

Florida State University Libraries

Electronic Theses, Treatises and Dissertations

The Graduate School

2017

The Piano Trios of Nino Rota and the Art Songs of Franco Alfano on Poetry of Rabindranath Tagore

Francesco Binda



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF MUSIC

THE PIANO TRIOS OF NINO ROTA
AND THE ART SONGS OF FRANCO ALFANO
ON POETRY OF RABINDRANATH TAGORE

By
FRANCESCO BINDA

A Treatise submitted to the
College of Music
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Music

2017

Francesco Binda defended this treatise on February 26, 2017.

The members of the supervisory committee were:

Timothy Hoekman

Professor Directing Treatise

André Thomas

University Representative

Iain Quinn

Committee Member

Valerie Trujillo

Committee Member

The Graduate School has verified and approved the above-named committee members, and certifies that the treatise has been approved in accordance with university requirements.

This treatise is dedicated to my father, Germano Binda, whose sacrifices in life gave me the opportunity to undertake the study of piano. The love he gave to his family has been an indelible example for my life. His passion for opera and for the arts was the spark that introduced me to music. I hope and pray that the achievement of this honorable degree may make him proud of my accomplishment.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to my major professor, Dr. Timothy Hoekman, who guided me throughout this exceptional journey. His patience, understanding, professionalism, and expertise were indispensable elements toward the accomplishment of this degree.

Special thanks go to the other members of my committee: Dr. André Thomas, Dr. Iain Quinn, Professor Valerie Trujillo. Their teachings and advice during each step of my study enhanced my critical thinking and broadened my musical horizons.

I dearly thank both sides of my family for their unceasing support. I am particularly appreciative of my mother-in-law, Marsha Feola, who dedicated a significant amount of her time surveying my treatise. I would like to especially thank my wife, Lauren Feola, whose love, understanding, and help with this project were crucial in every moment of my progress. Additionally, I would like to thank our three-year-old son, Mattia Binda, because every day he reminds me of the joy of life.

I am grateful to all of my colleagues and friends who shared with me joyful and stressful moments during the course of this program.

Ultimately, I thank God, from whom all things come. He gave me the possibility, the strength, and the perseverance to embrace my musical journey and to successfully reach its completion.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES	vi
ABSTRACT	viii
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE: NINO ROTA	2
Biographical information	2
Compositions and musical style	6
CHAPTER TWO: TRIOS WITH PIANO	9
Trio for Flute, Violin, and Piano (1958)	9
The trios in relation to Rota's other chamber music	13
Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano (1973)	14
CHAPTER THREE: FRANCO ALFANO	21
Biographical information	21
Compositions and musical style	25
CHAPTER FOUR: RABINDRANATH TAGORE	29
Biographical information	29
CHAPTER FIVE: ART SONGS ON TAGORE'S POETRY	32
<i>Tre poemi di Rabindranath Tagore</i>	32
<i>Mamma, il giovane Principe</i>	32
<i>Sei liriche di autori diversi</i>	36
<i>Non partire, amor mio</i>	36
<i>Tre liriche di Tagore</i>	39
<i>Giorno per giorno</i>	40
<i>Nuove liriche tagoriane</i>	43
<i>Corro come il cervo muschiato</i>	44
<i>Sette liriche</i>	47
<i>Non so</i>	47
<i>Cinque nuove liriche tagoriane</i>	50
<i>Si, lo so</i>	50
CONCLUSION	54
BIBLIOGRAPHY	55
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH	58

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 1.1: Nino Rota	2
Fig. 1.2: Map of Italy with the cities where Nino Rota lived	3
Fig. 1.3: Lifetime of Nino Rota's contemporaries	5
Fig. 1.4: Historical events around Nino Rota's life	6
Fig. 2.1: Nino Rota, Trio for Flute, Violin, and Piano, 1 st mvt., piano part, mm. 1-2	9
Fig. 2.2: Nino Rota, Trio for Flute, Violin, and Piano, 1 st mvt., flute part, mm. 10-15	10
Fig. 2.3: Nino Rota, Trio for Flute, Violin, and Piano, 1 st mvt., piano part, mm. 48-52.....	10
Fig. 2.4: Nino Rota, Trio for Flute, Violin, and Piano, 1 st mvt., flute and violin parts, mm. 149-151	10
Fig. 2.5: Nino Rota, Trio for Flute, Violin, and Piano, 2 nd mvt., flute part, mm. 1-9	11
Fig. 2.6: Nino Rota, Trio for Flute, Violin, and Piano, 2 nd mvt., flute and violin parts, mm. 34-38	11
Fig. 2.7: Nino Rota, Trio for Flute, Violin, and Piano, 2 nd mvt., mm. 71-75	12
Fig. 2.8: Nino Rota, Trio for Flute, Violin, and Piano, 3 rd mvt., mm. 19-24	13
Fig. 2.9: Nino Rota's chamber music output	13
Fig. 2.10: Nino Rota, Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, 1 st mvt., cello and piano parts, mm. 1-20	15
Fig. 2.11: Nino Rota, Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, 1 st mvt., piano part, right hand, mm. 46-66	15
Fig. 2.12: Nino Rota, Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, 1 st mvt., clarinet part, mm. 88-94 ..	16
Fig. 2.13: Nino Rota, Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, 1 st mvt., cello part, mm. 144-153 ..	16
Fig. 2.14: Nino Rota, Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, 2 nd mvt., clarinet part, mm. 1-9	17
Fig. 2.15: Nino Rota, Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, 2 nd mvt., cello part, mm. 38-45	18
Fig. 2.16: Nino Rota, Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, 3 rd mvt., clarinet part, mm. 1-18 ...	18

Fig. 2.17: Nino Rota, Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, 3 rd mvt., cello part, mm. 19-32	19
Fig. 2.18: Nino Rota, Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, 3 rd mvt., piano part, right hand, mm. 58-66	19
Fig. 2.19: Nino Rota, Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, 3 rd mvt., cello part, mm. 110-123 ...	20
Fig. 2.20: Nino Rota, Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, 3 rd mvt., clarinet part, mm. 148-153..	20
Fig. 2.21: Nino Rota at the piano	20
Fig. 3.1: Franco Alfano	21
Fig. 3.2: Lifetime of Franco Alfano's contemporaries	23
Fig. 3.3: Map of Italy with the cities where Franco Alfano lived	25
Fig. 3.4: Franco Alfano's Tagore songs output	27
Fig. 4.1: Rabindranath Tagore	30
Fig. 5.1: Franco Alfano, <i>Mamma, il giovane Principe</i> , mm. 1-2	34
Fig. 5.2: Franco Alfano, <i>Mamma, il giovane Principe</i> , mm. 20-21	35
Fig. 5.3: Franco Alfano, <i>Mamma, il giovane Principe</i> , mm. 32-33	35
Fig. 5.4: Franco Alfano, <i>Mamma, il giovane Principe</i> , mm. 59-60	35
Fig. 5.5: Franco Alfano, <i>Non partire, amor mio</i> , mm. 1-3	38
Fig. 5.6: Franco Alfano, <i>Non partire, amor mio</i> , mm. 39-42	39
Fig. 5.7: Franco Alfano, <i>Giorno per giorno</i> , mm. 36-40	42
Fig. 5.8: Franco Alfano, <i>Giorno per giorno</i> , mm. 84-87	43
Fig. 5.9: Franco Alfano, <i>Corro come il cervo muschiato</i> , mm. 39-48	46
Fig. 5.10: Franco Alfano, <i>Non so</i> , mm. 5-6	49
Fig. 5.11: Franco Alfano, <i>Non so</i> , mm. 33-34	50
Fig. 5.12: Franco Alfano, <i>Sì, lo so</i> , mm. 20-27	52
Fig. 5.13: Franco Alfano, on the left; Rabindranath Tagore, on the right	53

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the first part of this treatise is to provide information about the Italian composer Nino Rota and a summary of his musical output. In particular, the focus of this study regards his two piano trios. Both works are analyzed and compared to offer a taste of his musical qualities and compositional abilities.

Nino Rota is virtually unrecognized in Italy, and almost unknown outside his home country; consequently, his music is underperformed, despite its aesthetically pleasing qualities. The research is based upon material in the English language and my personal translation of other resources in Italian. The hope is that this document will generate interest in considering the music of a talented composer. The first chapter of this section provides a summary of Rota's life and outlines his musical output and general musical characteristics. The second chapter contains the analysis and comparison of the two piano trios.

The purpose of the second part of the treatise is to present biographical information about the Italian composer Franco Alfano and a summary of his musical characteristics. Additionally, information regarding the life of the Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore is provided. In particular, this research focuses on Alfano's art songs written on poetry by Tagore.

Franco Alfano gained fame as a composer of opera and was recognized in Italy as well as abroad. Beyond that particular genre, he succeeded with several orchestral and instrumental works and art songs. Among the songs, those composed on Tagore's poetry are of particular interest and it is possible to occasionally find them performed on recital programs. The Indian poet was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913 for the publication in English of some of his poems. I am hopeful that this study will provide relevance in examining the compositions of Franco Alfano. Chapter Three of this treatise consists of a description of Alfano's life, his compositions, and his musical characteristics. Chapter Four informs about Tagore's life and his poetry in English. Chapter Five addresses Alfano's songs on Tagore's texts and analyzes a selection of them.

The final section of the treatise consists of a general conclusion and provides a bibliography for those who would like to further explore the life and works of Nino Rota, Franco Alfano, and Rabindranath Tagore.

INTRODUCTION

The generation of Italian composers born between the end of 1800 and the beginning of 1900 offers a compelling musical output. Their music gradually shifted from opera, that dominated the 19th century, to more instrumental music that offers innovative characteristics. A large number of Italian compositions of the 20th century are not regularly performed or are not known at all. The composer's names are often unknown as well.

Since I was born and raised in Italy, I wanted to take the opportunity to explore some of this twentieth-century Italian music, taking it as material for my treatise. After becoming interested in Nino Rota and Franco Alfano, I centered and deepened my attention on Rota's two piano trios and on Alfano's Tagore's songs.

Nino Rota is virtually unrecognized in Italy, and almost unknown outside his home country; consequently, his music is underperformed, despite its aesthetically pleasing qualities. This research provides a summary of Rota's life and outlines his musical output and general musical characteristics and contains an analysis and comparison of the two piano trios.

Franco Alfano gained fame as a composer of opera and was recognized in Italy as well as abroad. Beyond that particular genre, he succeeded with several orchestral and instrumental works and art songs. Among the songs, those composed on Tagore's poetry are of particular interest and it is possible to occasionally find them performed on recital programs. The Indian poet was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913 for the publication in English of some of his poems. The treatise informs about the lives of the composer and the poet, provides a summary of Alfano's musical characteristics, and addresses and analyzes his songs on Tagore's texts.

The purpose of this treatise is to give light to two of the most prominent composers and figures of Italian music in the 20th century. Rota and Alfano's works are not consistently performed and it is often difficult to find published edition of their scores. I believe their music to be remarkable, pleasing, and rich in individuality. I hope, consequently, that this document will generate a genuine interest in rediscovering their musical output.

CHAPTER ONE

NINO ROTA

Biographical information

Giovanni Rota Rinaldi, who adopted the pen name Nino Rota, was born in Milan (see Fig. 1.2) in 1911 into a highly musical family. His maternal grandfather was a composer, his mother a concert pianist, and one of his cousins a singer. He was consequently introduced to music at a very early stage. At the age of four, he started playing the piano, and at the age of eight began composing. His oratorio *L'infanzia di San Giovanni Battista* (*The Childhood of Saint John the Baptist*) was finished in 1923, when he was only twelve years old. The composition was performed for the first time that same year and received great recognition, acclaiming Rota as a child prodigy.¹



Fig. 1.1: Nino Rota
Courtesy of Wikipedia, accessed December 3, 2016

1. Richard Dyer, *Nino Rota: Music, Film, and Feeling* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan on behalf of the British Film Institute, 2010), 21.

To augment Rota's musical formation during his childhood, he and his family frequented numerous concerts and opera performances and also held musical events at their home. During these occasions, several prominent figures of the musical world participated: Giacomo Puccini, Maurice Ravel, Igor Stravinsky, to cite a few.

