ON TRANSCRIBING RICHARD WAGNERS SIEGFRIED IDYLL FOR 21ST-CENTURY WIND ENSEMBLE INSTRUMENTATION

Brian Edward Hodge

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ON TRANSCRIBING RICHARD WAGNER’S SIEGFRIED IDYLL FOR 21ST-CENTURY WIND ENSEMBLE INSTRUMENTATION

by

Brian Edward Hodge

A Dissertation Equivalence Project

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Musical Arts

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Preface

It is rare in the current day to find gems of orchestral literature that have yet to be reworked into the band repertoire. Versions of various symphonies, overtures and other selections from operas, and particularly tone poems of every conceivable iteration have been regularly picked over during the history of the wind band. Therefore, it seems somewhat remarkable to find that the singular tone poem of one of the most iconic musicians in western music history in Richard Wagner does not have a version designed exclusively for wind band. This project seeks to remedy this situation through creating an adaptation which preserves much of the Wagnerian tradition of scoring through the lens of the 21st-Century wind band instrumental practices.
Abstract

This project contains a transcription of Wagner’s *Siegfried Idyll* for wind band. The dissertation project includes documentation as to the transcription process, as well as historical references for Richard Wagner and for two previously transcribed contrasting approaches with Lucien Cailliet’s “Elsa’s Procession to the Cathedral” and Micheal Votta/John Byrd’s adaptation of “Trauermusik”. A detailed theoretical analysis of the original work is presented to contextualize the transcription process.
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Chapter One - A Brief History of Richard Wagner, With Particular Emphasis on Historically Relevant Events Pertaining to Siegfried Idyll

Richard Wagner (1813-1883) is a seminal composer of the 19th century. He is a key figure in the history of opera as well as a tremendous influence in the development of the symphony orchestra.\(^1\) His life and works present a plethora of issues which scholars have invested their life’s work into investigating. From his early days through his death, Wagner’s life was rife with controversy, debt, and infidelity. In looking at his life, the least scandalous years were spent in his Tribschen villa, situated outside the Swiss lake Lucerne. It is here that the *Siegfried Idyll* was created in a moment of familial joy, and also where the Ring Cycle essentially came to its compositional conclusion.

**Early Years (1813-1833)**

The ninth child in his family, his father, Leipzig police actuary Carl Friedrich Wagner, died shortly after Wagner’s birth. Richard’s mother Johanna would move in with and eventually marry his adoptive father Ludwig Geyer, an actor and painter in Dresden. It was here we find the first of the numerous quandaries into the life of Wagner, for it is unknown if Geyer was his biological father. In addition, his mother was a former mistress of Prince Constantin of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach (though she claimed to actually be his illegitimate daughter).\(^2\) His relationship with his family was somewhat distressing. Geyer desired to see Richard ‘make something of himself’, and he was sent to live with a Pastor Wetzel for education. Richard was returned a year later upon the death of Geyer, and was shunted about to various extended family members during

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this time. His mother was distant in her relations with Richard; “I have no remembrance of her as a young and pretty mother . . . I hardly remember ever being caressed by her, just as outpourings of affection did not take place in our family at all.”

He began his official schooling in Dresden at the Kreuzschule in December of 1822. His mother desired that he not follow in the pathway of his father and siblings in the theatrical world. In school however, “the exploits of mythological Greek heroes made a greater impact on him than the irksome rules of grammar and the principles of mathematics.” His sister Rosalie’s success as an actress meant that she soon became the primary wage earner for the family, and upon accepting a position in Prague the family moved once again. To more successfully continue his education at the Kreuzschule, Richard was sent to live with the family of his schoolmates there.

When Richard turned fourteen, most of his family relocated to Leipzig and he continued his education at the Nicolaischule. It is here that two significant events happen; Richard abandons the surname Geyer for his birth-father’s name of Wagner, and he begins his studies in music, including his first compositions. He studied harmony with Christian Gottlieb Müller, and in his autobiography, Wagner attempts to downplay the significance of this tutelage. “I had secretly been taking some lessons in harmony [from Gottlieb Müller] . . . His teaching and exercises soon filled me with great disgust owing to what I considered their dryness.” However, other sources indicate a likely more intense education than he would advertise, possibly to reinforce the notion of Wagner being a self-taught genius, a musical Siegfried.

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4 Ibid, 11
5 Millington, Sorcerer, 13.
6 Ibid, 14.
7 Wagner, My Life, 32
“I had the good fortune of being taught by the most sincere and strict of teachers; my lessons with Herr Müller proved to be a series of almost oppressive demonstrations of an almost pedantically strict sincerity; he inured me to the most injurious and discouraging attacks on my youthful endeavors, teaching me to see in such criticism only instructive demonstrations of sincerity, even when these latter did not always spring from the purest of sources.”

During this time, Wagner did complete his first compositions (though none survived), as well as a very brief period of violin lessons. According to his violin teacher Robert Sipp, “He caught on quickly but was lazy and unwilling to practice. He was my very worst pupil.”

In February of 1831, Wagner enrolled at Leipzig University to continue his studies in music. More fruitful however was a private tutelage with the Kantor of the Thomaskirche, Christian Tehodor Weinlig, from October 1831-March 1832. In a letter to his sister Ottilie, Richard writes “I have been the pupil of the local cantor Theodor Weinlig, who, with some justification, may be regarded as the greatest living contrapunctalist and who, at the same time, is so excellent a fellow that I am as fond of him as if he were my own father.” He composed his first symphony in the spring of 1832, an orchestral sonata in the style of late Beethoven, two piano compositions, and shortly thereafter experimented with operatic projects, creating two works in that year - one incomplete (Die Laune des Verliebten) and one destroyed (Die Hochzeit).

**Early Career (1833-1842)**

In 1833, Wagner assumed his first major professional appointment as the chorus master at the theater in Würzburg, where his brother Albert was a tenor. There he became familiar

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10 Spencer and Millington, *Selected Letters*, 13
11 Millington, *Sorcerer*, 19-20
12 Ibid, 22
with repertory works by numerous operatic composers - Marschner, Meyerbeer, Beethoven, Paer, Cherubini, Rossini, and Auber. In addition, he finished his first complete opera; Die Feen. After a year in this position, Wagner returned to Leipzig where he began delving into philosophy, rejecting both the classicism of artists such as Mozart and Goethe and the “reactionary, socially irrelevant and sentimentally conceived romanticism of Weber and E. T. A. Hoffmann.” Instead, Wagner and his contemporaries lauded the French Utopian Socialists and more Italian sensibilities. Wagner’s second opera, Das Liebesverbot reflects this artistic philosophy, drawing on sources such as Auber and Bellini.

Wagner’s next appointment was as the musical director of a theater company based out of Magdeburg which was hosting a summer season in Bad Lauchstädt, a spa near Leipzig. The initial meeting of young Richard with this company was so terrible Wagner conspired to decline the position. The director of the company, Heinrich Bethmann, was first met on the road to the theater in a dressing gown and night cap. The stage director, Herr Schmale, essentially was left to actually run the company, and was scheduled to put together Don Giovanni for their upcoming Sunday performance. The orchestra musicians would not meet until the day prior. Wagner excused himself by saying he couldn’t conduct the performance given he had to return to Leipzig to “take care of some matters there. This was a polite way of turning down the job, a decision I came to at once… [it was] a pretext that was really unnecessary considering my intention never to return there.” The company took him to his residence for the evening, where Wagner would be introduced to Minna Planer, who would later become his first wife. This meeting with Minna caused him to immediately change his mind, and he signed on to conduct Don Giovanni and other operas slated for the season. “That I submitted without bitterness and even cheerfully to

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13 Millington, et. all, “Wagner Family (Opera)”, Grove Music Online
14 Wagner, My Life, 87
this abuse of my musical talent was attributable less to this period of indiscretion in my musical tastes, as I have termed it, than to my association with Minna Planer.”

Minna and Richard’s relationship was one that was often troubled. “[Richard] and Minna were settling into the pattern of mutual torment and tolerance that was to be the mark of their thirty-year marriage… Despite their tender feelings for each other, they were hardly suited by temperament or education to be partners.” The situation came to a head when Minna left for a position at the Königstadt Theatre in Berlin, while Wagner remained with the Magdeburg company. Less than a month later, Minna had returned, and they were wed on November 24, 1836.

In the Spring of 1837 Wagner was appointed as music director of the Königsberg Theatre, but due to financial hardships by the theater and an episode of strife with Minna (where she briefly ran away with a merchant before Wagner persuaded her to return) he quickly pursued other options. When the position came open in Russia (in the former Livonian capital of Riga) Wagner took over as the music director there, with Minna and her sister Amalie soon to follow. “Riga turned out to be a cultural backwater… after a contractual wrangle with the authorities he decided to try his luck in the very home of grand opera: Paris” Their travel to Paris was difficult, given that the family was so heavily in debt their passports were impounded to prevent flight. However, they escaped Riga, smuggled onto a small merchant vessel (the Thetis). The naval voyage was so treacherous with the weather that it is thought to have influenced Wagner’s next opera - Die fliegende Holländer.

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15 Ibid, 89
16 Millington, Sorcerer, 30
17 Ibid, 31
Though the couple had made their way to Paris, this turned out to be an unsatisfactory two-and-a-half year period; Wagner could gain little attention for his work, and instead had to get by through “making hack arrangements of operatic selections and by musical journalism in which he lambasted the mediocrities perpetrated by the Opéra.”\textsuperscript{18} It is thought that the frustration from this period of failure may have contributed to the beginnings of his anti-semitism, rooted in the bitterness of this time as seen in \textit{Das Judentum in der Musik}.\textsuperscript{19} However, during this time he was able to write both \textit{Die fliegende Holländer} and \textit{Rienzi}, which was completed in November of 1840. Once again though, financial troubles caught up with the Wagner family, and threatened with imprisonment (and through wrangling of Parisian Opera composer/influencer Meyerbeer to get \textit{Rienzi} produced in Dresden) the Wagners once again relocated for Wagner’s first long-term appointment at the Dresden Court Opera.

