-ble end, what

*pp*

CH.

265 Fort. (shuddering) Amar. (amiably)

*p* And your mo ther? *mp* Dear mo ther, dear mo ther, dear mo-ther, dear —

*mp* cour - age! Dear mo ther, dear mo ther, dear mo ther,

CH.

271 (Amar.)

mo - ther, dear mo - ther, dear mo - ther,

mo - ther dear, dear mo - ther, dear mo - ther, dear mo - ther.

CH.

275 (casually)

dear mo-ther died of na-tu-ral caus-es. *mp* A he-ro's death, a

*pp* Ah! *p* A he-ro's death, a

CH.

281 (Amar.)

*cresc.*

CH.

he - - - ro's death, a no - - ble end, what cour-age! What a  
No - ble end, what cour-age! ———

he - ro's death, what a no - ble end, a no - ble, no - ble end, what a

*cresc.*

286

CH.

no - ble end, a no - ble end, a no - ble, no - ble, no - ble, no - ble,

no - ble end, a no - ble end, a no - ble a no - ble, a no - ble, no - ble, a

*cresc.*

(She goes into the tent, and returns presently, followed by Inez. She is carrying a rifle.)

292 *rit.* (Amar.) *briskly, somewhat martially*

*f* no - - - - ble end! (spoken) "Now! Let's try you out!"

CH. *f* no - ble, what a no - ble end!

(Fortunato cannot repress his fright.)

300

*p* *mf*

309 **Fort.** (He asks Inez, in an aside:)

*p* This A-ma - ran ta... tell me... what does she do?

*dim.* *p*

*slower* (proudly, but still in an aside) *briskly* (to Fortunato)

317 **Inez** *mp* *p* **Fort.** (*in terror*) **Amar.** (*mf*)

*She is the world's great-est sharpshoot er! Good God! Let's go! Stand there!*

*fp* *mf*

8<sup>vb</sup>

324

*Be calm! Be qui - et! What we need is qui-et, se - ren - i - ty, and*

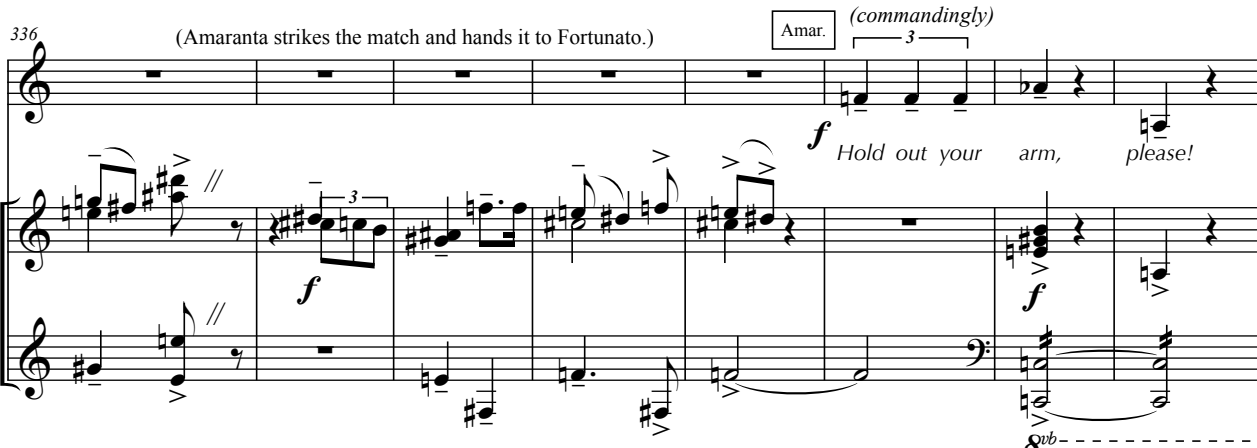
(Fortunato opens her bag and takes out a large wax match.)