Late in 1923, at the age of twelve, Nino Rota entered the conservatory in Milan. His teachers included Giacomo Orefice and Ildebrando Pizzetti. From 1926 to 1929, he attended the Accademia Santa Cecilia in Rome (see Fig. 1.2), studying with Alfredo Casella, where he graduated with a diploma in composition.



Fig. 1.2: Map of Italy with the cities where Nino Rota lived
 Courtesy of Google Maps, accessed December 4, 2016

From 1931 to 1932, Rota attended the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, due to influential suggestions by Arturo Toscanini. While there, he studied composition with Rosario Scalero (who was also Samuel Barber and Giancarlo Menotti's teacher)² and conducting with

2. Ruth B. Hilton, "Scalero, Rosario," *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, accessed September 9, 2016, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.lib.fsu.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/A2092701>.

Fritz Reiner. During his American journey, he became friends with Aaron Copland, Samuel Barber, and Giancarlo Menotti and discovered the music of George Gershwin. The value of these personal relationships in the development of his professional style was immeasurable.

On his return to Italy in his early 20s, he concluded his PhD in literature in Milan.³ Afterwards, he focused his attention on composing and produced an extensive list of works. Composing became an integral part of his entire life. He was an extremely gifted musician and writing new musical ideas seemed to be very easy for him. In 1937 he moved and taught in Southern Italy, first at the musical college of Taranto and then at the conservatory of Bari in 1939 (see Fig. 1.2).

The period immediately following World War II was a time in which Rota received the most criticism regarding his compositions.⁴ Post-war European music was strongly guided by a movement derived from the Second Viennese School, which included composers like Schoenberg and Webern. Consequently, Rota's compositions, especially those written for concert halls, were considered old-fashioned. This point of view was reinforced by his focus on film music, criticized by many people as being disconnected from the contemporary music scene.⁵ This, however, did not deter the composer's spirit or creativity, since he continued writing in his own style. From 1950 until 1977 he continued teaching at the conservatory of Bari and became its director. Rota died in Rome in 1979.

There is limited information about Nino Rota's personal life. It is possible to assume that the composer spent most of his lifetime dedicating himself exclusively to music. In addition to his extensive compositional production and his duties as teacher/director of the conservatory, he periodically conducted orchestra concerts and gave piano recitals. After the early death of his father, when Rota was eleven years old, it is said that he became very attached to his mother (although, unusually for an Italian bachelor, he did not live with her).⁶ Although he had many good friends throughout his life, he never married. It appears that music was the love of his life.

3. Martin Anderson, "Rota [Rinaldi], Nino," *The Oxford Companion to Music*. *Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, accessed September 9, 2016, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.lib.fsu.edu/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e5765>.

4. Giordano Montecchi, "Rota, Nino," *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, accessed September 9, 2016, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.lib.fsu.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/23924>.

5. Ibid.

6. Dyer, 32.

The following chart (see Fig. 1.3) gives a visual idea of Nino Rota's life time in comparison with the timeline of some of his contemporary composers, including most of those he met or was friends with (Puccini 1858-1924, Schoenberg 1874-1951, Ravel 1875-1937, Stravinsky 1882-1971, Prokofiev 1891-1953, Gershwin 1898-1937, Copland 1900-1990, Shostakovich 1906-1975, Barber 1910-1981, Rota 1911-1979, Menotti 1911-2007, Britten 1913-1976).

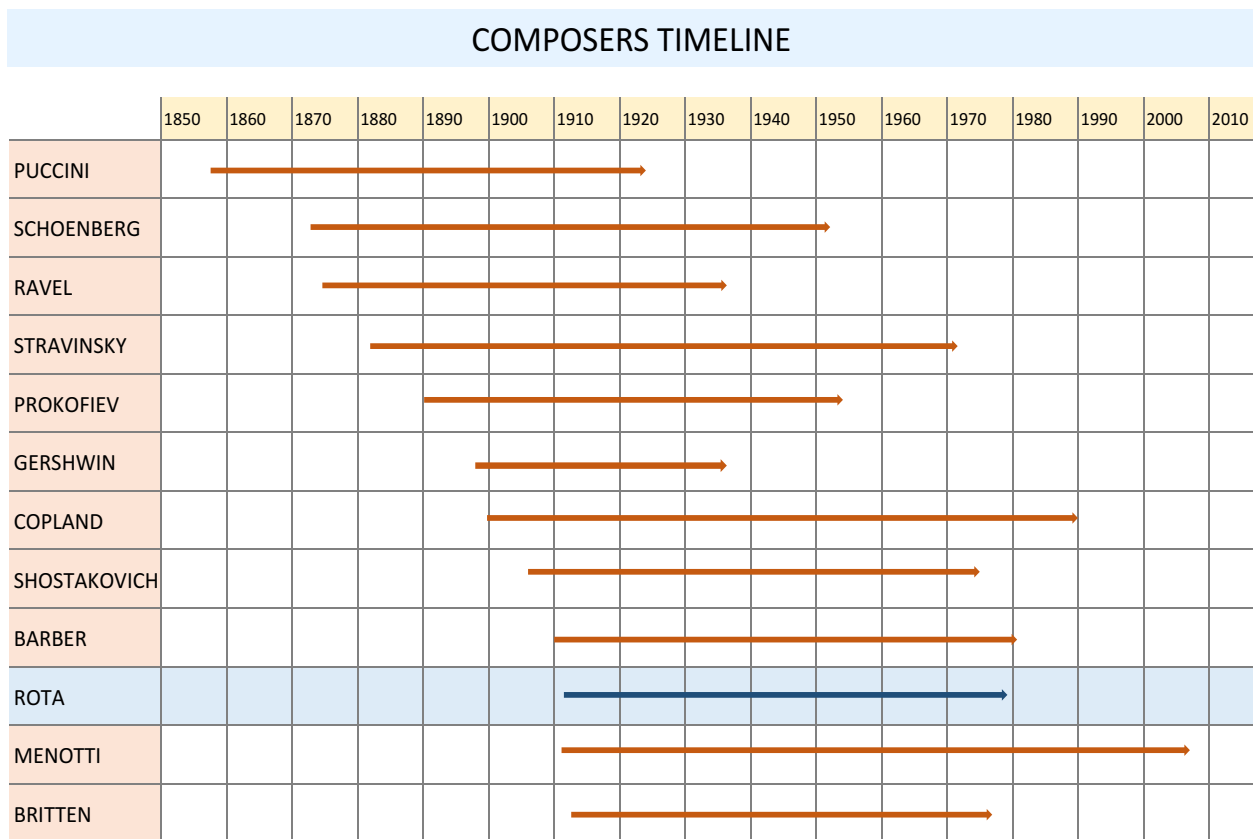


Fig. 1.3: Lifetime of Nino Rota's contemporaries

If, then, we put the chart into a historical context (see Fig. 1.4), we can see when some of the major events or facts fell in their lives (Thomas Edison invented the sound recording in 1877, the Metropolitan Opera House opened in New York in 1883, the London Symphony Orchestra was established in 1904, World War I 1914-1918, George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* was premiered in New York in 1924, World War II 1939-1945, Leonard Bernstein completed *West Side Story* in 1957, the precursor of the internet was created in 1967, Sony introduced the

Walkman, the first portable stereo, in 1978).⁷

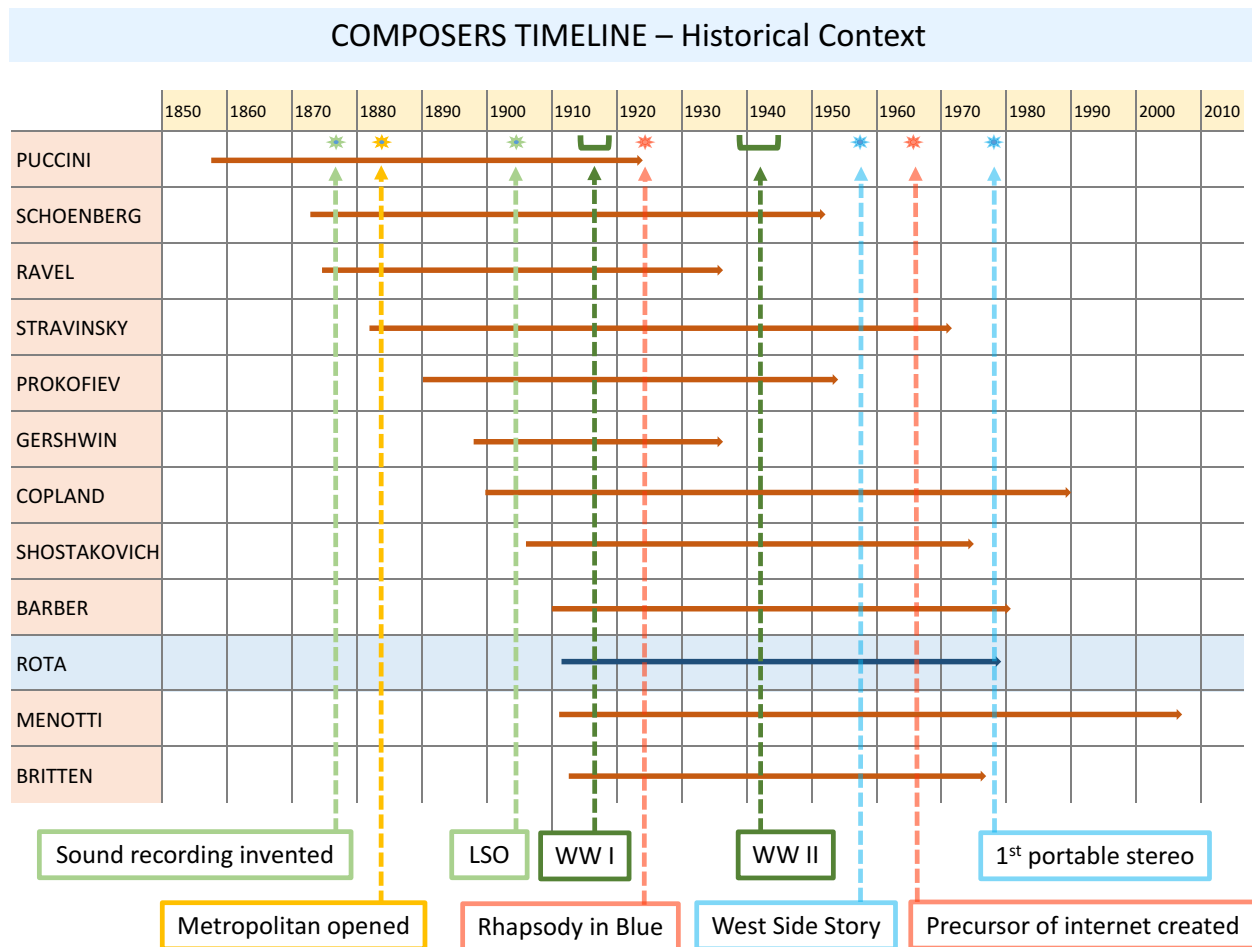


Fig. 1.4: Historical events around Nino Rota's life

Compositions and musical style

The music output of Nino Rota is largely dedicated to music for film. Starting in 1933, he composed soundtracks for 158 films, among which the most famous are *War and Peace* (1956), *La dolce vita* (*The sweet life*, 1960), *Romeo and Juliet* (1968), *The Godfather* (1972), and *The Godfather Part II* (1974). Additionally, he wrote incidental music for 28 plays; six ballets; twelve operas (two of which have never been performed), the most famous being *Il cappello di*

7. "Music Timeline." *Ask the Editors*, at Infoplease, © 2000–2015 Sandbox Networks, Inc., publishing as Infoplease. Accessed October 10, 2016, <http://www.infoplease.com/ipea/A0151192.html>.

paglia di Firenze – The Italian Straw Hat, as titled in English language productions; four symphonies; five oratorios; twelve concertos; and 22 more works for orchestra, six of which include voice or choir. Further, his music includes 22 compositions for choir, five a cappella, eleven with organ, three with piano or organ, one with piano, one with chamber ensemble, one for three female voices; 28 for voice, consisting of 17 with piano, three with organ, two with piano or organ, one with harmonium, four with chamber ensemble; 36 for either duo or chamber ensemble, among them are two string quartets, one quintet, one nonet and the two trios; and 14 for piano solo.⁸

The vast production of Rota's music and its musical quality brought him work mainly in Italy, but also in the USA, the U.K., France, Russia, and Japan.⁹ He composed in a large variety of genres and his style differs from that of most of his contemporaries, being rather traditional with a hint of contemporary flare. Rota's music exemplifies, in fact, a fine authenticity. The Hungarian film composer Miklós Rózsa (1907-1995) once commented on Rota and his music: "In the twentieth century, Nino Rota has been one of the rare composers who remained faithful to themselves and who wrote music entirely based on their convictions. As an Italian, he was a real melodist with no fear of writing inspired melodies in a period in which his contemporaries dedicated themselves to intellectual experiments and unmusical noise. His film music will always remain the best of that genre."¹⁰ The general characteristics of his music, which can be found in both trios, can be summarized as follows:¹¹

- His music is usually written with emphasis on a melody or a motif.
- The melodies are mostly given without preparation passages.
- His melodies are generally "cantabile."
- The music communicates immediately.
- His music always offers pleasing harmonies.
- His works are at times polyphonic and contrapuntal.
- Compositions have a sense of spontaneity.