**Dresden (1842-1849)**

\textit{Rienzi} premiered at the Dresden Hoftheater on October 20, 1842 to great success. Ten weeks later, \textit{Die fliegende Holländer} premiered there to a more muted acclaim, but one which was significant enough to promote Wagner to the open position of Kapellmeister of the Dresden Court Opera.\textsuperscript{20} Wagner himself was “by no means sure he wanted to submit to the yoke of court service and become a liveried retainer at the mercy of royal officialdom. However, the prospect of a decently paid job, with security for life (or so he thought), appealed greatly to the couple after their privations abroad.”\textsuperscript{21} Wagner was originally offered the position of Musikdirektor (\textit{assistant} conductor), but upon refusal was instead offered the higher rank of Kapellmeister. This

\textsuperscript{18} Millington, et. all, “Wagner Family (Opera)”, \textit{Grove Music Online}

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid

\textsuperscript{21} Millington, \textit{Sorcerer}, 33
position was to be a shared one, however, with Karl Gottlieb Reißiger. Reißiger was the elder statesman in this position, having built Dresden the “reputation of the finest opera house in Germany.”

He regularly attempted to push his more tedious responsibilities onto Wagner, though Wagner remained positive, believing that he was expected to reorganize musical life in Dresden with his radical proposals.

During this time, Wagner wrote a number of ceremonial works, including one remarkable to the world of wind band – Trauermusik. Performed during the funeral procession of celebrated composer Carl Maria von Weber, Wagner arranged a number of themes from Weber’s opera Euryanthe for winds. (Further discussion of this work may be found in Chapter 3.) Also during this time Wagner completed the second and third of his romantic-styled operas (the first being Die fliegende Holländer) with Tannhäuser and Lohengrin. Tannhäuser premiered in October of 1845, and after its successful premiere promoted Wagner to push for a number of reforms that “he deemed necessary in the musical establishment at the Dresden court. His recommendations included changes in the policy of hiring orchestral players, a rationalization of their workload, an increase in their salaries, and improvements in the layout of the orchestra so that players could hear each other and see the conductor clearly. He also suggested a series of winter orchestral concerts and the establishment of two concert halls, adaptable for other purposes.”

Wagner was made to wait for a year before having all of his proposals rejected, which was an upsetting setback. In a letter to his friend Ferdinand Heine, Wagner writes:

“I am so full of utter contempt for everything connected with the theater as it stands at present that - being unable to do anything about it - I have no more ardent desire than to sever all links with it, and I regard it as a veritable curse that my entire creative urge is directed towards the field of drama, since all I find in the miserable conditions which characterize our theatres today is the most abject scorn for all that I do.”

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22 Ibid
23 Ibid, 37
24 Richard Wagner, Selected Letters, 137
In addition, changes in leadership within the Dresden Court Theatre placed writer Karl Gutzkow as Intendant of the Court Theatre in 1846. Gutzkow disapproved of Wagner’s push towards his artistic dream of gesamtkunstwerk, believing instead that drama and opera should remain separate entities. Wagner responded through a series of performances which met with great acclaim, including the premiere of Lohengrin and a Palm Sunday benefit concert which would program Beethoven’s 9th symphony, a piece “regarded at that time as the work of a madman.”

A successful performance of Gluck’s Iphigénie en Aulide (with newly composed transitional music by Wagner) followed, and things seemed to be going well for the composer. However, two significant events were to change life rather dramatically for the Kapellmeister. The first was the death of his mother in January of 1848. While never truly close with his mother, her passing still came as a heavy toll for Wagner. The second event was the fallout from Wagner’s role in the May Uprising in Dresden, precipitated by the widespread reach of the Spring of Nations revolutions which came to a head in Saxony on May 3-9, 1849.

Spring of Nations and the May Uprising (1848-1849)

The Spring of Nations was a revolutionary movement which swept much of Europe during 1848-1849. These uprisings in general sought the removal of monarchies across Europe and the establishment of nation-states with some form of parliamentary body to govern. Beginning with revolutions in Sicily in January of 1848, the first major revolt happened in France shortly thereafter which ended the constitutional monarchy of Louis-Philippe and replaced it with the Second French Republic. Hungary saw a particularly bloody revolution.

25 Millington, Sorcerer, 39
which was eventually crushed by the combined Russian and Austrian forces (but led to a number of reforms which improved lives in its citizenry).

German states (as during this era the greater nation/empire of Germany did not exist) came together during this period to demand a new constitution to guarantee the rights of the people and promote better conditions among laborers. In December of 1848 a constitutional republic was formed from among the Germanic states which created a parliamentary body, but retained the monarchy (which would be the King of Prussia) to create a constitutional monarchy. However, King Frederick Wilhelm IV refused the crown, and the convention fell apart. It would take another two decades and a series of wars to bring the various German states together under a single German Reich (Empire) following the successful conclusion of the Franco-Prussian War of the 1870s.

Saxony was one of the southern Germanic states which found itself between the two major powers of Prussia and Austria. Its capital of Dresden saw significant uprisings which came to a head in the now infamous May Uprising of 1849. Saxony itself refused to accept the constitution before its failure. Town councilors across the kingdom urged King Frederick Augustus II to accept the constitution and promote reforms. He refused, further escalating tensions. Augustus dismissed the gathered legislators on May 3, which promoted a series of uprisings across the city. In response, Augustus called in the Prussian military to disperse the citizens. By May 9, the troops had successfully broken through various barricades and killed approximately 200 citizens, with warrants for arrest issued for the leaders, including Wagner.

Wagner was one of the more preeminent actors in this event, speaking out passionately in the months leading to the revolution. Whether he wanted an actual people’s revolution to promote an equitable society for all, except for Jews, or simply wanted better conditions for his
vision of art to flourish is a questionable issue. Months prior to the uprising he authored an article entitled “How do Republican Aspirations Stand in Relation to the Monarchy?” which called for a massive reorganization of the state. “Wagner’s answer to this question was nothing if not radical itself. For the sake of the common good, the aristocracy would have to go… this would be followed by universal suffrage… At the same time, money would be abolished.” He had also advocated for a reorganization of artistic life in Dresden, where his colleague Reißiger would be promoted to church music and the Intendant would be removed, as all responsibilities of that position would be absorbed into Wagner’s post as Theatre Director. The remaining months prior to the May Uprising saw Wagner acting as an instigator, promoting violent and subversive activities to bring about a new government of equality for the people.

After the failure of the uprising, with an outstanding warrant issued for his arrest, Richard and Minna fled Dresden. They were initially sheltered by his friend Franz Liszt in Weimar before making his way to Switzerland via Paris. The Wagners settled down in Zürich and remained away from Germany for over a decade, only returning in 1860 when he was granted amnesty for his role in the events of the May Uprising.

Exile (1849–1860)

While Wagner was unhappy with his displacement into Zürich given his passion for Germanic culture and art, he was able to find a community of other educated expatriates to interact with. As Wagnerian scholar Barry Millington describes, “part of the attraction of Zürich was that the city had a tradition of welcoming radical intellectuals.” Though he was unable to

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26 Joachim Köhler, Richard Wagner: The Last of the Titans, (New Haven, CT, Yale University Press, 2004), 215
27 Millington, Sorcerer, 73
28 Ibid, 78
participate in music as a conductor or theater producer in Switzerland, he was still active compositionally and in particular as an author. It is in Zürich that Wagner codifies his artistic visions of the role of art in society and the development of the ‘artwork of the future’ - gesamtkunstwerk, the complete work of art incorporating music, drama, dance, poetry, architecture, painting, sculpture, etc.

His time in Switzerland also included visitations to a local spa to relieve numerous health concerns, associations with admirers (particularly Julie Ritter, Dresden widow, and Jessie Lausso, Englishwoman and wife of a successful merchant) who supported him financially, and most importantly, beginning the ideas, music, and text of what would become the Ring Cycle. His most recent opera *Lohengrin* (completed in 1848 during the Spring of Nations) was premiered under the direction of Wagner’s close friend Franz Liszt in Weimar on August 28, 1850. “Wagner, unable of course to attend, was reduced to imagining the events unfolding in real time in Weimar from an inn (aptly named *The Swan*) in Lucerne.”29 It is also in Switzerland that Wagner became influenced by the philosophies of Arthur Shopenhauer, who promoted music as the highest of the arts, and which gave Wagner the perspective he desired in balancing the concepts of gesamtkunstwerk.

During this period of exile he also made various trips across Europe. In March 1855 he took a residency in England at the invitation of the Philharmonic society. There, he conducted eight concerts by various composers and had a pleasant and cordial conversation with Queen Victoria, who was in attendance at one of the performances.30 Wagner also revisited Paris, though again met with mixed success (mostly given that he bucked the traditions of Parisian Opera through refusing the traditional ballet scenes, but also given political circumstances

29 Ibid, 81
30 Ibid, 83
involving French relations with Austria). However, by 1860 Wagner had received an amnesty to return to most of Germany (his amnesty for Saxony would have to wait until 1862) and began reintegrating with German society. At this point, his Ring Cycle was halfway completed, and in his personal life his relationship with Minna was coming to its bitter conclusion. The couple met for the final time in Dresden in November 1862, before she passed away in January of 1866. This allowed Wagner to begin the next chapter of his life with something of a clean slate with his new beloved, Cosima.31

Return to Germany (1860-1865)

Wagner returned to his homeland with renewed energy for creation. In February of 1862 he took up residence near Mainz where he began working on Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg, relocating to Vienna in 1863 and, as normal, living beyond his means in luxury. Now, however, he relied on cadres of admirers to help support his extravagant lifestyle (which they readily supplied). In 1864 he received his greatest offer of support from the new king of Bavaria, the 18-year-old Ludwig II. It would be Ludwig II who would make possible Wagner’s visions of the Ring. He forgave all of Wagner’s debts, established him with a comfortable salary of 4,000 gulden, and worked with him to establish Wagner’s dream theater in Bayreuth. In addition, it was then that Wagner met and fell in love with one who would become his second wife and artistic partner; Cosima von Bulow, wife of conductor Hans von Bulow and daughter of Wagner’s closest friend, Franz Liszt.