*slower* (*hysterical with fear*) *a tempo: brisk!*

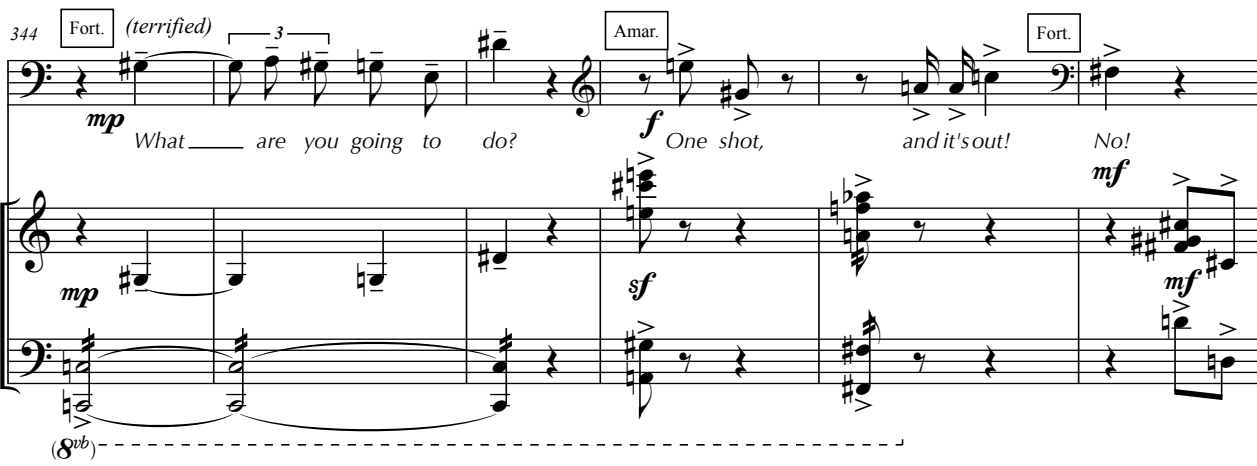
330 **Fort.** *mp* *mf*

*cool - ness! Cool-ness? My blood is froz - - - en!*

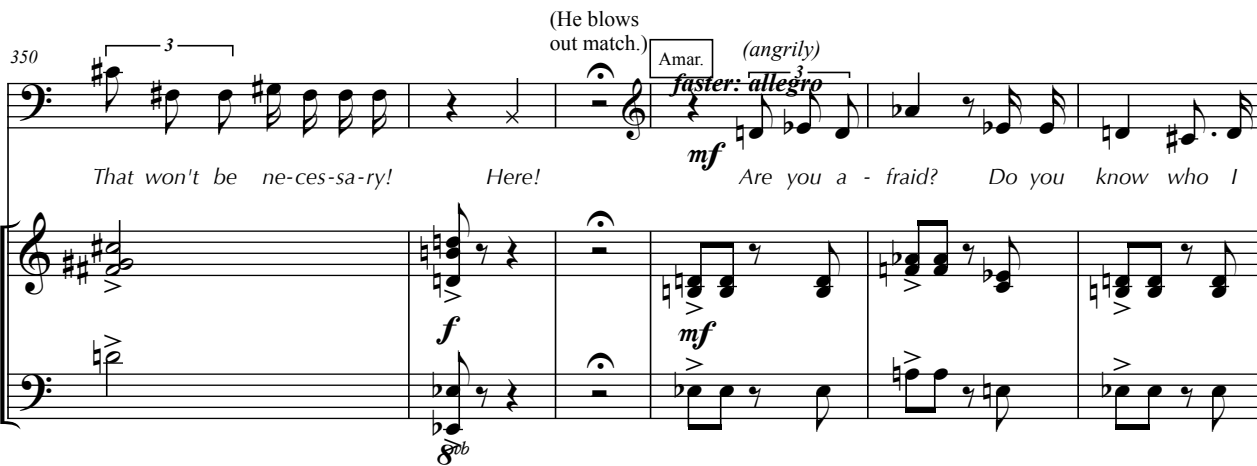
336 (Amaranta strikes the match and hands it to Fortunato.) Amar. (commandingly) *f* Hold out your arm, please!



344 Fort. (terrified) *mp* What \_\_\_ are you going to do? Amar. *f* One shot, and it's out! No! Fort. *mf*



350 (He blows out match.) Amar. (angrily) *faster: allegro* *mf* That won't be ne-ces-sa-ry! Here! Are you a - fraid? Do you know who I



356 (Amar.) *slower*

am? Five hundred times I've shot at my own mother... Neve-er missed the match yet!