8. Dyer, 25.

9. Ibid., 20.

10. Pier Marco de Santi, *La Musica di Nino Rota* (Bari, Italy: Editori Laterza, 1983), xi. Translation by Francesco Binda.

11. Dyer, 22-28.

- The music can be sad but never tragic, romantic but not ardent, sentimental but not tear-jerking, energetic but never excessively busy.
- A melody or a theme can be reused and modified in the same work or altered for new compositions, especially in film music. Rota addressed this controversial subject: “I’m absolutely convinced that there is no such thing as plagiarism in music. There is musical material at one’s disposal: if one takes it and makes it one’s own, there is still the gratitude that a new author owes to the old one, but what could be more beautiful between us musicians?”¹²

12. Dyer, 22.

CHAPTER TWO

TRIOS WITH PIANO

Trio for Flute, Violin, and Piano (1958)

The Trio for Flute, Violin, and Piano was written in 1958 and was dedicated to the Klemm-Cervera-Wolfensberger trio.¹³ It is a playful work in C major that easily communicates enjoyable feelings to the audience. The trio is classically structured in three movements: fast, slow, fast. The first movement tempo indication is *Allegro ma non troppo*. The music is centered around the key of C, alternatively major and minor. During the movement, Rota often makes use of bitonality.

One could perceive this movement as being in sonata form, varied from the traditional pattern by reorganization of tonalities and theme structure. The exposition (mm. 1-71) is mainly based on a rhythmic ostinato in the piano, characterized by repeated octaves in the right hand and a chromatic inner line in the left hand, interchanging intervals of minor and major seconds and minor thirds (see fig. 2.1). The lively first theme in C (see Fig. 2.2) presented by the flute (mm. 10-15) nicely contrasts with a quiet and motivic second theme in D-flat (see Fig. 2.3) given by the piano (mm. 48-52).

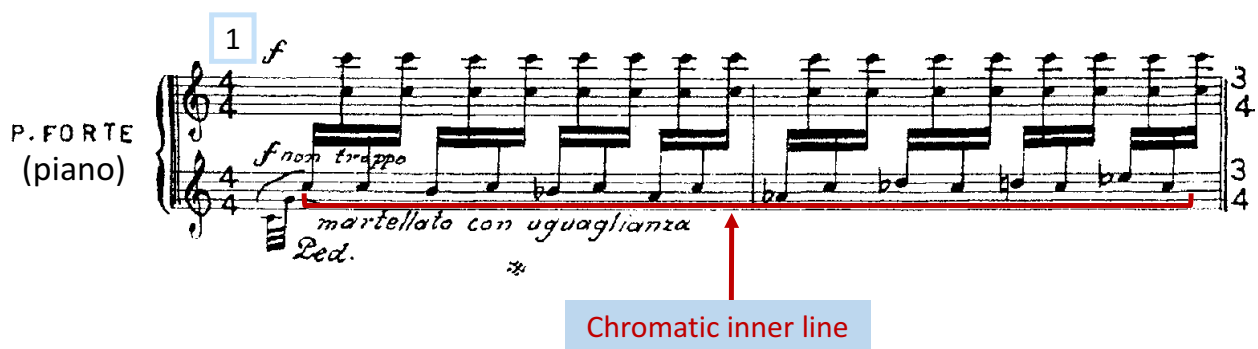


Fig. 2.1: Nino Rota, Trio for Flute, Violin, and Piano, 1st mvt., piano part, mm. 1-2

13. Nino Rota, *Trio per Flauto, Violino e Pianoforte*, Milano, Italy: Casa Ricordi S.r.l., 1958.

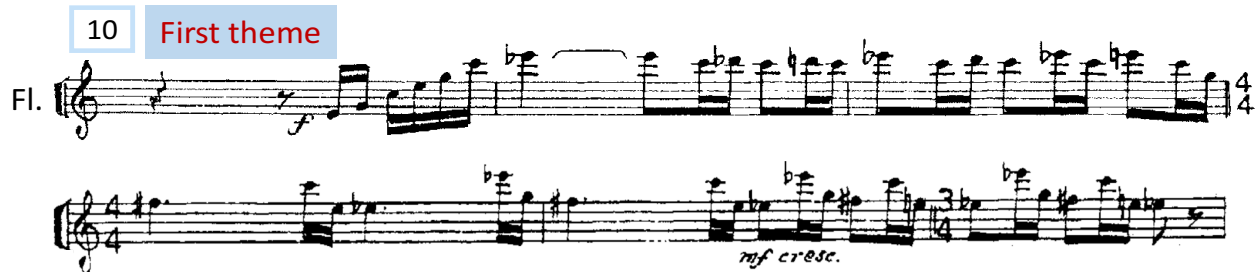


Fig. 2.2: Nino Rota, Trio for Flute, Violin, and Piano, 1st mvt., flute part, mm. 10-15



Fig. 2.3: Nino Rota, Trio for Flute, Violin, and Piano, 1st mvt., piano part, mm. 48-52

Rota recycles and modifies the first and second themes multiple times (see Fig. 2.4) in the development (mm. 72-125), which is centered on the tonalities of C major/minor. A transition (mm. 126-139) brings us to a short recapitulation (mm. 140-165) that presents only varied portions of the two themes together (from m. 149) in a vibrant run until the end of the movement.

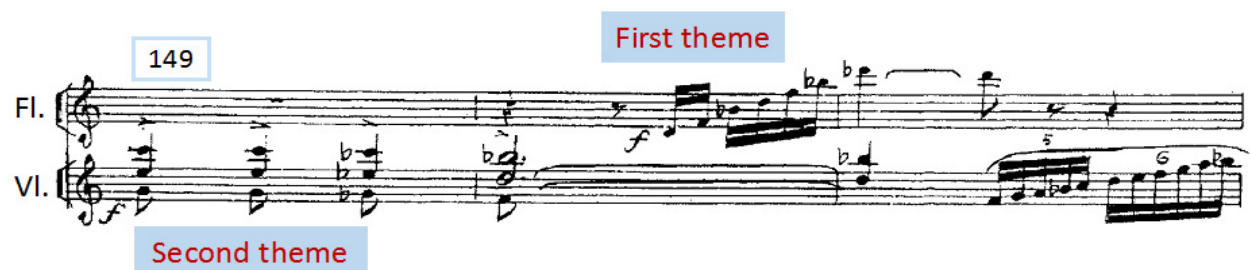


Fig. 2.4: Nino Rota, Trio for Flute, Violin, and Piano, 1st mvt., flute and violin parts, mm. 149-151

The second movement presents introspective harmonies and is marked *Andante sostenuto*. Conceived in F major, the music shifts through approximately five tonalities and uses much chromaticism. The romantic orientation and dream-like quality of the melodic material create an effective contrast between the two faster movements. We can subdivide this movement into three parts, A – B – A'. The opening A section (mm. 1-34) presents a chromatic melody (see Fig. 2.5) as the result of thematic material borrowed from the beginning of the first movement (see Fig. 2.1). Each instrument, in the order of flute, violin, and piano, enters in a canon-like fashion presenting the same theme, which then evolves differently for each instrument.

Sec. A

1 Solo Melody

Fig. 2.5: Nino Rota, Trio for Flute, Violin, and Piano, 2nd mvt., flute part, mm. 1-9

The B section (mm. 34-64) is slightly faster, *Appena più mosso*. Here, Rota creates a dialogue between the flute and violin, alternating variations of a small motif based on a sequence of three chromatic notes (see Fig. 2.6).

Sec. B

Appena più mosso

34

Motif

Fl.

VI.

Motif

Fig. 2.6: Nino Rota, Trio for Flute, Violin, and Piano, 2nd mvt., flute and violin parts, mm. 34-38

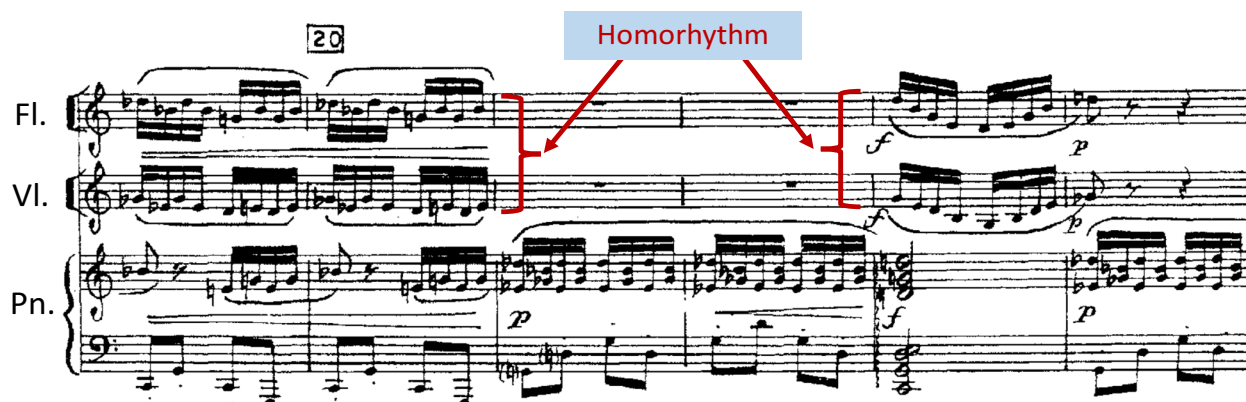


Fig. 2.8: Nino Rota, Trio for Flute, Violin, and Piano, 3rd mvt., mm. 19-24

The trios in relation to Rota's other chamber music

The chronological spaces between Rota's six ensemble works are relatively large, with the exception of the first trio and primary drawing of the nonet (see Fig. 2.9). The gap between the two trios alone is 15 years. If we consider Rota's vast number of compositions, it is safe to assume that the chamber ensembles were not his first priority.