Cosima’s relationship with von Bulow was tumultuous. Her rather interesting upbringing instilled the value that life was best lived through suffering, and therefore established a tolerance

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31 Millington, et. all, “Wagner Family (Opera)”, Grove Music Online
for nearly masochistic levels of psychological abuse.\textsuperscript{32} This was given to her in abundance with her relationship with von Bulow, who was even seen multiple times striking Cosima in the presence of a shocked Richard.\textsuperscript{33} The illicit relationship which grew in 1864-1865, and when Wagner was sent away from Bavaria by Ludwig II in response to public outcry over Richard’s “baleful influence and unacceptable drain on the royal exchequer”\textsuperscript{34} Cosima soon followed Wagner to his new home, an idyllic homestead on the banks of Lake Lucerne called Tribschen.

\textbf{Tribschen and \textit{Siegfried Idyll (1866-1872)}}

Upon expulsion from the Kingdom of Bavaria, Wagner searched for a new place to settle down and continue his work. Initially, he had “sought a congenial place to live in the south of France” when in his travels he discovered Tribschen.\textsuperscript{35} Here, Wagner set about completing the first of the three operas in his Ring cycle; \textit{Das Rheingold}, \textit{Die Walküre}, and \textit{Siegfried}. He also maintained a large entourage, which included “more than a dozen people; in addition to Cosima and their five children [two step children and three with Richard]… there were a governess, a nurserymaid, a housekeeper and her niece, a cook and two or three servants.”\textsuperscript{36} Additionally, many noteworthy guests were regular visitors, including Hans Richter, Franz Liszt, Friedrich Nietzsche, and pianist Joseph Rubinstein.\textsuperscript{37}

This period was also quite busy for Wagner. Some of his most known essays were completed in this time, including “\textit{Was ist Deutsch?}”, “\textit{Deutsch Kunst und deutsch Politik}”,

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{32} Millington, \textit{Sorcerer}, 204
  \item \textsuperscript{33} Ibid, 210
  \item \textsuperscript{34} Ibid, 214
  \item \textsuperscript{35} Ibid, 214
  \item \textsuperscript{36} Ibid
  \item \textsuperscript{37} Ibid, 216
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
“Beethoven” (written to celebrate the 100th birthday of the composer), and a new edition of “Das Judenthum in der Musik” which added nearly double the content to his original 1850 version. In addition, this time frame sees the first performances of three of his operas in Munich; Die Meistersinger in 1868, Das Rheingold in 1869, and Die Walküre in 1870.38 Wagner completed work on Siegfried in 1871, from which much of the Siegfried Idyll borrows thematic content. Regarding Wagner’s personal life, Cosima was finally able to secure her divorce from von Bulow and later (August 25, 1870) marry Richard. Richard became the step-father to Cosima’s two earlier children with Von Bulow, and they had already had one child together from before the official divorce, Isolde. A second daughter to Richard and Cosima, Eva, was born February 17, 1867, and on June 6, 1869, a son - Siegfried. The Siegfried Idyll itself was crafted in part from reminiscences of the day of his birth.

The Siegfried Idyll is not the original title given to the work. Instead, it was entitled “Tribschen-Idyll”, with the manuscript note of “Tribschen-Idyll, with Fidi’s Bird Song and Orange Sunrise, presented as a Symphonic Birthday greeting to his Cosima by her Richard, 1870.”39 The term “Fidi’s Bird Song” refers to the birds singing on the occasion of Siegfried’s birth (Fidi being a nickname for the boy). In the diaries of Cosima Wagner, Richard himself pens the narrative of the event in the entry on June 6, 1869.

“With feelings of sublime emotion he stared in front of him, was then surprised by an incredibly beautiful, fiery glow which started to blaze with a richness of color never before seen, first on the orange wallpaper beside the bedroom door; it was then reflected in the blue jewel box containing my portrait, so that this, covered in glass and set in a narrow gold frame, was transfigured in celestial splendor. The sun had just risen above the Rigi and was putting forth its first rays,

38 Millington, et. all, “Wagner Family (Opera)”, Grove Music Online
proclaiming a glorious, sun-drenched day. R. dissolved into tears… We were very happy.”

This event stayed with Wagner as he created the *Idyll*, which was a gift to Cosima for her birthday the following year.

The premiere of this work was on the household steps of the Tribschen villa on December 25, 1870. Fifteen musicians lined up on the fifteen stairs leading to the couple’s bedroom. Cosima describes the event in her diary:

“When I woke up I heard a sound, it grew ever louder, I could no longer imagine myself in a dream, music was sounding, and what music! After it had died away, R. came in to me with the five children and put into my hands the score of his “Symphonic Birthday Greeting.” I was in tears, but so, too, was the whole household; R. had set up his orchestra on the stairs and thus consecrated our Tribschen forever!”

Following the initial performance and breakfast, a concert was held in the lower apartment, which included the wedding procession from *Lohengrin*, Beethoven’s Septet, and the *Idyll.*

Additionally, the trumpet player for this premiere was Hans Richter, who learned how to play the trumpet specifically for the occasion of this performance.

As occurred multiple times throughout Richard’s life, financial troubles eventually arose, and later he reworked the piece for a larger orchestra and sold it in 1877. Cosima was unhappy having to sell the piece to the publisher Schott. She attempted to negotiate for other earlier works by Wagner, without success. Her diary from November 19, 1877 notes the occasion. “The *Idyll* is sent off today; the secret treasure is to become public property - may the pleasure others take in it match the sacrifice I am making!”

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41 Ibid, 312
42 Ibid
43 Ibid, 997
Bayreuth and Final Years

In 1872, Wagner began the creation of his new theatre in Bayreuth, laying the foundation stone on May 22, the culmination of 30 years of planning and designing.\(^{44}\) A massive concert was held in celebration, featuring a performance of Beethoven’s 9th Symphony at the Markgräfliches Opernhaus.\(^{45}\) The family relocated to the city in order to oversee its construction and finish the final opera of the Ring, *Götterdämmerung*. The theater proved to be enormously expensive, and despite methods such as selling ‘patron certificates’ and collecting more modest sums from numerous Wagner Societies from across Europe (an occurrence which “was, and remains, unparalleled in the world of classical music”\(^{46}\)), Wagner once again had to turn to Ludwig II to complete the theater, who donated 100,000 talers to the cause.\(^{47}\) In addition, the performances would be required to charge admission, which was philosophically contrary to Wagner’s dream of “a non-commercial venture where art was enjoyed for art’s sake and the relentless effort to attract attention and raise capital.”\(^{48}\)

While the first festival saw numerous delays, the first series of performances commenced on August 13, 1876 featuring three cycles.\(^{49}\) Visitors from across the musical tapestry of Europe were in attendance, including a young Edvard Grieg and Tchaikovsky, who reported that the *Ring* was “an event of the greatest importance to the world, an epoch-making work of art.”\(^{50}\)

\(^{44}\) Millington, *Sorcerer*, 221
\(^{45}\) Ibid, 225
\(^{46}\) Ibid
\(^{47}\) Millington, et. all, “Wagner Family (Opera)”, *Grove Music Online*
\(^{48}\) Millington, *Sorcerer*, 225
\(^{49}\) Ibid, 229
\(^{50}\) Ibid, 232
Wagner himself held mixed reactions to the performances, dissatisfied with both the staging and the tempos of conductor Hans Richter.\textsuperscript{51} Following the completion of the initial performances of the cycle, Wagner set about attempting to raise funds to cover the various debts still held from the festival, including a concert series at Royal Albert Hall in London. Eventually, an agreement with Ludwig II which included royalty free performances of \textit{The Ring} in Munich as well as hosting the first performance (and thereafter unrestricted performance rights) of his final opera \textit{Parsifal} was struck which discharged all remaining debts regarding the Bayreuth project.\textsuperscript{52}

Following these initial festivals and the subsequent fund-raising activities to relieve the debts incurred by them, Wagner spent his final years writing further essays in a journal “devoted to the Wagnerian cause”. This journal espoused Wagner’s theories on “the decline of the human race and the need for an establishment of a system of ethics.”\textsuperscript{53} A second Bayreuth festival was held in the summer of 1882 consisting of 16 performances of \textit{Parsifal}, but by this time Wagner’s health had begun to decline. The family relocated a final time to Venice, where Wagner’s final heart attack claimed his life on February 13, 1883.\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{51} Millington, et. all, “Wagner Family (Opera)”, \textit{Grove Music Online}
\textsuperscript{52} Ibid
\textsuperscript{53} Ibid
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid
Chapter Two - Analysis of Wagner’s *Siegfried Idyll*

**Introduction**

Wagner’s singular foray into the realm of the tone-poem presents a picture into the personal life of Richard and Cosima. Its premiere on the staircase of their home in Triebschen as the sun arose on December 25, 1870 was a joyous event in the lives of the couple. Using thematic ideas written shortly after the birth of his son Siegfried, Wagner crafted the motifs he would use in the creation of the *Idyll*. It is unknown whether this thematic material was composed initially for the opera *Siegfried* or for the *Idyll*; in reviewing literature, opposing positions emerge. In either case, it is of little doubt that five key themes are apparent in both works and will be discussed in this analysis.

From his early years, Wagner expressed disdain at the rigidity of Classical sonata form. In his letters to Liszt, he spoke against the ‘senseless’ repetition of expository material. However, in the *Idyll*, Wagner does retain some elements of the sonata form. As Millington writes in *The Wagner Compendium*, “In spite of the lyrical melodies and the pastoral pedal-points, the work itself is in a broadly based (modified) sonata form, in which the subsidiary material is represented by the lullaby... and in which new thematic ideas are given out in place of an orthodox development.”

1 If one takes the view that vestiges of Sonata form are prevalent in this composition, then it becomes prescient to identify the key aspects within the score itself, namely an exposition consisting of a primary and secondary theme, some form of development, and a recapitulation. While Millington’s statement does hold true that new thematic ideas are given out of place, the overall character of sonata form may be seen throughout.