*a tempo: allegro*

361 Fort. (meekly) Amar. (sneering)

*p* Would-n't it be bet-ter with a can-dle in a bot-tle? *mf* Can-dle in a bot-tle!

369 *slower (with intensity)*

*p subito* Man, don't you know the thrill of dan-ger? To know that an inch eith-er way can mean

375 (Amar.)

*a tempo: allegro*

death, death! One false step — on the tightrope, and pa-

382

pa — is gone! Crowds shiv'ring with ex - cite ment, that's

388

*slower**a tempo: allegro*

— what they pay for, that's what they pay for, that's what they pay for! One false step —

394 (Amar.) cresc.

— in the panther's cage, and my bro - ther — is no more! — That's what they

*espr.* cresc.

400 *f* slower *moderato*

pay for, that's what they pay for, that, — that! — *p* Have you ev - er loved a wo - man — who be-

*f*

406 *faster: allegro*

longed to an - oth - er man? (ignoring him) *mf* Sud - den - ly her

*Fort.* (bewildered)

*p* No, I've al - ways been a qui - et man... *mf* No, I've

411 (Amar.)

282

husband is there, read-y to kill both of you! Oh! The thrill of it!

(Fort.) al-ways been a qui-et man, a qui-et man, a qui-et man! No, I've always

415

The thrill of it, Oh! The thrill of it! The thrill of it! The thrill, the

been a qui-et man, a qui-et man, a qui-et man, I've al-ways

419

*cresc.* thrill, the thrill, the thrill, the *rit.* thrill of it, Oh! — The *f* thrill, — the *p subito* thrill, — the *p subito*

been a qui-et man, a qui-et man, — a qui-et

423 *moderato*

(Amar.)

thrill!  
(Fort.)

CH.

man!

*p*

*poco cresc.*

Have you ev - er known the thrill of it? Have you ev - er known the thrill of it?

*p*

*poco cresc.*

CH.

429

*mp*

*mp*

Have you ev - er known the thrill of it? Have you, have you, have you, Have you, —

One false step on the tight - rope, one false step, And her fath - er is — no more. One false

*mp*

433

CH. *cresc.* *f* *dim.*

have you ev-er known, have you ev-er known, have you ev-er, ev-er known, have you  
 ever known, have you ever, ev-er known, have you ev-er ev-er known  
 have you ever have you ev-er, have you

step and her fa-ther is no more. Have you ev-er, have you

*cresc.* *f* *dim.*

437

CH. *p*

ev-er ev-er known? and her bro-ther,  
 One step, one step in the pan-ther's cage and her  
 ev-er, have you ever, ever known? One false step, one step in the panther's cage,

*p*

442 *cresc.* *mf* *p sub.*

CH. *broth-er and her broth-er* *And her broth-er is no more, no*

*and her brother, and her brother, and her brother,*

*and her brother, and her bro - ther, (etc.)*

*cresc.* *mf* *p sub.*

446 *cresc.* *mf* *pp* *mp*

CH. *more. — And her broth-er is no more, no more, — Oh! — The thrill of it!*

*Oh, Oh! The*

*cresc.* *mf* *pp* *mp*



senza rit.

CH.

460 *f* *ff*

thrill of it, the thrill, the thrill, the thrill, the thrill, the thrill, the thrill!

thrill of it, the thrill, the thrill, the thrill, the thrill, the thrill, the thrill!

(spoken) Amaranta: (matter-of-factly) "Now, then, let's get down to work!"  
 (She strikes another match, and gives it to Fortunato, who takes it with trembling hands.)

(in stentorian tones) "Back to the target! Arm out!"  
 (Fortunato trembles so much she cannot take aim.)

Fortunato: (in despair) "Señora, it's too much for me... I can't do it..."

(flatly) "Please excuse me..."

(He turns to leave. Crowd is disgusted with his cowardice, and dwindles away.)

467 *quickly*

Amar.

(Holding him back.)