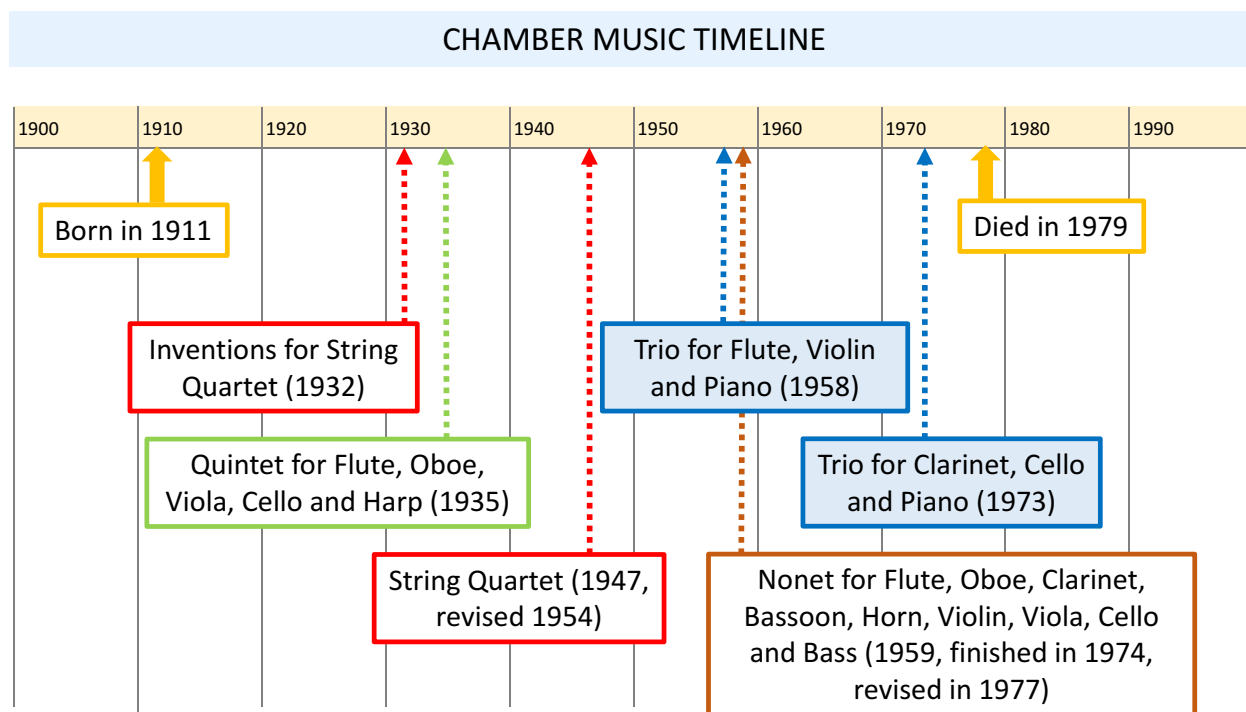


Fig. 2.9: Nino Rota's chamber music output

After looking at the instrumentation of Rota's chamber works (see Fig. 2.9), one can notice that aside from the two string quartets with a traditional formation of violin I, violin II, viola, and cello, the other ensembles use non-traditional groupings of instruments. The quintet consists of flute, oboe, viola, cello, and harp. The nonet's group includes flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn, violin, viola, cello, and bass, which reminds me of an orchestra reduced to the minimum. In my opinion, Nino Rota was deliberately exploring diverse colors and timbres while writing the four non-traditional compositions. The different instrumentation of the two trios is consistent with the composer's musical ideas.

The question to ask here is: are the two trios similar or different, despite the instrumentation? As can be seen in the analysis of the second trio, several factors are comparable between the two trios; other elements are different.

Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano (1973)

This composition was written in 1973. As was the case for the previous trio, it has a lively character and builds its texture by mixing rhythmic excitement with moments of romantic lyricism. The trio also has a direct connection with the listener and presents a classical structure of three movements: fast, slow, fast.

The first movement, marked *Allegro (quasi in 1)*, enharmonically alternates between C minor and major at the beginning. Rota's chromatic design of the movement is layered, resulting in unsettled tonalities; however, it does not sound unpleasantly dissonant. As was the case in the first movement of his earlier trio, one notices that the motion of the music is frequently guided by a repetitive rhythmic component. Furthermore, the first melody (mm. 3-20), played by the cello and later by the clarinet, is derived from the chromatic opening measures of the piano part (see Fig. 2.10), which was also Rota's procedure in the first trio.

A second melody (mm. 46-66) is presented on the top line of the right hand of the piano (see Fig. 2.11). Later, a third melody (mm. 88-94) is introduced by the clarinet (see Fig. 2.12). The first large section of this movement consists of these three melodies. The entire section is repeated, due to the repeat sign in m 108. At this point, Rota structurally deviates from a through-composed form, since the first part is repeated; however, he does not give us a sonata form either. In fact, in place of an expected developmental section, he introduces a fourth melody

1

Melody 1

Violoncello

p

sim.

p staccatissimo

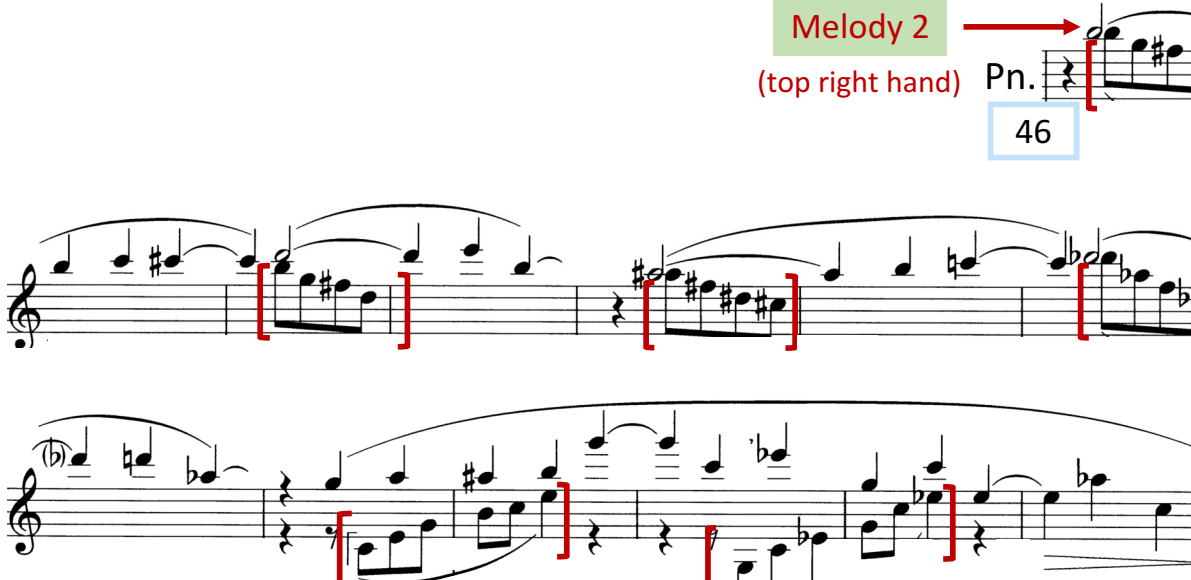
sim.

cresc.

f

Allegro (quasi in 1)

Melody 2 (top right hand) Pn. 46



15



Fig. 1.15 – continued

88

Melody 3

Cl.

Fig. 2.12: Nino Rota, Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, 1st mvt., clarinet part, mm. 88-94

The new melody (see Fig. 2.13) is later repeated and combined with earlier musical material by the clarinet and then the piano. Following that, excerpts of the first three melodies are alternatively presented by the clarinet and the cello. This compositional technique contributes

Melody 4

Vc.

144

Fig. 2.13: Nino Rota, Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, 1st mvt., cello part, mm. 144-153

to a flowing and pleasant pace of the music. Furthermore, the instruments alternate and exchange moments of rhythmic impulse with moments of expressive lyricism. The first movement concludes with a restatement of the first melody by the piano.

The second movement, *Andante*, is in E minor and is the most tonally definite among all movements of the trios. Rota styled the middle movement of his trios identically: writing the music as a calm, lyrical contrast to the declamatory first and third movements. Another similarity is in the ternary structure of the movement: A – B – A'. In this trio, the A section (mm. 1-38) contains a beautiful, melancholic melody (see Fig. 2.14), presented first by the clarinet and then by the cello. In this entire section the piano is only responsible for the harmonic musical landscape and consists of dotted half notes in the left hand and an eighth-note motion in the right.

Sec. A

Theme 1

Fig. 2.14: Nino Rota, Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, 2nd mvt., clarinet part, mm. 1-9

A new theme (see Fig. 2.15) is introduced by the cello in the B section (mm. 39-68) and reestablished later by the clarinet. Once again, however, the piano functions as harmonic soundscape, presenting in this case a different texture made of sixteenth-note motion. A small thematic transition (mm. 69-78) brings the music to A' (mm. 79-96), where the first melody is now played in octaves by clarinet and cello. The piano continues to be the harmonic base for this delightful movement, this time with eighth-note triplets.

Sec. B

Theme 2

Vc. Tranquillo e uguale 39 *pp*

Fig. 2.15: Nino Rota, Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, 2nd mvt., cello part, mm. 38-45

The last movement tempo marking is *Allegriissimo*. Written around the key of G major, it moves through chromaticism and multiple tonalities. As in the other trio, the rhythmic component is responsible for the vitality of the movement. The big difference with the former work is that here there are several melodic themes. The main theme (mm. 1-18) is presented at the beginning by the clarinet (see Fig. 2.16) and recurs several times, alternating among all three instruments.

Theme 1, main

Cl. 1 *mp*

Fig. 2.16: Nino Rota, Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, 3rd mvt., clarinet part, mm. 1-18

The multiple returns of the main theme make it possible to identify the structure of this movement as a sort of rondo form. Four other themes and their variations alternate with the

main one; some have a lyrical and somewhat melancholic vein to create variety. Theme 2 (mm. 19-32) originates from the same four measures of theme 1, played an octave lower (see Fig. 2.17). Theme 3 (mm. 58-66) is characterized by a descending chromatic sequence of a two-measure motif (see Fig. 2.18); theme 4 (mm. 110-123) has a lyrical line, mainly made of half notes tied over the bar line (see Fig. 2.19); theme 5 (mm. 148-155) combines an ascending chromatic scale with ascending jumps of a ninth (see Fig. 2.20). All of these elements are smartly put together to create a continuous flow. The culmination of the movement is reached with an even faster coda, which ends the composition brilliantly.

Theme 2

19

Vc.

Fig. 2.17: Nino Rota, Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, 3rd mvt., cello part, mm. 19-32

Theme 3
(right hand)

58

Pn.

Fig. 2.18: Nino Rota, Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, 3rd mvt., piano part, right hand, mm. 58-66

Theme 4

110 *mp*

Vc.

Fig. 2.19: Nino Rota, Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, 3rd mvt., cello part, mm. 110-123

Theme 5

148 *f*

Cl.

Fig. 2.20: Nino Rota, Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, 3rd mvt., clarinet part, mm. 148-153



Fig. 2.21: Nino Rota at the piano
Courtesy of WPCLipart, accessed January 10, 2017

CHAPTER THREE

FRANCO ALFANO

Biographical information

Francesco Alfano was born in Posillipo, a residential quarter of Naples, on the Mediterranean Sea. According to his birth certificate, the year of his birth is 1875; however, he maintained that he was born in 1876.¹⁴ The first of six brothers and one sister, Francesco was the son of Vincenzo Alfano and the French-born Francesca Fourcade, who were renowned silver engravers.¹⁵ Francesco never used his birth name. His mother and some family friends used to call him Franck. Often he would sign his name as Franko and while in Germany he referred to himself as Frank. Later, he consistently used Franco and it remained that way for the rest of his life.¹⁶



Fig. 3.1: Franco Alfano
Courtesy of Wikipedia, accessed January 20, 2017

14. Konrad Dryden, *Franco Alfano: Transcending Turandot* (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2010), 1.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid., 6.

Alfano was motivated to learn the piano at a young age when his paternal aunt began living with the family. She had some pianistic ability and began giving him lessons, but she soon realized the necessity to locate a more qualified teacher. It was then that Alfano started studying privately with Alessandro Longo, Italian pianist and composer, who compiled the sonatas of Domenico Scarlatti in the eleven volumes that are still used today.¹⁷

While studying the piano, Alfano attended the Istituto fisico-matematico (Institute of physics and mathematics). He remarked: "Numbers, drawing attract me more than the classics."¹⁸ A failing grade convinced Alfano to leave school and fully dedicate his time to music. He prepared himself to enter the Conservatorio di San Pietro a Majella (Naples Conservatory) and obtained admission on December 1, 1891, when he was sixteen years old. There he studied harmony with Camillo de Nardis and counterpoint with Paolo Serrao, who had also taught Longo, an alumnus of the Naples Conservatory.¹⁹ When he was close to completing his degree, Alfano decided to leave the country and finish his studies abroad. In 1895 he moved to Germany, attending the Leipzig Conservatory; there he studied violin with Hans Sitt²⁰ and finished his studies in composition under the supervision of Salomon Jadassohn,²¹ whose students (see Fig. 3.2) included Ferruccio Busoni (1866-1924), George Chadwick (1854-1931), Frederick Delius (1862-1934), Edvard Grieg (1843-1907), Sigfrid Karg-Elert (1877-1933), and Felix Weingartner (1863-1942).²² The discipline at the Leipzig Conservatory contributed greatly toward making Alfano a formidable contrapuntist and a master of form.²³

Alfano moved to Berlin in 1896 and attempted a career as a pianist, but did not fully commit himself. Instead he began composing his first operas: *Miranda* and *La fonte di Enschrir*.