1 Millington, *Wagner Compendium*, 311.
Another interesting aspect is the use of materials which make a reoccurrence in leitmotifs in the end of the opera *Siegfried*. There are five key leitmotifs which Wagner uses in both works, either as a complete idea or in a slight variant. The introductory theme itself was used as a variant in Act 3, Scene 3 of *Siegfried* (as much of this borrowed material is, considering Wagner was in the process of completing the opera at the time). According to Richard Donnington’s “Wagner’s Ring and its Symbols”, this figure represents “Brynhilde’s holy love”. The figures are presented below for comparison.

![Figure 2.1 - Opening of ‘Siegfried Idyll’, Strings](image)

![Figure 2.2 - Siegfried, Act 3, Scene 3, m. 655-662, Strings; “Brynhilde’s Holy Love”](image)

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The second borrowed leitmotif is a descending scale figure (presented below) which may also be found throughout Siegfried Act 3, for example the transition in Siegfried, Act 3 Scene 2 into Scene 3, and repeatedly in Act 3 Scene 3. Donnington writes that this phrase represents “Brynhilde sinking into the innocent sleep from which she will be awoken into womanhood.”

![Flute Score](image)

*Figure 2.3 - Siegfried Idyll, m. 37-38, Flute*

![Flute Score](image)

*Figure 2.4 - Siegfried, Act 3, Scene 2, m. 366, Flute; “Innocent Sleep”*

The third leitmotif may be found as a mutation of what Donnington labels as the “bliss” theme in the transitional material into the Second theme (Cradle theme). In the violins, an ascending figure is similar to more material from Siegfried, Act 3 Scene 3.

![Violin Score](image)

*Figure 2.5 - Siegfried Idyll, m. 75-80, Violin 1*

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3 Ibid, 273
4 Ibid, 277
The next theme to be borrowed from Siegfried is another mutated theme, but with highly similar structure and pitch levels. This is part of Wagner’s alteration of the sonata form, in that it is a new theme which introduces the development portion of the work. Donnington considers this passage a complimentary to the “holy love” theme from figure 2.2. In the Idyll, this is presented in 3/4 time, as shown in the following;

![Figure 2.7 - Siegfried Idyll, m. 148-153, Bb Clarinet](image)

In the passage following figure 2.2, this theme presents itself as a variant, in 4/4 time, but the relationship is indisputable.

![Figure 2.8 - Siegfried, Act 3, Scene 3, Violin 1, m. 674-678; “Holy Love Complimentary”](image)

Finally, the last obvious leitmotif found in both the Idyll and the opera Siegfried is the horn part from m. 259 of the Idyll, which is replicated in the characters Siegfried and Brunhilde’s

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5 Ibid, 290
vocal lines to conclude the opera (see figures 2.9-2.10). This theme is considered “Siegfried’s infectious impetuosity in love” by Donnington. 

Figure 2.9 - Siegfried Idyll, Horn 1 in F, m. 259-262

![Horn in F](image)

Figure 2.10 - Siegfried, Act 3, Scene 3, m. 925-928

Other leitmotif ideas are present in the Idyll, but not as a borrowed theme from the opera Siegfried. One such example is the presence of the ‘bird-song’ mentioned in Wagner’s subtitle for the work, found in the flute, oboe, and Bb clarinet part in the Idyll written in counterpoint to figure 2.9.

Figure 2.11 - Siegfried Idyll, Flute/Bb Clarinet, m. 267-270

![Flute, Clarinet](image)

Similar passages are found in the Ring, but not as a direct transcription. The final thematic construct to consider is the “Cradle Song” which serves as the secondary theme in the Idyll. This theme is taken from the German folksong/lullaby Schlaf Kindchen. The text is as follows;

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6 Ibid, 281
“Schlaf, Kindchen, balde/Die Völgen fliegen im Walde/Sie fliegen im Wald wohl auf und
nieder/Und bringen dem Kindlein den Schlaf bald wieder/Schlaf, Kindchen, Schlaf!”7 This
roughly translates to “Sleep soon, child/The birds fly in the forest/They fly across the forest from
one end to the other/And bring the child back to sleep/Sleep, child, sleep!” (translation by
author)

Analysis of Siegfried Idyll

The work begins with a seven-bar phrase which establishes the main thematic motifs for
the primary thematic material of the exposition. The next phrase continues this thematic idea in
based in the subdominant of A before resolving to a cadence in B during m. 11-13. Moving into
the third phrase, Wagner establishes a brief tonicization of the ii before delving into transitional
material built on rhythmic fragmentation of the primary theme, then resolving back to the
dominant in m. 25-28. The primary motif begins anew, however with two significant differences.
First, this reiteration contains the leitmotif fragment from figure 2.3 punctuating throughout and
second, instead of moving to a new tonicization this presentation remains in the key of B, with
the melodic cells transitioning to the lower strings and countermelodic material built on
descending scales and the aforementioned leitmotif. This section cadences at m. 50 which leads
to transitional material separating the primary and secondary themes of the exposition.

The transitional material beginning at m. 50 has three distinct segments. Each features a
notable relaxation in rhythmic intensity between phrases, interspersed with different melodic
ideas. The first section serves as a transitory phrase between the exposition and development-like
material beginning in m. 63. A simple call and response figure is created between winds and
strings which begins a tonicization of F# major to establish the secondary dominant that

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7 Robert Kahn, 24 leichte zweistimmige Kanons, op. 66, (C.G. Roder, Leipzig, 1920)
eventually cadences at m. 91 with the secondary theme. The second phrase is built on a similar motivic cell from the primary theme (see figure 2.12) presented five times in succession, with the final time presenting an alteration (with the Flute concluding the phrase in continued triplets, breaking from the eighth note pattern)

\[\text{Figure 2.12 - Siegfried Idyll, m. 63-68}\]

Transitioning between section two and three of the transition is a series of held chords (C# major, A# minor, and E# major, descending to E#7) in the strings, which builds into a new segment that uses a sequence. Each measure increases in rhythmic intensity into the climax of the transitionary section found in m. 78. This is the ‘bliss’ theme presented in figure 2.5, which (after a brief declension in intensity) resolves into the secondary theme beginning in m. 91; the Cradle Song, \textit{Schlaf Kindchen}. 
The secondary theme is a simple folk song in the key of B, presented by the oboe and accompanied by strings in paired parts (shifting between violins and a viola/cello combination). Following the completion of this theme (m. 100), material from the primary theme reoccurs in fragmentation, and is combined with a cannon of the first two measures of Schlaf Kindchen in the winds and an ostinato crafted from the concluding phrase of the primary theme in the strings. Measures 114-115 serve as a tonal transition back to the original key of E featuring the primary theme combined with the secondary theme before another passage of rhythmic declination segues the piece into a transitional bridge that leads into the development of the atypical sonata that is Siegfried Idyll.

This transitional section features two distinct segments. The first contains passages one might expect to find in a traditional development sequence. Beginning in m. 121, the horns establish a rhythmic figure which is answered by a fragment of the “B” section of the secondary theme in the key of G. Each iteration of this rhythmic figure ascends by a third, but retains the key of the secondary theme. Again, Wagner transitions the phrase with a long held trill in strings (A ascending to A#) to begin the second portion of the transition, a rather interesting musical palindrome. Beginning with a sustained Bb7 in the winds (then transitioning to Abm/Bb), the strings perform an ascending arpeggiation on the Abm chord, rising and then falling in register to resolve back to Bb7. A violin trill ascending from Bb to B leads to a G augmented triad which precedes the unusual development section.

Beginning with the new thematic content starting in m. 148 (based upon the “Holy Love Complimentary” variant, Figure 2.8) is arguably the beginning of the development section of the work. Transitioning to the key of Ab and the time signature of 3/4, a four-bar theme (Figure 2.7) is created. It is interspersed with held trills, then fragmented in a manner analogous to a
traditional development section immediately following its initial exposition. Motivic cells from the four bars are presented in a nearly continuous response, building to a thickly scored held chord in m. 179 and followed by an almost cadenza-like passage in the clarinet to begin the next segment. This section fragments the melody from the new material in the development before devolving into a repeated sequence of three shifting chords in quarter notes as presented below.

![Figure 2.13 - Siegfried Idyll, m. 191-192, Strings](image-url)

Wagner uses this material to transition keys from Ab to B in m. 201, where he retains this harmonic ostinato/fragmentation of the development theme in the strings while presenting the primary theme from the exposition in the oboe (m. 201-213). Another transition featuring a sustained G augmented chord pivots the key back to Ab and leads to a presentation of the primary theme in the cello/horn in the new key combined with the new development theme in the woodwinds/violins. Measure 237 begins a chromatically ascending fragmentation of the development theme, resolving in m. 243 with a resplendent variant of the development theme, fragmenting into a single bar cell consisting of the second measure of the theme in a nearly rhythmic tutti for four bars, transitioning from F major to A minor in m. 251. This culminates in a massive tutti sustained F#7 chord followed by a cadenza-like descending passage pairing A minor arpeggios with lower neighbor tones in triplets leads to another section of new material, again based on leitmotifs - one from Siegfried (figure 2.9) paired with the second based on
birdsong (figure 2.11). Retransition begins in m. 275 featuring transitional material in triplets supporting a melodic ostinato based on the concluding rhythms of the primary theme (quarter followed by three descending triplets).

This transition concludes in m. 286 with the appearance of the recapitulation, accentuating the return with triumphal settings of both the ‘innocent sleep’ leitmotif and a variant of the development theme overlaid in the winds.

Figure 2.14 – Siegfried Idyll, m. 286-290

Rapid ascending triplets in the violins in m. 292-294 lead to another reprisal of the primary theme in a new key (C major), the actual climax of the work as a whole. The trumpet makes its only appearance in this passage, performing 40 individual notes over 13 measures, mostly in line
with the overtone series. Considering that conductor Hans Richter began learning trumpet only a short time before this performance (and solely for the purposes of this performance), one might speculate that Wagner did not wish to overexert the novice trumpeter in the work’s premiere. However, the trumpet does add to the grandeur of the overall composite in its solitary appearance.