*mp*

Ah, I know! It's the gos-sip you've heard that I killed Sa-ba-ti-no in

*slower* (coolly)

475

*a tempo*

(violently) >

*slower* (archly)

try-ing a dif-fi-cult shot... but it's not true! He killed him - self for

481 (Amar.) *cresc.* *f* (Fortunato and Inez exchange glances.) 288  
*(breathlessly)* *(scornfully)*  
 love, for love, for love of A - - ma - ran - ta. I swear it! Fool!

487 *quickly* *(vehemently)*  
*mp* I know \_\_\_\_\_ what ev - 'ry one is say - ing a - bout me... My nerves are shot, my hand is un -

493 *slower* *(ominously)* *ad lib.* *(fiercely)*  
 stead - y... I'm going to piec - es... *pp* But by God \_\_\_\_\_ I'll show them!

*calando*

(Fortunato and Inez again exchange glances.)  
 502 *andante* *Fort.* *(quietly)*  
*mp* I'm sor - ry, Señ - or - a, this \_\_\_\_\_ is not \_\_\_\_\_ for me. I'd bet - ter go. \_\_\_\_\_

509

Amar.

*quickly*  
*(furiously)*

289

*mf* Go a-head! I won't stop you! What do I care \_\_\_\_\_ if you

*espr.* *sf* *mf*

(Fortunato stands transfixed.)

516

*slower: andante*

starve! You, and your child-ren, if you have child-ren...

*p* (distantly) 3

523

*rit.*

*a little faster*

*(impatiently)*

*andante*

*mf* What are you waiting for?

*pp* *mp* *p*

(Fortunato remains as if in a trance.)

531

Fort.

*p* My — child-ren, my child-ren, Señ - or - a A - ma - ran - - - ta!

*fp* *sf*

537 (Fort.) *3* (Fortunato braces himself.)

*I have five!* *For their sake, Señ - or-a,*

(resolutely)

545 *3* Amar. *briskly* (immediately cordial again) *f* *slower*

*give me an-oth-er chance! Bra-vo! Bra - vo! Bravo! Bravo! But re - mem ber... don't... move...*

*p subito*

*p* *mf* *sf* *p*

(She puts him back against the target. Then she takes aim, while Inez strikes a match again and hands it to Fortunato. Amaranta fires. Fortunato falls to the ground.)

Inez: (shrieks with horror) "My God, you've killed him!"

(Crowd, hearing the shot and shriek, gathers again.)

(Fortunato slowly begins to rise, feeling himself all over.)

553 *moderato*

*p* *mp* *poco cresc.*

559 (sheepishly) Fort. *3*

*I guess it's no-thing. Just a lit-tle ner-vous-ness...* *espressivo*

*p* *fp*

(Fortunato braces himself. With resolution he stands against the target.)

566

(Fort.)

*faster: allegro*

Amar.

(Picks up her gun again.)

*f* Now \_\_\_\_\_ watch me!

*mf* Bra-vo, my he-ro!

574

Fort.

(wildly)

*slower*

(more quietly)

*mf* He-ro? Not at all! *mp* Just a man \_\_\_\_\_ meeting life as he has to...

580

*deliberately*

Inez

(Gives him a lit match.)

(Amaranta fires.)

*mf* Stead-y now! Take aim! *p* Stead-y, stead-y, read-y now, *f* ready! G. P.

*mp* Stead-y now! (Takes aim.) *p* Stead-y now, stead-y now, read-y now!

587 **Fort.** (wildly) (Amaranta and Inez prepare for another shot.) (with controlled frenzy) *dim.*

*f* For a piece of bread! For the sake of my children, my children, my

*f* *mp* *dim.* *pp*

8<sup>vb</sup>

593 *rit.* **moderato** (Inez continues to supply Fortunato with lighted matches.)

*pp* child-ren! (explosively)

*sf* *sf* *p*

8<sup>vb</sup> *loco* 8<sup>vb</sup>

(Amaranta continues to take aim and fire, while the crowd watches in breathless suspense, as the curtain slowly falls.)

600

*cresc.* *mf*

8<sup>vb</sup> *loco* 8<sup>vb</sup>

610

*f* *ff*

8<sup>va</sup> 8<sup>vb</sup>

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