17. Carolyn Gianturco, "Longo, Alessandro," *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, accessed December 3, 2016, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.lib.fsu.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/16953>.

18. Andre della Corte, *Ritratto di Franco Alfano* (Torino, Italy: G. B. Paravia & C., 1935), 4.

19. Gianturco.

20. Alberto Pironti, "Alfano, Franco," *Treccani. Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani – Volume 2 (1960)*, accessed December 16, 2016, [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/franco-alfano_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/franco-alfano_(Dizionario-Biografico)/).

21. Ruth C. Lakeway, White, Robert C. Jr., *Italian Art Song* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1989), 23.

22. Janna Saslaw, "Jadassohn, Salomon," *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, accessed January 24, 2017, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.lib.fsu.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/14087>.

23. Guido M. Gatti; Theodore Baker, translation, "Franco Alfano," *Musical Quarterly* 9, no. 4 (October 1923): 559.

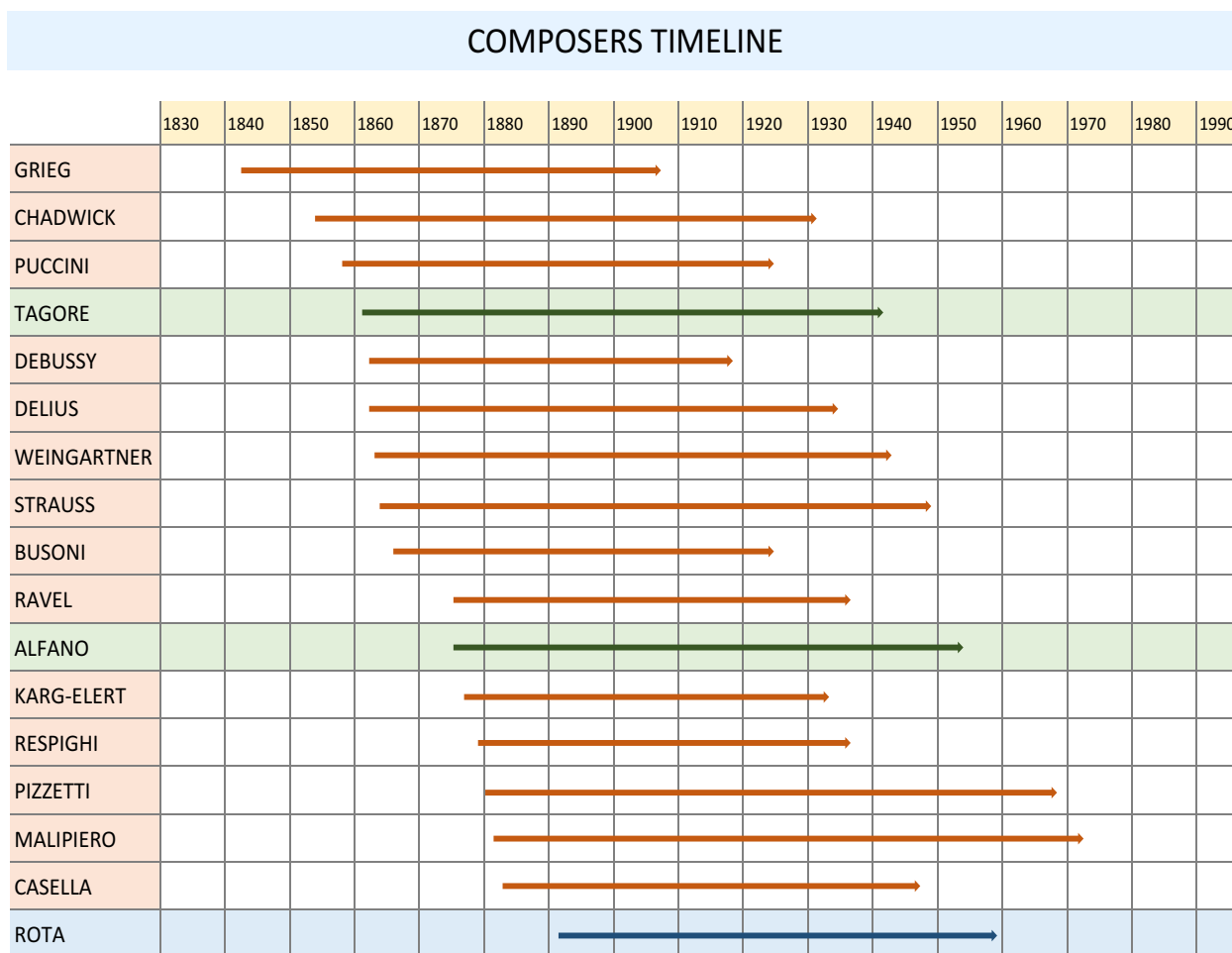


Fig. 3.2: Lifetime of Franco Alfano's contemporaries

Neither was ever published, but the second one was performed once in Breslau, Germany (modern day Wrocław, Poland), in 1898.²⁴ During the summer of 1899, Alfano became a Parisian. His sole source of income was from the publication of his works. Particularly, Alfano composed two successful ballets: *Napoli*, which was repeated 160 times, and *Lorenza*, whose main performer was Cléo de Mérode,²⁵ an icon of the French world of the Belle Époque.²⁶ He also composed *Risurrezione*, an opera that definitely launched his career as a composer to be

24. Lakeway and White, 23.

25. Pironti.

26. "De Mérode, Cléo," *The Red List*, accessed January 3, 2017, <http://theredlist.com/wiki-2-24-525-770-925-view-1900s-1-profile-cleo-de-merode.html>.

recognized in Italy and also abroad.²⁷ Since its first performance in 1904, this opera reached 1,000 performances by 1951.²⁸ Although he resided in Paris until 1905, Alfano still travelled to Germany, Russia and Poland,²⁹ with the desire to explore and know the music and the culture of other countries.³⁰

After his residency in Paris, Alfano returned to Italy, settling in Milan, and then moved to San Remo in 1914 (see Fig. 3.3). These years, 1905 to 1915, are characterized by his self-commitment to refining his musical qualities.³¹ Notable compositions of this period are *Suite romantica* (Romantic Suite) of 1909, *Prima Sinfonia* (First Symphony) of 1910, and the opera *L'ombra di Don Giovanni* (The Shadow of Don Juan) of 1913, which was highly acclaimed because of the quality of its orchestration. From 1916 until 1923 Alfano taught composition at the Liceo Musicale of Bologna and was also appointed its director in 1918. While in Bologna, Alfano composed *La leggenda di Sakùntala*, whose importance was equivalent to *Risurrezione*, although it was musically less conformist.³² Further, upon the recommendation of Arturo Toscanini, one of the most acclaimed conductors at the turn of the twentieth century, Alfano was commissioned to finish *Turandot*, an opera left unfinished by Puccini because of his death in 1925. Alfano took the commitment and wrote an effective ending, “one that retains Puccini’s style and intention.”³³

From 1923 to 1939 Alfano was director and professor of composition at the Liceo Musicale in Turin (see Fig. 3.3). Another opera of notable success was written during this time: *Cyrano de Bergerac*. Alfano moved to southern Italy and worked as superintendent for the Teatro Massimo in Palermo from 1940 to 1942. Later he spent several months as professor of operatic studies at the Conservatory Santa Cecilia in Rome.³⁴ From 1947 to 1950 he took the

27. Gatti, 559.

28. John C.G. Waterhouse, et al., "Alfano, Franco," *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, accessed January 25, 2017, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/00547>.

29. Pironti.

30. Gatti, 559.

31. Pironti.

32. John C.G. Waterhouse, et al.

33. Lakeway and White, 23.

34. John C.G. Waterhouse, et al.

position of Direttore Musicale (Musical Director) of the Liceo Musicale Rossini in Pesaro.³⁵
 Shortly thereafter, in 1954, Alfano died in San Remo.



Fig. 3.3: Map of Italy with the cities where Franco Alfano lived
 Courtesy of Google Maps, accessed December 4, 2016

Compositions and musical style

Alfano's principal interest of composition was instrumental music, of which he wrote several works:³⁶ four ballets; one symphonic suite; one symphonic poem; three symphonies; two intermezzi for strings; a divertimento for chamber orchestra and piano obbligato; two string quartets; one quintet; one concerto for violin, cello, and piano; one sonata for violin and piano; one sonata for cello and piano; one work for chorus and orchestra. Notable among this group for their textural creativity are the first symphony, the sonata for violin and piano, and the sonata for

35. Pironti.

36. Lakeway and White, 24.

cello and piano, the latter considered his instrumental masterpiece.³⁷ Besides these works, Alfano wrote a few small pieces for piano solo.

Although a large portion of Alfano's compositional output consisted of instrumental music, he began his career as an opera composer. He wrote twelve of them, all successful.³⁸ His greatest contribution to the tradition of Italian opera lies in the attention he gave to the orchestra. Feeling concerned about the inadequacies of Italian music at the turn of the century, Alfano applied symphonic principles to his operatic scores: "all instruments were given lyrical contrapuntal lines equal to the vocal lines."³⁹ Regarding vocal music, he meticulously structured the vocal line so that every word would receive the proper verbal accent. He accomplished this feat with careful attention to the rhythm of the texts, as well as by using expression markings and tempo changes. Alfano's attention to the lyrics was so rigorous that he "did away with all ornamentation that did not come from a natural source of expression, and virtually nothing is left to the discretion of the performer."⁴⁰

Another significant group of Alfano's composition consists of art songs. He chose poetry of Bona, Calantoni, Lipparini, De Lupis, Meano, Pastonchi, L'Orsini, Sappho, one anonymous ancient poet, and the Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore, whose poetry in Italian translation was used in nearly half of Alfano's songs.⁴¹ Four more songs are vocalises with no words. Between a period of approximately 1915 to 1935, many composers, both male and female, set Tagore's poetry to music. After 1935, however, interest in Tagore's poetry progressively diminished.⁴² Franco Alfano was, instead, one of the few that continued utilizing Tagore's melodic poetry throughout his career, composing nineteen art songs spanning from 1918 to 1947 (see Fig. 3.4). A selection of these songs and their musical analysis is presented in chapter three, and it includes *Mamma, il giovane Principe*; *Non partire, amor mio*; *Giorno per giorno*; *Corro come il cervo muschiato*; *Non so*; *Sì, lo so*.

37. John C.G. Waterhouse, et al.

38. Lakeway and White, 24.

39. Lakeway and White, 24.

40. Ibid.

41. Lakeway and White, 25.

42. Carlo Coppola, "Rabindranath Tagore and the Western Composers: A Preliminary Essay," *Journal of South Asian Literature* 19, no. 2, (Summer, Fall 1984): 43, accessed December 27, 2016, <http://www.jstore.org/stable/40872678>.