The return to sustained chords and descending passages transition to the resolution of the phrase in m. 306-307 which feature a combination of a variant of the new development theme and birdsong leitmotif. The following transitional material contains the rhythmic punctuations introduced in m. 50 with held tones and chromatically ascending long tones to return the piece to E and cadential material, which mirrors m. 314-319 with m. 55-60. The continuing phrase follows suit, correlating m. 323-333 with m. 60-69. Melodic material at m. 334-339 presents a mixture of the variant development of m. 292 with ascending cadential material reminiscent of m. 74 (figure 2.5). A final swell in m. 344-346 similar to figure 2.5 concludes with transitional material to lead into a final presentation of the primary theme beginning in m. 351, paired once again with the ‘innocent sleep’ leitmotif of figure 2.3. The recapitulation essentially concludes at m. 365, which leads into a coda segment that begins with a reprisal of a condensed variant of the material from m. 259 (figure 2.9 and 2.11). Measure 373 reprises the ‘Schlaf Kindchen’ theme, and transitional material at m. 384-387 returns to the development variant presented in the climax (m. 286, et. all) before relaxing into the concluding phrase of the primary theme, followed by a final presentation of the primary theme in cello supported by sustained harmonic tones in the remaining strings. The final two chords reintroduce the winds for a final cadence, resolving the nearly 24-minute work with a peaceful release. The following table presents a comprehensive outlay of the overall formal structure of the work.
Table 1 - Formal Analysis of *Siegfried Idyll*

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Primary Theme</strong></th>
<th><strong>M. 1-49</strong></th>
<th><strong>M. 50-90</strong></th>
<th><strong>M. 91-124</strong></th>
<th><strong>M. 125-147</strong></th>
<th><strong>M. 138-147</strong></th>
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<td>M. 1-7</td>
<td>M. 50-59</td>
<td>M. 91-99</td>
<td>M. 125-147</td>
<td>M. 138-147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Initial presentation of Primary theme in tonic</td>
<td>Transitional material beginning with gradual rhythmic retardation, proceeding from a chromatic resolution into quasi-developmental thematic material in m. 55-59</td>
<td>Establishment of Secondary theme based on “Schlaf Kindchen” in key of B</td>
<td>Fragmentation of Secondary theme interspersed with rhythmic pedal, concluding with sustained trills in Violin I</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M. 8-14</td>
<td>M. 60-68</td>
<td>M. 100-115</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Repetition of Primary theme in the Subdominant, with an extended cadence on the Dominant of the original key from m. 11-14</td>
<td>Transitional material beginning with chromatically altering sustained tones in strings, leading into call and response fragments built from Primary thematic material; tonal shift to secondary dominant (F# major)</td>
<td>Quasi-developmental fragmentation of Primary thematic material, interspersed with call-and-response fragments of Secondary theme, with cadential sustained tones m. 113-4</td>
<td>Arpeggiated palindrome, anchored on either side with sustained tones as transitional material</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M. 15-28</td>
<td>M. 69-90</td>
<td>M. 116-124</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Third repetition of Primary theme in the Supertonic (extended predominant) featuring rhythmic fragmentations of thematic material, with a cadential resolution to the Dominant in m. 25-28</td>
<td>Transitional material beginning with chromatically altering sustained tones in strings, developing into presentation of leitmotif based on fragmented Primary thematic content. Cadential moment m. 82-83, followed by shortened reprise of similar material, cadencing into resolving material m. 89-90 to lead into secondary theme</td>
<td>Combination of Primary theme with Secondary theme, concluding with rhythmic pedal in horns m. 121-124</td>
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<tr>
<td>Figure 2.3</td>
<td>M. 29-42</td>
<td>M. 50-90</td>
<td>M. 91-124</td>
<td>M. 125-147</td>
<td>M. 138-147</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Return of Primary theme in tonic, superimposed with leitmotif countermelody in winds</td>
<td>Transitional material beginning with gradual rhythmic retardation, proceeding from a chromatic resolution into quasi-developmental thematic material in m. 55-59</td>
<td>Establishment of Secondary theme based on “Schlaf Kindchen” in key of B</td>
<td>Fragmentation of Secondary theme interspersed with rhythmic pedal, concluding with sustained trills in Violin I</td>
<td>Arpeggiated palindrome, anchored on either side with sustained tones as transitional material</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M. 43-49</td>
<td>M. 60-68</td>
<td>M. 100-115</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Continuance of Primary theme, melody revoiced to cello/bass/bassoon, with cadential material in m. 48-49 featuring rhythmic intensification in two nearly identical measures</td>
<td>Transitional material beginning with chromatically altering sustained tones in strings, leading into call and response fragments built from Primary thematic material; tonal shift to secondary dominant (F# major)</td>
<td>Quasi-developmental fragmentation of Primary thematic material, interspersed with call-and-response fragments of Secondary theme, with cadential sustained tones m. 113-4</td>
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<td>Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Figure 2.7</td>
<td>M. 148-159</td>
<td>New theme in the key of Ab to begin development, divided in half and separated by sustained trills in Violin I.</td>
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<td>M. 160-180</td>
<td>Developmental fragmentation of New theme, building to climactic resolution featuring quasi-cadenza Clarinet I arpeggio to lead into transitional material.</td>
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<td>Figure 2.13</td>
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<td>Repeated sequences based on New theme, transitioning into developed variant of the repetitive sequence which shifts key from Ab to B.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>M. 201-218</td>
<td>Presentation of Primary theme in Oboe underscored by variant of New theme, concluding with sustained pivot G/B augmented triad.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M. 219-232</td>
<td>Combination of Primary theme with New theme.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>M. 233-242</td>
<td>Fragmentation of New theme rising in pitch level to transition to key of F.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>M. 243-258</td>
<td>Combination of fragmented Primary theme with fragmented New theme, concluding with cadential material from fragmented New theme and ornamented arpeggiation descending into Leitmotif-based new material.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Figures 2.9, 2.11</td>
<td>M. 259-274</td>
<td>Leitmotif material combining Siegfried in Love theme with birdsong, concluding with descending flourish.</td>
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<tr>
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Chapter 3 - Analysis of previous Wagnerian band transcriptions; Cailliet and Votta

The practice of transcribing orchestral works for wind bands is a longstanding tradition in the history of the medium. Original compositions for full wind bands began happening as early as the mid-19th, though the widespread practice of creating original compositions for the medium did not develop on a larger scale until the early 20th C. Early wind bands found themselves in a situation where works for performance were needed, and the ensembles naturally turned to the adaptation of orchestral works, particularly within US Military Bands and prominent professional and semi-professional organizations. Many of the early transcriptions however are lost to time, fail to translate well into the modern conception of the wind ensemble, or are unavailable to the public.

Wagner’s compositional style lends itself well to the medium of the wind band, but the lack of non-dramatic works has limited much of its inclusion into the literature. Excerpts from operas exist, particularly famous thematic materials such as “Ride of the Valkyries” (for which no less than seven arrangements exist for various performance levels of bands) or “Siegfried’s Funeral Music”. Further, organizations such as the President’s Own United States Marine Band have developed numerous adaptations and fantasies on Wagnerian works. However, in the realms of standard wind band literature available for public consumption, there are two significant works which are held in esteem in the community which encapsulate the differing approaches to capturing the signature Wagnerian sound. The first may be seen in Lucien Cailliet’s 1938 transcription of Elsa’s Procession to the Cathedral, which incorporates the stylistically early approach to band orchestration that was prevalent for decades. The second is found in Michael Votta’s edition of Trauermusik, an original work for winds by Wagner (though for a quite non-standard instrumentation).
Lucien Cailliet and Elsa’s Procession to the Cathedral

Written in 1938, this transcription has become one of the classic works in the history of band. Cailliet himself was a clarinetist for the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra and Associate Conductor of the Allentown Community Band, the oldest civilian concert band in the United States. He regularly used this ensemble as a test subject for his various transcriptions. Cailliet’s approach to reorchestrating symphonic works for winds is seen in this adaptation which rescores the opening material from Act 2, Scene 4 of Lohengrin into a standard concert band instrumentation. While a later adaptation by Col. John Bougeois exists, the works are similar in nature excluding the ending; both take considerable liberties with how to conclude the work and an in-depth comparison would prove superfluous to the scope of this particular project.

The choice of this excerpt was well conceived given its key signature and concise structure. The excerpt also presents a couple of orchestration challenges to consider. In addition to strings, the work also features two separate choruses which must be absorbed into the composite arrangement. Further, the ending of this excerpt in the original opera segued into dramatic portions featuring soloists. Cailliet instead ends by creating a seven-measure coda based on extending previous melodic and countermelodic material beginning in m. 71.

Beginning with the opening 8 measures, Cailliet retains identical scoring with Wagner’s original, though with copious cueing to ensure playability for various ensembles (such as English horn cues in alto saxophone 1 and clarinet 3 and bassoon in tenor saxophone). Beginning in m. 9, Cailliet expands the orchestration considerably. Euphoniums and baritone saxophones are added to third and fourth horns, while first and second horns become doubled with original oboe and

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1 Program Notes from Elsa’s Procession to the Cathedral, United States Marine Corps President’s Own Band, Lt. Col Jason K. Fettig, Washington, D.C.: Sylvan Theater, August 17, 2016
clarinet 2 parts in octave displacement. Further, alto and tenor saxophones are added to the bassoon, English horn, and clarinet 1 parts. This gives considerable depth to the sound comparative with Wagner’s orchestration. The sound deepens even further in m. 13 with the addition of tuba, contrabassoon, and contrabass clarinet to the low horn parts. Timpani is also added to assist with the resolution of the phrase entering into m. 15-16. The segment which continues the cross cuing (such as muted trumpet 1 for the oboe solo, or euphonium, tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone, and tuba for bassoon) and also features octave displacement into lower registers compared with Wagner’s original, as can be seen in the bass clarinet part. In addition, even when octave displacement is not used larger instruments are written for, such as contrabassoon, and certain parts are reinforced such as alto saxophones with clarinet 2, further adding to the deeper texture in the transcription. Outside of these minor alterations, the piece as written maintains much of the original scoring, including maintaining part integrity throughout.

As the work proceeds into the key change, necessary alterations become more prevalent. To begin with, the issue of the double chorus is answered with cornets, trombones, and horns. The original horn parts are instead placed in the saxophone family to compensate for the line. The violin melody beginning in the second bar of the key change is placed in first flute, Eb soprano clarinet, and first Bb clarinet. Second and third clarinet in divisi with alto clarinet parts take the place of second and third flutes with upbeat underscoring, while second and third flutes, oboes, and English horn cover the original first flute part. Cello and double bass are scored for bassoons, contrabassoon, bass clarinet, contrabass clarinet, baritone saxophone, bass saxophone, euphonium, and tuba. One interesting technique Cailliet employs is the specificity in the euphonium part. The other instruments replacing the low strings follow Wagner’s rhythmic notation specifically, with clear separation between the notes. The euphoniums however do not,
carrying through each tone change into the other. The effect provides an aural illusion of reverberation as might be expected from low strings continuing their sound in the resonating chambers of their respective instruments. In a similar vein, another alteration by Cailliet include the replacement of the viola part (pizzicato chords on downbeats) with the addition of a harp part providing sustained chords and string bass pizzicato. The cumulative effect of these substitutions provides a complete transcription of the key change while retaining much of the characteristic Wagnerian sound. The continued reinforcement of the lower parts as well as the general thickness in orchestration creates a fuller sound, though is less distinctive in timbral character overall.

Returning to the original tonic of Eb, Cailliet slightly varies his substitutions. The cornets, trombones, and horns continue their role of replacing the choirs (with the addition of euphoniums), while the long tone harmonic underpinning of the winds is portioned out to bassoons, contrabassoon, bass clarinet, contrabass clarinet, the saxophone family, trumpets (distinctive of cornets, as is characteristic with band scoring of this era), bass trombone, and tuba. The tremolo violas are substituted with second and third Bb clarinets and alto clarinet, and the violin melody is carried by piccolo, flutes, oboe, Eb clarinet, and first Bb clarinet. Two additions are in the score in the form of timpani (reinforcing the bass pedal found in low winds) and an original harp line performing arpeggiation of the harmonic progression.

The next phrase beginning in m. 55 brings more woodwinds into the melody (and subsequent harmonization), seeing piccolo, flutes, oboes, English horn, Eb clarinet, second and third Bb clarinets, alto clarinet, alto saxophone, and tenor saxophone carry the melodic line. This is consistent with shifts in Wagner’s score which takes the melodic content into woodwinds and horn (for which saxophone is substituted). The first clarinet part remains on the violin line,
performing the arpeggiated figures. Again, the brass choir replaces vocal choirs, while the bass pedals are carried by bassoons, contrabassoon, bass clarinet, contrabass clarinet, baritone saxophone, bass saxophone, and tuba. The next phrase (beginning m. 63) breaks down the previous conventions, both in the Wagnerian score and Cailliet. Wagner brings both choirs together, breaking from the call-and-response setup utilized to this point. Subsequently, Cailliet homogenizes the various lines, shifting from his approach featuring brass as choir analogue to one of alto voices carrying the melodic line of the combined choir, harmonized in low brass and cornet/trumpet parts. First and second flutes with second and third clarinets replace the violins, while the ascending chromatic countermelody originally performed by flute 1, oboe 1, English horn, and horn 1 is transferred to piccolo, flute 3, Eb clarinet, and Bb clarinet 1. Timpani is added to reinforce the harmonic roots in contrabassoon, contrabass clarinet, baritone saxophone, bass saxophone, and tuba, while additionally the harp continues to provide punctuations at harmonic junctures.

Following the climactic moments of m. 69-70, the arrangement creates a seven measure coda. Cailliet continues the ostinato in the upper winds, while reprising the main theme across oboes and cornets. Trombones and euphonium joins in via an arpeggiation reminiscent of the secondary theme, while alto saxophones, tenor saxophone, horns, and alto clarinet continue the descending scalular countermelodic lines. Battery percussion (snare drum, bass drum, and cymbals) join in for the only time in the arrangement, adding to the sense of culmination. As the arrangement closes, the piece cadences into three bars of tonic in the rhythmic motif of the primary theme.

Many elements of early orchestral band transcriptions are on display throughout this arrangement. Cailliet attempts to retain as much of the original source material as possible,
maintaining the original timbres of solo lines and much of the supporting orchestration. Other
instruments are often added in support roles, thickening the orchestration and incorporating more
performers into the work (or providing much needed sound reinforcement for incomplete
ensembles). Violin and viola parts are repurposed into flutes and clarinets, while secondary and
tertiary flute and clarinet parts retain the original source material. Accessory instruments such as
harp and percussion are added, but mostly in climactic moments and sparingly. Saxophones are
used as horn analogs as well as melodic, countermelodic, or harmonic reinforcement.
Euphoniums and tubas are written as an extension of low horn parts or occasionally low strings.
Unique to this arrangement is the adaptation of the double vocal choir in brass, specifically
cornet, trombone, and horn parts. Despite this particular unique circumstance, elements which
were prevalent in many subsequent wind band orchestral transcriptions are evident throughout.

Michael Votta and Trauermusik, WWV 73

Michael Votta, director of bands at the University of Maryland and student of Donald
Hunsberger (another noted transcriber of orchestral works for wind band), created this adaptation
of Trauermusik, WWV 73. As Votta notes in his introductory text to the arrangement,

“One of the landmark works of 19th-Century wind band repertoire is Richard
Wagner’s Trauermusik. This work now exists in at least three separate versions:
The original manuscript score (1844), the first published full score edited by
Michael Balling (1926), and Erik Leidzen’s “revision” for symphonic band
(1948). In preparing this edition, I have worked to create a practical performing
edition that is faithful to Wagner’s original.”

Votta continues to provide a synopsis of the history of the work as well as performance
suggestions based upon historical precedence of the score and adaptations to modern wind band
scoring practice. As he explains in this section, “Wagner’s original calls for 75 winds, of which

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2 Richard Wagner, Trauermusik, WWV 73, ed. Michael Votta and John Boyd (Ohio: Ludwig Music Publishing
Company, 1994), 2
seven are oboes, 10 are bassoons, and 14 are horns... very few modern ensembles could amass such numbers of these instruments.”³ He further discusses his process for creating an adaptation which simultaneously honors the original transcription and becomes practical for modern ensembles. The end result of calls for two flutes, two oboes (one on a part), eight clarinets (two each on four parts), four bassoons (two each on two parts), six horns (two on first F horn, two on second F horn, one each on first and second Bb horn), two trumpets (one on a part), three trombones (one on a part), two tubas, and two drums. Also included are optional bass clarinets, contrabass clarinet, saxophones (soprano, alto, tenor, and baritone), and euphonium. To promote an even greater reach for the performance of the work, in coordination with John Boyd and Ludwig band publications a full score using a fairly standard instrumentation was created to allow the work to be performed by a symphonic band with large numbers of players.

In producing the adaptation in this manner, Votta provides a number of options for performing ensembles. Within the score, parts original to the 1844 manuscript are noted, thus ensembles wishing to perform the work in a way Wagner initially intended may do so. Otherwise, as stated previously additional parts are available for more modern instrumentation. The doublings follow a rather sensible pattern, with optional instruments such as bass clarinet doubling with bassoon, soprano and alto saxophone with clarinets, and euphonium, tenor saxophone, and baritone saxophone alternating between trombone and horn extensions. Because this is a work original to the wind band repertoire, little in the way of adaptation is required. This makes this work not a true transcription or arrangement, but rather a modernized edition of an original work (which, as Votta notes in his introduction, is in itself Wagner’s band arrangement of Weber’s opera *Euryanthe*).

³ Ibid, 3
Conclusion

As is evident from the existence of Votta’s edition of *Trauermusik*, the idea of crafting band arrangements from works existing in other mediums is not a new idea. Harmoniemusik ensembles performing various music were much en vogue during the 18th-Century. These works ranged from original works (such as Mozart’s *Serenades* or the Beethoven Octet or *Rondino*) and arrangements crafted from existing works. Evidence for this may be seen in a letter from Mozart to his father, whereupon completing *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Mozart penned “Well, I am up to the eyes in work, for by Sunday week I have to arrange my opera for wind-instruments. If I don't, someone will anticipate me and secure the profits.”

Different approaches have been used in these creations throughout history, but as may be seen from the previous examples modern convention calls for maintaining the integrity of original parts to the greatest degree possible while simultaneously making informed compromises in instrumentation choices and orchestrational practices. It is important to examine what practices have been used in the past to determine the principles which any adaptation of *Siegfried’s Idyll* should be created moving forward. This transcription attempts to answer this by using modern orchestrational practices in wind band scoring while keeping with Wagner’s presentation of melodic and countermelodic material as well as harmonic voicings.

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Chapter Four - Preparation of the Transcription

General Transcription Considerations

There are a number of considerations for the selection of this work for transcription. First, this work is a unique opportunity as an original work by Wagner of substantial artistic merit and depth. As previously mentioned, upon the conclusion of the initial festivals in Bayreuth Wagner found himself in substantial debt. While not explicitly mentioned in scholarly documents regarding Wagner’s life, the time frame of the festivals ending, accumulation of debts incurred resultantly, and the selling of the work to Schott suggests at least a correlative connection between the events. Therefore, given the conditions of the release of this piece, various orchestral conductors have freely interpreted the performance practices of this work in numerous ways. This allows a would-be transcription to take similar liberties in crafting a wind band edition. In creating this version, the primary consideration has been to craft an edition as could reasonably be created by Wagner himself were he given the full palate of the modern symphonic band. This transcription is based off of the 1878 Schott publication of the work, which may be seen in full in Appendix 2.

As seen from previous examples, transcriptions of Wagner’s work for winds have followed two general categories of classic symphony-to-band orchestration as exemplified by Cailliet’s *Elsa’s Procession to the Cathedral* and a more authentic interpretation in *Trauermusik* as created by Michael Votta. This particular transcription seeks to reinterpret the Wagnerian style into the modern wind ensemble template through the use of extended instrumental families and the addition of more current percussion practices. While this admittedly alters the characteristic sound from Wagner’s original tonal palette for this piece, in doing so it is desired to achieve through the wind band medium a closer relation to the expressed musical intent of the original
work. In particular, two distinct practices of stylistic orchestrational interpretation are presented in an effort to represent both the original small ensemble for which the piece was composed (through the extensive use of wind chamber groups throughout the work) and Wagner’s adaptation in 1878 to fit a medium-sized symphony orchestra. The choice of which interpretation is presented is determined by the thickness of the scoring texture used in the expanded orchestration in conjunction with traditional performance practice of the wind ensemble. Three other general distinguishing features which must first be addressed are the adaptation of keys, editorial clarity (with particular consideration of articulations), and the addition of percussion.