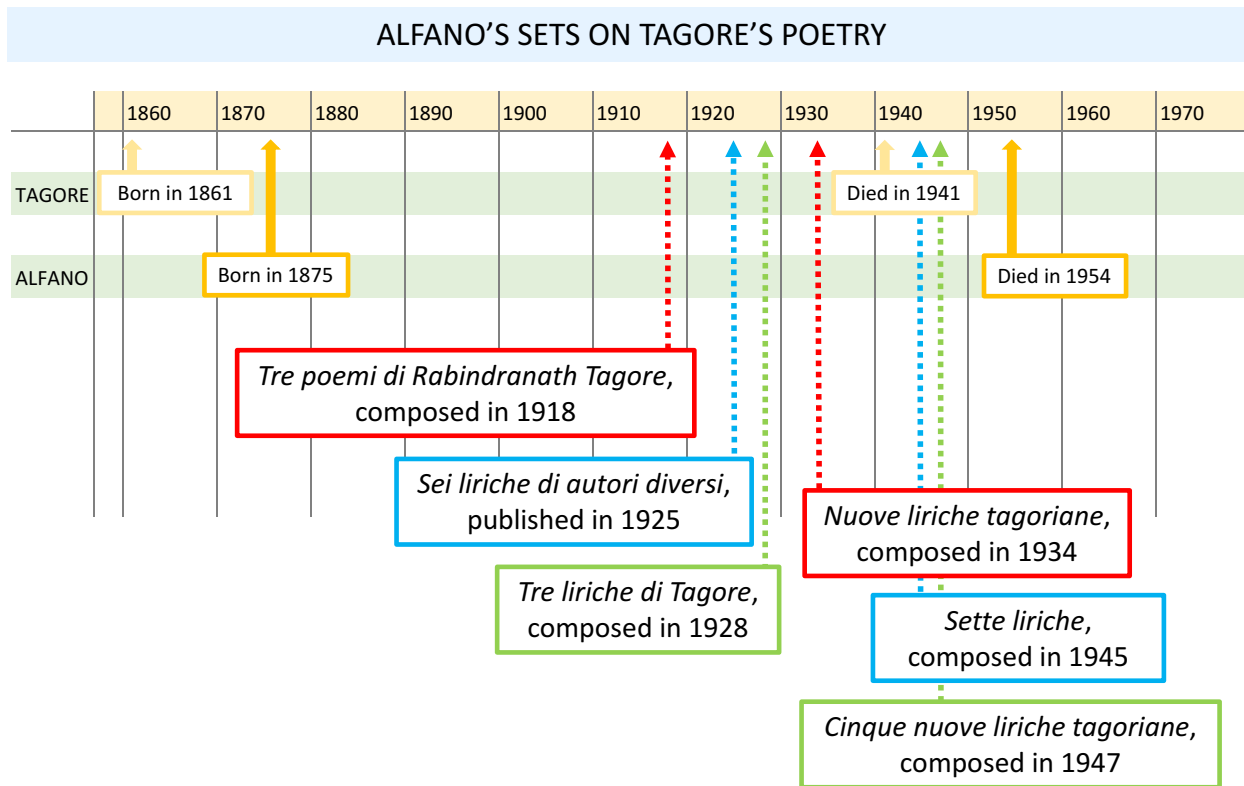


Fig. 3.4: Franco Alfano's Tagore songs output

From his first compositions, Franco Alfano's musical characteristics can be associated with those of French and Russian opera composers of the nineteenth century. With *Risurrezione*, Alfano's style becomes correlated with Italian *verismo*, without its extremes.⁴³ Central in Alfano's writing is the concept of what he called *dramma musicale "cantato"*⁴⁴ (sung musical drama), in which the vocal line stands independently from the accompaniment. Around the 1920s, Alfano's musical orientation began to exhibit a more mature, complex design, similar to the works of Claude Debussy (1862-1918) and Richard Strauss (1864-1949).⁴⁵ After this period, Alfano gradually reverted to a more traditional musical approach, showing signs of neo-classicism.⁴⁶ In his last compositional period, he favored a musical language closer to that of Ravel (1875-1937),

43. Pironti.

44. Ibid.

45. John C.G. Waterhouse, et al.

46. Ibid.

somewhat rescinding the Debussian elements that shaped his compositional techniques earlier in his career.⁴⁷

The main characteristics of Alfano's music can be summarized as follows:⁴⁸

- His music is greatly influenced by that of Debussy.⁴⁹
- His early compositions relate to Italian *verismo*.
- His works contain an Italian lyrical impulse.
- When dealing with a text, Alfano scrupulously follows the verbal accents.
- Almost every measure of his music contains expression indications.
- Alfano often uses dissonances without resolution and polytonal chords.
- His works present patterns of rhythm and harmonies that are developed during the course of a composition.
- His orchestral music has a very distinctive imagination.
- His later compositions are less affected by Debussy and more influenced by Ravel.⁵⁰

Despite the fact Alfano was influenced by a multitude of the distinguished composers of his period, his compositions maintain a particular individuality. As a result of his uniqueness and his successes, Alfano belongs to a group of five leading Italian composers of the late nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century (see Fig. 3.2), namely Ildebrando Pizzetti (1880-1968), Alfredo Casella (1883-1947), Gian Francesco Malipiero (1882-1973), and Ottorino Respighi (1879-1936).⁵¹

47. Ibid.

48. Lakeway and White, 23-24.

49. John C.G. Waterhouse, et al.

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid.

CHAPTER FOUR

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Biographical information

Rabindranath Tagore was an Indian poet, writer, teacher, painter, and song composer who lived from 1861 until 1941. He was born in Calcutta, one of the largest Indian cities and the capital of West Bengal, a region situated on the east side of India,⁵² on the border with what today is Bangladesh. Tagore was the son of a religious reformer and was inspired to write verse in his youth. He went to study in England during the late 1870s, where he did not conclude his courses, and therefore returned to India. There, he gained fame from the publication of his poems and songs. In 1901 he founded a school, Visva-Bharati, with the intention of providing the best of both the Indian and Western cultures. In 1913 Tagore won the Nobel Prize for literature for the English publication of *Gitanjali*. During his 60s, Tagore embraced painting, becoming renowned among India's artists of his time.⁵³

As a composer, Tagore wrote more than 2,200 songs. Tagore had an innate ability to amalgamate words with melodies, which significantly contributed to his being a lyricist and a composer. Curiously, however, since Tagore did not have any particular knowledge in music, he had to rely on his relatives, first his brother and then a grand-nephew, to notate the musical ideas stored in his head.⁵⁴ The most prevalent themes of his songs are love, religious devotion, nature, and celebration of the seasons. Due to their large production, the songs became a genre of music called *rabindrasagit*, in which many artists specialized.⁵⁵ Also, the songs are considered essential to the Indian culture, so much so that they are taught as a special class in Indian music schools. Furthermore, two of Tagore's songs are currently used as the national anthems of India and Bangladesh. In general, the songs are very effective if sung by the voice alone or

52. Swapna Banerjee-Guha, N.K. Sinha, "Kolkata," *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., October 5, 2012, accessed January 2, 2017, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Kolkata>.

53. W. Andrew Robinson, "Rabindranath Tagore," *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., accessed December 14, 2016, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Rabindranath-Tagore>.

54. William Radice, "Tagore, Rabindranath," *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, accessed January 26, 2017, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.lib.fsu.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/27380>.

55. Coppola, 42.

accompanied by a traditional Indian instrument, like the *tambūrā*, *esrāj*, and *tablā*. However, today they are performed accompanied by a variety of modern instruments.⁵⁶

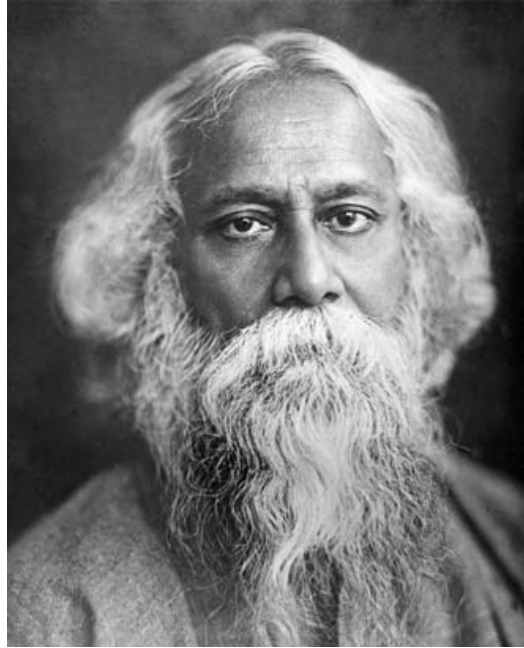


Fig. 4.1: Rabindranath Tagore
Courtesy of Encyclopædia Britannica, accessed January 27, 2017

As a poet, Tagore was responsible for introducing a new prose form and the use of colloquial Bengali language. This was a crucial time for Tagore: by deviating from the traditional literature based on classic Sanskrit, he made his poems available to a larger audience.⁵⁷ Tagore took advantage of his previous English language training to translate his own poetry into English. From the original poetry in Bengali, he “translated it into English *prose* rendering, and in the process often created new poems.”⁵⁸ There are five volumes of Tagore’s poetry in English: *Gitanjali* (1912 and 1913), *The Gardener* (1913), *The Crescent Moon* (1913), *Fruit-Gathering* (1916), and *Lover’s Gift and Crossing* (1918). The volume *Gitanjali* of 1912 is

56. Radice.

57. Robinson.

58. Coppola, 44.

the work for which Tagore received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913,⁵⁹ making him the first non-European person to receive this prestigious award.⁶⁰ The Nobel Prize Committee awarded the literature prize to Tagore "because of his profoundly sensitive, fresh and beautiful verse, by which, with consummate skill, he has made his poetic thought, expressed in his own English words, a part of the literature of the West."⁶¹

From 1913 until the mid-1930s, Tagore's poetry was widely read in Europe, North and South America, and Eastern Asia. During the same period, Tagore travelled to those regions, lecturing on various literary topics, social topics, esthetics, and politics. Besides being an important figure of the literary and humanitarian world, he was often received by the political leaders of various countries. His travels were primarily organized as fund-raisers to provide financial assistance to the school he founded in India, Visva-Bharati.⁶²

Tagore's poetry relates to music, singing, and dancing. These were characteristics that prompted the interest of many composers, especially between 1913 and the mid-1930s. Currently, we can count over 100 composers who chose at least one poem from Tagore and set it to music.⁶³ Many composers referred to Tagore's five volumes of poetry in English; however, further translations were made from the English version. Author André Gide made a French translation, from which several composers made translations into Italian, one of whom is Franco Alfano. Other translations from the English were made into Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, and German. From the German, a few more adaptations were made for Polish, Czech, and Russian.⁶⁴ After the mid 1930s, the interest in Tagore and his poetry decreased considerably in Europe and in the Americas. Despite his decline, he remained a vivid figure and charismatic artist of the early 20th century in India, his home country.

59. Ibid., 41.

60. Robinson.

61. "The Nobel Prize in Literature 1913," *Nobelprize.org*. Nobel Media AB 2014., accessed January 4, 2017, https://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1913/.

62. Coppola, 41.

63. Ibid., 43.

64. Ibid., 44.

CHAPTER FIVE

ART SONGS ON TAGORE'S POETRY

Tre poemi di Rabindranath Tagore

Tre Poemi di Rabindranath Tagore (Three poems of Rabindranath Tagore) is the first set of Alfano's songs composed on poetry by Tagore. The lyrics for these songs are taken from the volume entitled *The Gardener*. The set was composed in 1918 and published in 1919, was written for soprano or mezzo-soprano, and illustrates diverse perspectives of love. The songs that comprise the set are *Mamma, il giovane Principe* (Mother, the young Prince); *Egli mormorò: "Amor mio, alza i tuoi occhi"* (He whispered: "My love, lift your eyes"); *Parlami amor mio* (Speak to me, my love).

Mamma, il giovane Principe

The poem portrays a girl who wishes the prince would pass by her door step. She questions her mother because she would like to be properly dressed when that time comes. Although she knows in her heart that the prince will not notice her, for a moment she allows herself to dream of reaching his attention.

Mamma, il giovane Principe deve passare
avanti la nostra porta.
Come vuoi che lavori stamane?
Insegnami come devo acconciare i miei capelli,
dimmi che vestito devo indossare.
Perchè mi guardi sgomenta, mamma?
So bene che il Principe non alzerà gli occhi
alla mia finestra.
So che sparirà dalla mia vista in un baleno
e che solo il palpitar del flauto
giungerà singhiozzante di lontano sino a me!
Ma il giovane Principe deve passare avanti la
nostra porta,

Mother, the young Prince must pass in front of
our door.
How do you want me to work this morning?
Teach me how to style my hair,
tell me what dress I should wear.
Why can you look at me with dismay, mother?
I know that the Prince will not lift his eyes to
my window.
I know he will disappear from my sight in a flash
and that only the flute's trembling
will reach to me sobbing from a distance!
But the young Prince must pass in front of our
door,

ed io voglio vestirmi per un momento con gli
abiti più belli!

Mamma, il giovane Principe passò avanti la
nostra porta,
e il sole mattutino scintillò sul suo cocchio!
Mi tolsi il velo dal viso,
mi strappai dal collo il vezzo di rubini
e lo lanciai sul suo cammin!
Perchè mi guardi piena di sgomento, mamma?
Lo so che non raccolse la mia collana,
vidi che s'infranse sotto le ruote
lasciando una macchia vermiglia ne la polvere
e nessuno comprese qual fosse il mio dono e
per chi!
Ma il giovane Principe passò avanti la nostra
porta
ed io gettai sui suoi passi il gioiello che
portavo sul seno!

and I want to wear for a moment the most
beautiful clothes!

Mother, the young Prince passed in front of
our door,
and the morning sun sparkled on his coach!
I took off the veil from my face,
I ripped from my neck the necklace of rubies
and I threw it on his path!
Why do you look at me full of dismay, mother?
I know he did not pick up my necklace,
I saw that it broke under the wheels,
leaving a rose-red stain in the dust,
and no one understood what my gift was and
for whom!
But the young Prince passed in front of our
door
and I threw on his path the jewel that I wore on
my bosom!⁶⁵

This composition is a through-composed song and is written in E major despite the complex harmonic texture which does not clearly establish the key. Organized in 4/4 time, it contains two measures in 6/4 and the tempo indication is *Mosso ma flessibile* (moving but flexible). The text constitutes two large stanzas with irregular verse length. The vocal line and the piano part are completely independent from one another, but they are creatively entwined “to follow the action of the narrative.”⁶⁶ There are numerous expression indications throughout the song to accommodate and convey the flow of the text. Dynamically, the first stanza mostly presents *pp* and *ppp*, with only two measures in which the music touches *mf* and *f*, and then suddenly returns to a quiet dynamic. The second stanza, instead, is characterized by frequent

65. English translations of all the poems in this treatise are by Francesco Binda.

66. Lakeway and White, 26.

changes between soft and loud dynamics, to underline the bittersweet and agitated part of the story.

The vocal line assumes several compositional aspects during the song. The opening line is a wave of whole and half steps, which will be repeated once in transposed variation and twice in exact repetition, when the text speaks of the prince passing by, which “gives a sense of cohesion to the otherwise through-composed song.”⁶⁷ In subsequent sections, the vocal line employs an angular motion, encompassing various intervals, including major sevenths. It describes both the girl’s anxiety in anticipation of the prince’s arrival and her resigned feeling of accepting that he will not glance at her. In a few instances, the voice is given repeated notes, demonstrating the contemplative side of the girl. There are also two points at which Alfano demands immense agility and sensitivity from the singer: the major ninth leaps (mm. 35-36 and 75-76) on the words “*più belli*” and “*sul seno.*”

The piano is centered on colorful repetitious patterns that alternate between the right and left hands. They are seen as a single syncopated eighth note, which serves as a pedal point for the first 17 measures (see Fig. 5.1); a figure of dotted sixteenth and thirty-second notes (see Fig. 5.2); a repeated eighth-note octave (see Fig. 5.3); or repeated block chords (see Fig. 5.4). The music evolves with small motivic ideas, chord progressions, arpeggios, and descending octave lines, which intermingle with the previous patterns. Alfano dismisses or eliminates these motifs when there is a sustained note in the vocal line and at the moment in which the girl throws her necklace to the prince (mm. 52-54).

Fig. 5.1: Franco Alfano, *Mamma, il giovane Principe*, mm. 1-2

67. Ibid., 27.

20

Pattern of dotted sixteenth and thirty-second notes

p *poco* *pp*

Fig. 5.2: Franco Alfano, *Mamma, il giovane Principe*, mm. 20-21

32

Repeated eighth-note octaves

p *pp*

Fig. 5.3: Franco Alfano, *Mamma, il giovane Principe*, mm. 32-33

59

Riprendendo il tempo iniziale

Repeated chords

pp *m.s.*

Fig. 5.4: Franco Alfano, *Mamma, il giovane Principe*, mm. 59-60

The song began with a two-measure introduction by the piano, but between the verses,

Alfano wrote a six-measure interlude (mm. 37-42). This interlude is characterized by the return of the repeated pattern of dotted sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The composer also inserts the indication *come un trotto lontano* (like a distant trot) that perfectly depicts the image of the prince who left as quickly as he arrived.

Alfano used alternating diatonic lines with chromatic lines to position the text. He also used triplets, both to accommodate the natural flow of the lyrics and to characterize the protagonist's emotion. The vocal line lies mainly in the middle and low registers of the singer and does not present any text repetition. Alfano also utilized word painting: the tremolo in the right hand of the piano (mm. 27-29) is added when the verse recites "*il palpitar del flauto*" (the trembling of the flute); in a similar manner, the tremolo is added again in the right hand (mm. 63-64) with the indications *con un brivido* (like a shiver) for voice and *freddo* (cold) for piano at the words "*lasciando una macchia vermiglia*" (leaving a rose-red stain). To sustain the narrative vocal line, Alfano produced a rhythmically articulated and harmonically complex piano part. There is never a moment in which the music settles on a definite tonality. Several dissonant chords appropriately portray the anxiety and the internal turmoil of a girl dreaming of an impossible love.

Sei liriche di autori diversi

Sei liriche di autori diversi (Six lyrics of different authors) are a set of songs published in 1925. The set is written for soprano or tenor, and the general theme is "sensual abandonment."⁶⁸ The last song of the set is based on Tagore lyrics and is entitled *Non partire, amor mio* (Do not leave, my love). This song was composed in 1922, but was published with the other songs, as mentioned above, in 1925.

Non partire, amor mio

This song can be sung by either a male or a female voice. The protagonist of this poem is afraid of losing his or her beloved while sleeping and is not consciously aware of this being

68. Luvada Anthonette Harrison, "Lyric Vocal Songs for the Salon of Franco Alfano" (doctoral treatise, Florida State University, 2006), 56, accessed October 20, 2016, <http://fsu.digital.flvc.org/islandora/object/fsu:182397/datastream/PDF/view>.

reality or fantasy. The only desire is to embrace the lover endlessly.

Non partire, amor mio, senza avvertirmi!	Do not leave, my love, without telling me!
Ho vegliato tutta la notte,	I stayed awake all night,
e ora i miei occhi son pesanti di sonno.	and now my eyes are heavy with sleep.
Ho paura di perderti mentre dormo!	I am afraid of losing you while I am sleeping!
Non partire, amor mio, senza avvertirmi!	Do not leave, my love, without telling me!
Mi desto e tendo le mani per toccarti.	I wake up and I stretch my hands to touch you.
Mi domando: è un sogno?	I ask myself: is it a dream?
Ah, potessi stringere i tuoi piedi col mio cuore	Ah, if only I could hold your feet tightly with my heart
e tenerli saldi al mio petto.	and keep them firmly on my bosom.
Non partire, amor mio, senza avvertirmi!	Do not leave, my love, without telling me!

This song is structured as a through-composed form. It is in the tonality of A minor; however, as usually happens with Alfano's Tagore songs, Alfano touches numerous tonalities throughout the song, often suddenly switching from one to another. The time signature is cut time except in measure 20, where it becomes 3/2 to accommodate the syllabic structure of the fourth line of this single stanza poem. The tempo indication at the beginning is *Lento* (Slow); at measure 3 it changes to *Molto animato* (Very animated); at measure 39 it goes to *Largamente* (Broadly); lastly, at measure 47, the indication is *Ritornando al tempo animato* (Returning to the animated tempo). The text's meter is irregular and the first line is repeated in the middle and at the end of the poem. Alfano used the same melody each time this poetic line appears. The piano part acts independently from the vocal line and it is responsible for creating the soundscape on which the lyrics evolve. Many are the expression indications and abounding are the dynamic markings.

From the beginning until the seventh line of the poem, the vocal range is contained in the low register. With the eighth and ninth lines (mm. 38-47), the melody is moved to the middle-high register and it assumes a strong declamatory character. This is the climax of the song and represents the fear of the girl that her lover will leave her and not return. Then the vocal line is moved to a lower register and at the end, after the last line, Alfano added the word "*Ah!*" on a sustained note covering five measures. In this moment, both the vocal and the piano part gradually make a *crescendo* from a *ppp* dynamic marking (m. 54) to a final declamatory *ff* (m.

58), to underline the anxiety and pain of the protagonist.

During the first two measures, the piano presents only two unresolved chords. With the new tempo (m. 3), the top of the right hand offers a repeated eighth-note middle C, while below, colorful chords are presented in long sustained notes (see Fig. 5.5). At measure 10, the rhythmic

1 **Lento** (*in 2*) ($\text{♩} = 54 \text{ circa}$)

Unresolved chords

Repeated eighth notes

Indug.^{do} e subito Molto animato ($\text{♩} = 84$)

sempre con V.

Fig. 5.5: Franco Alfano, *Non partire, amor mio*, mm. 1-3

repeated pattern is moved to the left hand, centering on the note A. At this point the right hand presents a progression of chords, whose top notes seems to delineate a motif, as counterpoint to the vocal line. A new texture (mm. 17-22) consists of bouncing chords, and with the addition of a trill and a tremolo, the music produces a surreal landscape in a Debussian style. Then, Alfano went back to the same repeated eighth-note pattern of the beginning, this time doubling the middle C with an octave lower (mm. 23-29). The piano part introduces a new motivic idea (mm. 30-38) on the wave of unresolving chords. Subsequently, Alfano created a grandiose section (mm. 38-48) in which the chords spread on a wide range of the piano, doubling for the first time the same melodic line of the voice (see Fig. 5.6). At the indication *Ritornando al tempo animato* (m. 47), the repeated eighth-note pattern is repeated anew in the piano part to connect the grandiose section to the last line of the poem (mm. 47-49). At the words “*Non partire, amor io, senza avvertirmi!*” (m. 49), the harmonic and rhythmic pattern repeats for the third time.

39 **Largamente** ($\text{♩} = 54 \text{ circa}$)

ff po - tes - si strin - ge-re i tuoi pie - di col mio

Doubling the voice

Largamente ($\text{♩} = 54 \text{ circa}$)

ff p *ff* *ff*

Fig. 5.6: Franco Alfano, *Non partire, amor mio*, mm. 39-42

Five more measures will conclude the song, with a gradual *crescendo* leading to a strong ending. At the word “Ah!” (m. 54), the piano part states three times the motif presented at measure ten, slightly differentiated and in an ascending motion, to propel the final chords.

The setting of this poem is scrupulous regarding the pace of the lyrics. Every syllable is meticulously assigned to a determined note to let the meaning of the story emerge clearly. Alfano does not economize in writing musical directions: with tempo markings, dynamics, or articulation marks, every measure has instructions on how to interpret the song. The multiple dynamic color changes and the distribution of the rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic material are assembled together with great intelligence, giving a sense of uneasiness that accompanies the feeling of the persona depicted in the poem.

Tre liriche di Tagore

Tre liriche di Tagore (Three Lyrics of Tagore) is a set of songs composed in 1928 and

published in 1929. It is written for soprano or mezzosoprano, and is centered on the theme of frustrated love.⁶⁹ The songs contained in the set are: *Perchè, allo spuntar del giorno* (Because, at the dawn); *Finisci l'ultimo canto* (Finish the last song); *Giorno per giorno* (Day by day).

Giorno per giorno

The text of this song depicts a girl who falls in love with a boy whom she sees every day. To try to reach his heart, she asks a friend to be the person to make contact with him. According to Bengali tradition, of which Tagore is part, a girl does not introduce herself directly to a boy, but she uses a third party.⁷⁰ After the connection is made, the girl does not want to reveal her name because he always goes away. This love seems to be impossible and this frustration is emphasized in the second verse when the girl describes the boy's sadness.