The initial technical issue to consider in creating a transcription to suit winds is adapting key centers to better acclimate to the particular tonal centers of wind instruments. The original work is primarily in the key of E, with modulations from m. 148-193 and again from m. 216-242 in the key of Ab, as well as periodic modulations to the key of C (m. 194-199, m. 259-285, m. 295-312). Other brief tonicizations include G (m. 125-137), Eb (m. 128-147), B (m. 200-215) and F (m. 243-258). To better fit various overtone tendencies characteristic to winds and to assist in several register issues which arise when transcribing the string parts into various consorts, the work has been transcribed into the key of F. To keep pitch levels consistent throughout the work, no alterations to modulations as Wagner wrote them are utilized; thus, all keys and notes are transposed relative to each other. Other key tonal centers were considered, namely Eb and Gb, as it would be undesirable to alter the key too far away from the original source material in order to preserve instrumental register usage by Wagner. With these options in mind, this arrangement chooses to set the original tonic in F as it best fit the technical factors of instrument registration preservation (in particular eliminating octave displacements to preserve harmonic lines) and overtone characteristics of winds. In addition, this adaptation restructures various tonicizations
into open key scoring to allow for maximum clarity. Instead of short, five measure forays into various keys, efforts are maintained to only shift keys when doing so would simplify the efforts of musicians in reading the parts.

The second point of generalized consideration is in editing the score for clarity. There are a number of articulation and phrase markings which are somewhat ambiguous to modern scoring practices. One example is the use of phrase markings in coordination with staccato marks (see figure 4.1)

Figure 4.1 - Siegfried Idyll, m. 63-65, Oboe and Clarinets in A

Stylistically, this marking would seem to indicate something akin to the *portato* notation in string parts. For a wind orchestration the use of *tenuto* articulation marks provides a more accurate modern interpretation and is used consistently as applicable.
Finally, the original Wagnerian score does not include percussion of any sort. This transcription uses minimal percussion, as well as harp. Timpani, snare drum, bass drum, triangle, suspended cymbal, and crash cymbal are added to primarily heighten large cadential moments. While the effect is intended to be subtle, the addition of these resources assist with the arrival of these moments. One specific distinctive addition comes in m. 296-303. The cadential snare drum part is added to reinforce the style indicated by the switched instrumentation of flugelhorn to trumpet (this being the only place in Wagner’s original where the trumpet was utilized). In
general, there is a marziale feel to this particular section, and the additions in the percussion parts assist with recreating some of the ambiance lost with the subtraction of the strings (figure 4.3)

In several of his compositions Wagner used cymbals, bass drums, timpani, snare drums, triangles, and tambourines, with Gotterdammerung using five different instruments itself. Therefore, the addition of limited percussion is not outside of the character of Wagnerian compositional technique while simultaneously reinforcing the stylistic considerations of the passages in which they are found. Mallet parts are incorporated as well, but are similarly sparse. The adaptation calls for vibraphone, marimba, bells, and chimes. As can be seen in figure 4.3, the bells and chimes are used exclusively here to further develop the marziale style. Other places where the instruments are used are to alter the tonal palette (such as the addition of vibraphone in m. 69-71) or to add clarity on particularly note filled passages (see figure 4.4).
The intention of the percussion additions is to reinforce stylistic norms in understated ways while attempting to remain true to the original Wagnerian style.

**Detailed Description of Adaptations**

The beginning of Wagner’s original version of *Siegfried Idyll* begins with the chamber strings. This provides a light and lyrical introductory passage. In this adaptation, the initial presentation begins with a saxophone quartet; soprano, alto, tenor, and baritone. Singular clarinets are used in longer held tones to add a rounded texture to the sound. This allows for both a chamber texture while simultaneously softening the tonal palette to recreate the gentle nature of this beginning section. Starting in m. 14, the clarinet choir (Eb clarinet cued in Oboe 1) supported with string bass (cued in tuba) takes over, providing a slightly more dense sound in congruence with Wagner’s scoring, then returns to the saxophone family in m. 29 to bring back the chamber atmosphere as well as to allow for the upcoming colors of the flute, oboe, and clarinet countermelody to be distinguishable amidst the harmonic underpinnings and repetition. As with the initial passage of the piece, lower clarinet sounds are used to reinforce and complete the harmonic sequence from the original scoring, and for ease of performance the horn 2 pedal tone from m. 36-42 is substituted with euphonium.

This segment culminates with the first tutti ensemble presentation, beginning in m. 43 and arriving at m. 48 to mark the arrival of the first *forte* cadence in the work. The increasing volume and voices entering suggest this choice to be apropos given the stylistic traditions of wind ensemble (where it is often uncharacteristic to remain silent for extended periods of time). The use of flugelhorn at this point in the arrangement is intended to subdue the more brash tones inherent in the Bb Trumpet sound. Thus, when the trumpet is utilized from m. 295-307 (the only
time this instrument was used in Wagner’s original composition) it retains the distinctive tone and character in translating from the Wagnerian score. A minor modification at this point in this transcription includes a slight accelerando from m. 43-47, with a con moto marking (♩ = c.96) in m. 48-59. These slight shifts in tempo correspond with traditional orchestral performance practice and encourage the conductor to move the music as is stylistically appropriate. Other minor additions to the score in this segment include the addition of percussion (timpani, m. 50, 52; snare drum, m. 48-49).

Following this tutti, the arrangement returns to the chamber-like texture, first presenting a conical brass adaptation of the string parts (flugelhorns, euphoniums, tuba) and the horn capturing the full extensions of the G9 chord in the triplet punctuations. This allows for greater timbral contrast when returning to the more woodwind dominated following area beginning m. 55 and makes the transition into this segment more gradual in nature. Beginning at m. 55, much of the scoring remains the same from the Wagner, with flutes substituting for the strings (clarinet 3 doubling flute 2 to provide the depth in register from the viola original part). This enables the clarinet/horn counterpoint to be the featured melodic content. The aforementioned phrasing and portato alterations happen here, with tenuto replacing the staccato/phrase marking notation and alterations to allow for adequate breath support (see figure 4.2). The saxophone quartet resumes its role as string analog, with markings of con vibrato as appropriate to better capture the expressive passage and lightly reinforced with vibraphone. Coming out of this transitional segment brings the arrangement to its second tutti segment before the introduction of new material in the dominant tonicization. This tutti recalls the style of the previous tutti, with adequate doubling throughout to reinforce and amplify the cadence.
As the transition diminishes into the next segment, instrumentation is strategically reduced to gradually shift from the full ensemble cadence in m. 85 into the chamber atmosphere of m. 91. The oboe part is directly transcribed from the original Wagner, but the string accompaniment is divided between clarinets (serving as violins) and saxophones (serving as violas, cellos, and basses). The cadence point at m. 100 incorporates the double reed family to provide a fuller conclusion to the segment, while clarinets complete the string section phrase before the line transitions once again to the saxophones in m. 104. The use of saxophones here is to allow the consort-like nature of Wagner’s composition to be more clearly expressed; pairs of winds (initially oboe and clarinet, then clarinet and horn, and finally bassoon and horn [substituted with euphonium here for ease of intonation clarity in the given range]) with the harmonized motif from the oboe lullaby (m.91) passed throughout.

This segment continues into a modulatory transition, which culminates in the new thematic material arising from the development in m. 148. The orchestration is slightly expanded with the horn rhythmic pulses being doubled across the section so that the brass chorale (substituting for strings) arrives in a more gradual fashion. Conical brass is selected for this segment of strings to allow for a change in tonal palette both in terms of contrast from previous chamber groups and to allow for the muting technique prescribed by Wagner to be more accurately replicated. To ensure the trills are performed with the expected weight and vacillation of a first violin section marked *p*, alto saxophone marked *mp* is replaced. The transition concludes in a palindromic arpeggiation of Ab minor supported by a thick chord which rises and falls accordingly with the increasing and decreasing instrumentation. The arpeggio is taken from the strings and placed into the clarinets, piccolo, and saxophones, while the chord instrumentation is increased to reinforce appropriately. Afterwards, the alto saxophone once
again picks up the first violin trill to complete the transition into the unusual development section of the work.

The development is kept as close to the original Wagnerian score as possible from m. 148 to m. 175, with the only alteration being the alto saxophone replacement for first violins (m. 153-157). As the section reaches its first climax, instrumentation doublings begin to increase until the arrival of the cadence in m. 179. A decrescendo is added leading into the second held bar to allow for the singular first clarinet arpeggio to be more clearly heard as the material proceeds into a modulatory meandering, originally presented in strings but now home in the clarinet family. Octave displacement occurs in the clarinet 3 part to allow for playability (the C#3 being beyond the range of the instrument). While this admittedly disturbs the direction of the harmonic line within the part in isolated incidences, it preserves the harmony itself. This segment continues until m. 201 where, as in the original Wagner, the oboe presents the introductory theme above the chromatic undulations in the clarinets. Beginning in m. 216, the saxophone consort resumes its role as string family replacements, with flutes joining the string transcriptions beginning in m. 226 to reinforce the high tones from the original violin part. This design permits the direct transcription of the clarinet melody of m. 219 (as well as the bassoon 1 and horn 1 parts) to be preserved from the original Wagner score with timbral clarity.

As the transition to the next featured tutti begins, doublings start to occur to make the transition between the chamber setting and tutti setting more moderate. Oboe 2, horn 3, clarinet 3, bass clarinet, and snare drum are all added beginning in m. 237 to make the gradual crescendo into the next arrival at 243 more poignant. Here, there are three distinct textural elements present. First, there is a distinctive bass line, reinforced harmonically in upper voices. In the original, these elements were performed by the cello/double bass/bassoon in the bass, and the
harmonization by oboe, horn 1, and viola. This element is transcribed to tuba, euphonium, bass trombone, tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone, and bassoon, while the supporting harmony is carried by oboes, English horn, and tenor trombones. The second thematic element is the modified introductory theme, performed by horn 2 and clarinets in the original. In this adaptation, the line is given to all soprano clarinets, the soprano and alto saxophone, and the horn section in unison. The goal here is to preserve much of the timbral design from the original Wagner score. Finally, there is a high registered presentation of a modified development theme, originally scored for violins and flute. Here, this theme is given to the flutes and flugelhorns. The resultant mix allows all three elements to be heard independently in a similar fashion to the Wagnerian score. The three-bar transition from m. 256-258 is taken from flute and violins and replaced with flute and clarinets, before arriving at the next segment in m. 259.

The segment beginning in m. 259 is again transcribed directly from Wagner’s score until m. 274. The horn sustain is broken between horns 2 and 4 to improve playability, but is otherwise unchanged until m. 274, where the tutti cadence on beat 3 arrives. The use of the tutti mirrors Wagner’s approach and presents a rush of color before transitioning to the next section of the work. Here, the clarinets and marimba take on the chromatically meandering triplets, while alto saxophone, tenor saxophone, and clarinets 2 and 3 take over the cello/viola melody. The bassoon pedal tone is retained, only broken between two players for ease of playability. This modulatory section culminates with the tutti arrival once again at m. 286. As with previous arrivals of the full ensemble, the measures leading up to the cadence see an increase in scoring to mediate the intensity of the arrival. Here, the initial theme is once again contrasted with with a new counter-line which alters the style of the segment, preparing the arrival of m. 295. In this transcription, the flugelhorns are not used from m. 287-294 to allow for the transition to C
trumpets. This change from flugelhorns to trumpets allows the timbral character of the trumpet to be distinct in the work in a similar method used by Wagner. When the trumpets do arrive in m. 295, they are in unison and reinforced by unison tenor trombones to truly capture the intensity of Wagner’s usage in his original score.

The section between m. 286-307 is the final extended tutti section in the work, and serves as the beginning of the modified recapitulation. It presents a marziale style as indicated with the counter-line articulations, and is comprised of two distinct halves separated by a half-step rise in key beginning in m. 295. The first half presents four distinct motives. One motivic element in the oboe and clarinet 1 is a descending pentatonic line (first presented in m. 37), which is contrasted by an ascending marcato line from flute and clarinet 2 in as seen in figure 4.5.

![Figure 4.5 - Siegfried Idyll, m. 286-289, Flute, Oboe, Clarinet in A](image)

In contrast, the violin 1 and horn 1 present the introductory theme, while cello and bassoon perform a complimentary theme to this above a sustained pedal tone in the double bass and horn 2 (see figure 4.6)

![Figure 4.6 - Siegfried Idyll, m. 286-291, Cello and Double Bass](image)
The final element is a harmonic sequence supported by violin 2 and viola in split parts. In this transcription, the main melodic figure is captured by flute 1, piccolo, clarinet 2 and 3, soprano saxophone, and horns. The dual countermelodic figure from the woodwinds is written into the flute 2, oboes, English horn, Eb clarinet, and clarinet 1 part, while the bassoons, baritone sax, and euphoniums cover the complimentary figure found in the original cello/bassoon line. The pedal tone is reinforced and performed by tuba, contrabassoon, and bass clarinet, while the harmonic sequence is kept to the alto and tenor saxophone, mostly to ensure clarity in the various trills from the original score. This half regresses into transitional material featuring the triplet-based chromatically altered lines similar to prior transitions in m. 292-293, and a sustained trill combined with a descending bass line returns us to an even more triumphal presentation of the thematic material in the recapitulation in m. 285-291.

In the consequent segment material from the previous section is presented again, only with fuller orchestration. As mentioned previously, the trumpets and trombones take on the triumphal line presented initially by the flutes beginning m. 286, and reinforced with piccolo, soprano saxophone, Eb clarinet, clarinet 1, and chimes. The introductory theme is placed in the oboes and clarinet 2 (again replicating Wagner’s orchestration) while the flutes, English horn, and clarinet 3 present the descending leitmotif line. The moving bass lines are transcribed to baritone saxophone, bass clarinet, contrabassoon, euphonium, tuba, and double bass, while the harmonic complimentary melody from the violin 2 and viola part is again captured by the alto and tenor saxophones to ensure cleanliness of ornamental figures. This potentially creates an imbalance with this orchestration, as the saxophone lines are somewhat underrepresented, but the rapidity of their moving line contrasted with the rather static triumphal line should ensure the projection of this line in a proper balance with the other motivic features. The section concludes
with a fanfare-like motif, resolving into a descending flourish from the flutes and clarinets back into the quiet chamber ensemble scoring present beginning in m. 308.

The transitional music from m. 308 to 350 presents again the same thematic material from m. 50-91. As in the Wagner score, the instrumentation is altered to preserve the sense of declining intensity; in the initial presentation of the Wagner, after the transitional material in m. 50-54/308-311, the orchestration changes from the melody focused on the winds during the initial transition into the strings during the second, presenting a more delicate rendition in this recapitulation. To achieve a similar effect, the initial transitional music in the wind adaptation is presented in conical brass, yet in the recapitulation is transferred to clarinet choir followed by clarinet/flute in harmony. Following this phrase, the push towards heightened comparative delicacy continues, with more sparse scoring. The final phrase which climaxes this transitional material is equally reduced, limiting percussion and lessening the intensity of the brass scoring. The transcription closes the recapitulation following the structures from earlier in the work, with saxophones serving as analogues for the strings, retaining the clarinet leitmotif and bassoon pedal tone (supplemented with bass clarinet to round the tone). Beginning with m. 362, flutes join the soprano saxophone to assist with the timbral shifts required moving into the coda segment at m. 366.

Beginning with the coda, Wagner returns to the Siegfried love/birdsong motifs, underscored by sustained strings in a wide register. Flutes, oboes, and saxophones are used to create a similar texture, with the horn 1 and clarinet 1 being directly transcribed from the Wagner score. The flute variant of the leitmotif is kept in its presentation at m. 370, and the Schlaf Kindchen theme is presented in two harmonized oboes; in contrast, the Wagner used the solitary oboe scored with clarinet. The viola countermelody is taken by the soprano saxophone and flute
2 to keep the texture similar, despite the octave displacement. The descending clarinet 2 line from the Wagner score is placed into the English horn (cued in clarinet 3). The desired timbre is for double reed choir with flutes and saxophones, though realities of wind ensemble membership precipitate this cueing. The last segment of the piece once again returns the brass in chorale to present the New theme reprise and the beginning of the final presentation of the Primary theme. This transitions back to the clarinet/saxophone choirs in m. 396 to bring the piece to its resolution, and the final chords follow the Wagnerian scoring, reintroducing the remaining woodwinds and horns to complete the work.

**Concluding Thoughts**

While many works by Wagner exist in the wind band medium, it does seem exceptional that this singular tone poem for orchestra has not yet found its way into the repertoire. Adaptations, arrangements, and fantasies from various operas exist, as does a replication of Wagner’s original wind band arrangement of Weber’s music. But while transcriptions are recognized as an essential component of wind ensemble literature, the fact that this is Wagner’s only tone poem and one of the only works exclusively set for orchestral performance, yet has not already been transcribed presents a truly rare opportunity to reenvision this classic for the modern wind band setting. By utilizing the concepts of contrasting consort and tutti orchestra, reliance on original orchestrations whenever feasible, and through limited extrapolations of orchestrational conceit this setting seeks to provide a compromise which is as faithful to the original score as possible while still exploring the myriad potential and color of the full wind band medium.
Additionally, this piece is intended for future public consumption. As a work of singular quality given its origin and genre, transcribing the *Siegfried Idyll* for winds allows wind players to engage with various characteristics of Wagnerian music in a setting created specifically for non-dramatic performance – a true rarity in his catalog of works. The transcription is, at the time of writing, being optioned to sheet music publishers in order to bring Wagner’s unique voice into the band world. Further, it calls into question what other ‘hidden gems’ buried in the repertoires of the great masters which might find new light in performance halls of wind bands around the world.

Wagner’s music remains a cornerstone of Western Art music. His principles of composition continue to be used in modern orchestration, from his rich chromaticism to his development of leitmotif. Wagnerian style helped to codify methodologies in scoring for media in ways which are still used today. Wind bands in search of new ways to present works by early masters continue to turn to new arrangements still today, as is evidenced by recent settings of works by Tchaikovsky, Debussy, and even Mozart. It is hoped that this remarkable work by Wagner may be used to further the understanding of his life and music in the wind band world through this transcription.
Bibliography


Appendix A – Score of transcription

Siegfried Idyll

Richard Wagner
Transcribed by Brian E. Hodge

©2019 Brian E. Hodge
Es war dein obermächtig hehret Wille,
Der seinen Weit die Weisenstimmeg hod,
Von Dir gewehlt zu wehdertüchtig Stelle,
Wo aus es wuch und kräftig uns erstand,
Die Hellenwelt uns ruchend zum Idylle,
Uraltes Fern zu trautem Heimatland.
Erschall ein Ruf da froh in meine Wiese:
"Ein Sohn ist der" — der müste Siegfried heißen.

Für ihn und dich durft ich in Tümen danken. —
Wie galt es Liebenden heldre Lohn?
Sie hagen wir in untr's heimes Schankten.
Die wilhe Freunde, die hier ward zum Ton.
Die sich uns treu erwiesen ohne Wanken,
So Siegfried bold, wie freundlich uns'rem Sohn,
Mit Dessen Hold sei ihnen jetzt erschlossen,
Was uns als treuend Glück wir soll grossen.
SIEGFRIED - IDYLL.

RICHARD WAGNER.

Ruhig bewegt.

Flöte.
Horn.
Clarinetten in A.
Trompeten in C.
Horn in E.
Fagott.
Violinen.
Bratsche.
Violoncelli.
Contrabasso.

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