Giorno per giorno egli viene, egli viene, e poi
sen va!
Tieni amica, dagli un fiore, questo fior che ho
tra i capelli!
Se ti domanda chi glielo dona,
Oh! No! non dirgli, no, non dirgli il nome mio,
ti prego,
perchè egli non fa che venir... che venire e
andarsene!

Si siede in terra sotto l'albero,
fagli un sedil di foglie e fiori!
I suoi occhi son tristi e portan la malinconia
nel cor.
Ei non rivela il suo pensiero,
vien soltanto, e poi sen va.

Day by day he comes, he comes, and then he
goes away!
Here, my friend, give him a flower, this flower
that I have in my hair!
If he asks you who gives it to him,
Oh! No! do not tell him, no, do not tell him my
name, I beg you,
because all he does is to come... to come and
go away!

He sits on the ground under the tree,
make him a seat of leaves and flowers!
His eyes are sad and bring melancholy to the
heart.
He does not reveal his thought,
he only comes, and then he goes away.

69. Harrison, 57.

70. Ibid., 35.

The song is written in the tonality of A major and its time signature is 2/4. The general structure is a very clear ternary form: A – B – A'. The poem is made of two stanzas: Alfano assigns the first stanza to the A section (mm. 11-43) and the second stanza to the B section (mm. 44-67). The text contained in the A' section (mm. 68-101) is a repetition of the lyrics of the first stanza. The design of the song is very classical and the text is organized in musical phrases of four bars each. The melodic material of the B section is imitative of that of the A section. In the third part, the vocal line is exactly the same as it was the first stanza, except for the very ending, where the note values are stretched to properly conclude the song.

In the A section, the vocal line is set in the low register of the voice for lines one and two of the poem. Then, it is set in the middle register for lines three and four. The melodic line mainly moves by intervals of seconds and thirds. In a few instances the intervals are bigger, but are limited to fourths (m. 30-31, 34), a fifth (m. 26-27), and sixths (mm. 16, 24, 40). Alfano wrote several timing indications, alternating *ritardando* and *a tempo* markings. These gestures denote the care of the composer towards the expressiveness he intended for the song, in relation to the lyrics.

Despite the organized structure in musical phrases of four measures, the solo piano introduction's length is ten measures. The song starts with an anacrusis rhythm on the dominant of A major, but immediately goes into an enigmatic sequence of chords, before landing again on the dominant (m. 10), not harmonized, to prepare the entrance of the voice (m. 11). The piano part is independent from the vocal line, and its function is to create the soundscape on which the singer narrates the story. It is structured with chords in the left hand and a broken-chord eighth-note rhythmic pattern in the right (mm. 11-18). To flavor the harmonic language, Alfano inserted a chromatic inner voice within the chords (mm. 19-26). In addition, he placed a syncopated rhythm on the pedal note A (see Fig. 5.7), on the weak beat (mm. 27-43). In general, the piano part is written in the middle and high register of the keyboard.

The vocal line of the B section is very similar to the one of the A section. It still moves mainly in intervals of seconds and thirds, but now it has fifths (mm. 49, 57), sixths (mm. 45, 65), and an octave to establish the end of the second stanza (m. 66). Some accidentals make the melody more chromatic, to accommodate a more reticent text. The range for the singer in this section remains in the middle and low register.

36

Poco a poco - ritardando

non fa che ve - nir... che ve - ni - re e an -
nur ge - gan - gen kommt, nur ge - gan - gen und

Syncopated rhythm

Fig. 5.7: Franco Alfano, *Giorno per giorno*, mm. 36-40

The texture of the piano part in the B section substantially remains the same. There is, however, more variety in the harmonies. It starts in F-sharp minor, it seems to settle on C major in a couple of places (mm. 52, 60-62), and it ends on an E major ninth chord as a preparation for the return to A major. The chromatic inner line is still present, and the music is once again written in the middle and high register of the keyboard. Only in two instances Alfano added lower notes: in the middle of the stanza (m. 55) on the second syllable of the word “*tristi*” (sad), and in the last two measures of the section (mm. 66-67), where he ends on the dominant of A. The right hand’s structure retains the eighth-note motion, mostly of broken chord harmonies, now offering a more motivic variety than earlier in the song.

In the last section, A', the same text and melody of the first stanza are repeated. The only difference lies at the end of the song, where the words “*e andarsene*” (and go away) are stretched over five measures (mm. 97-101), emphasizing the wistful fact that the boy, once again, will go away. Various expression markings precisely indicate the interpretation required by the composer.

The piano part does change in the A' section. At the beginning of this section, both hands together share a repeated descending pattern of broken chords in sixteenth notes (mm. 68-83). At the second part of the stanza (m. 84), the right hand’s notation is moved to the high part of the keyboard and continues the motion of sixteenth notes (see Fig. 5.8). The left hand returns to the

84 A tempo
(sempre *pp*)

Se ti do - man - da chi glie - lo do - na
Wenn er dich fragt, wer die Blü - te dir gab,

(sempre *pp*)

Sixteenth-note motion

Fig. 5.8: Franco Alfano, *Giorno per giorno*, mm. 84-87

middle register and moves by quarter-note chords. Towards the end (m. 96), the chords become half notes on the down beat, alternating with the pedal A, tonic of the song's tonality, on the second beat.

The song is written mostly with soft dynamics from *p* to *pppp*. Only at the lines “*I suoi occhi son tristi*” (his eyes are sad) and “*Ei non rivela il suo pensiero*” (He does not reveal his thought) Alfano assigned the dynamic of *mf* (mm. 52-55, 60-62). The melody of the song is given entirely to the singer. The vocal line is without virtuosic elements to characterize a young girl who falls in love with a young boy. The function of the piano is to provide the soundscape of the story through the harmonic design, structured with frequent dissonances and cluster chords. The various dynamic and expression indications given by the composer represent an indispensable guide for the interpretation of the song.

Nuove liriche tagoriane

Nuove liriche tagoriane (New Tagorian lyrics) is a set of songs composed in 1934 and published in 1936. The lyrics are taken from the volume entitled *The Gardener*. It is written for medium voice, and the themes are anticipation, frustration, and longing.⁷¹ The songs contained

71. Harrison, 58.

in the set are *Perché siedi là* (Why do you sit there), *Non nascondere il segreto del tuo cuore* (Don't hide the secret of your heart), *Corro come il cervo muschiato* (I run like the musk stag).

Corro come il cervo muschiato

The protagonist of this poem searches for his beloved, but loses his way. In his heart the image of the loved one runs fast and cannot be caught. The way is lost: what he searches for is not found, but he finds that for which he did not search.

Corro come il cervo muschiato	I run like the musk stag
che ebbro del suo profumo	that, intoxicated by his own scent,
si slancia nell'ombra del bosco.	launches itself in the shadow of the woods.
È una notte di maggio,	It is a night of May,
e la brezza vien dal sud!	and the breeze comes from the south!
Smarrisco la via e cammino, cammino...	I lose the way and I walk, I walk...
Cerco quel che non trovo,	I search for what I do not find,
trovo quel che non cerco.	I find that for which I do not search.
Corro! Corro! Corro! Corro!	I run! I run! I run! I run!
Dal mio cuore esce e palpita	From my heart comes and beats
l'immagin del tuo desiderio	the image of your desire
La visione sfolgorante corre, corre veloce	The dazzling vision runs, runs fast
Provo a ghermirla fra le mie braccia,	I try to catch it between my arms,
ma essa mi sfugge, e smarrisco la via...	but it escapes from me, and I lose the way...
Cerco quel che non trovo,	I search for what I do not find,
trovo quel che non cerco.	I find that for which I do not search.

This work is a lively composition in D major. Written in 3/4 time, it has a tempo indication of *Molto Allegro (in 1)* (Very fast, in 1). The music is developed on a long single stanza of poetry. The piano and the voice act independently; however, in three circumstances the piano doubles the vocal line. Characteristic of the vitality of this song are the sudden dynamic changes and the presence of either trills or tremolos throughout most of the

composition.

The song opens with two measure of piano solo in a *ff* dynamic, setting the tone of the piece with a prolonged trill on D in the left hand, and a pattern of sixteenth and eighth notes in the right hand (mm. 1-24), resembling a running motion. When the voice enters (m. 3), its dynamic is *f*, in contrast with the piano's dynamic, marked as *pp*. The vocal line is rhythmic and continuously descends and ascends by a mix of small and wide intervals. Alfano put one measure of rest in the voice between lines three and four of the poem (m. 16).

At the words "*Smarrisco la via e cammino, e cammino...*" (I lose the way and I walk, I walk...), the texture of the piano changes (mm. 25-32). While the left hand continues the trill, the right hand presents quarter notes on beats two and three, each preceded by grace notes. The harmonies alternate between diminished and augmented, creating an imaginative sound recalling longing. In this section, the vocal line continues its wave-like motion, and retains a declamatory tone, still in a loud dynamic.

A new arrangement of the piano part (mm. 33-40) consists of the shift of the trill to the right hand. The left hand is now structured in chords with the pattern of a half note and a quarter note in each measure. The dynamic marking is *p*, which is also given to the vocal line for the first time in this song. A four-measure *crescendo* in both parts introduces a new segment in which the piano doubles the voice (mm. 41-48). A new arrangement is made for the piano: a tremolo is assigned to the left hand; the trill occurs in the right hand when the voice has long notes. In the text, the word "*Corro*"! (I run!) is stated four times, so Alfano gave those words the same rhythm in the vocal line. Twice they start from the high G, twice they start from the E-flat below (see Fig. 5.9).

The dynamic jumps abruptly to *pp* in the piano and *mp* in the voice (mm. 49-57). The piano part is characterized by a trill in the left hand and tremolo in the right. Here the composer added the indication *legatissimo* (very legato). The vocal line, now shifted slightly downwards in the register, returns to its wave-form motion. A quadruplet is added to accommodate the word stresses during the eleventh line (m. 55). Then the piano part produces waves of sound with arpeggios first in decuplets and then in octuplets (mm. 58-64).

At this point, the piano and the voice parts double again (mm. 65-76). The right hand follows the ascending sequence in the vocal line. This leads to some long and sustained notes for the voice (mm. 70-76), supported by the trill in the left hand and half-note chords in the right,

before arriving at a fermata on a rest (m. 76). For the first time, the “frenzied”⁷² music seems to

39

quel che non cer - co... Cor - ro!... Cor -

- ro! Cor - ro! Cor - ro! Cor - ro!

Tremolo Trill

Fig. 5.9: Franco Alfano, *Corro come il cervo muschiato*, mm. 39-48

get to a pause (mm. 76-77): the vocal line, in fact, is unaccompanied on the words “*e smarrisco*” (and I lose). On the text “*la via*” (the way), piano and voice return together, with the piano trilling in both hands (mm. 78-81). The last part of the song consists of tremolos in the left hand and doubling the vocal melody in the right (mm. 82-102). The vocal line becomes more and

72. Lakeway and White, 41.

more intense. After the last line of text, Alfano added the exclamation “*Ah!*” four times (mm. 90-102), as if recalling the repetition of the word *corro* (mm. 41-48). The last two times the word “*Ah!*” is presented, the composer asked for an *accelerando sino alla fine* (accelerating until the end), to provide an effective, vigorous ending.

Due to the natural vitality of this song, Alfano did not have to insert in the score a lot of expressive markings, as he did in many of his other songs. The vocal line, however, contains several breath markings, scrupulously inserted by the composer, to indicate how to break the phrases. The notation range for both the piano and the voice is wide. A moderate amount of chromaticism helps deliver the story of the poem throughout this frantic composition.

Sette liriche

Sette liriche (Seven lyrics) contains six Tagore poems and one by Rainer Maria Rilke, translated into Italian by Vincenzo Errante. The songs were composed in 1945 and published in 1947; they are written for soprano or tenor and the themes are various degrees of love.⁷³ The Tagore songs contained in the set are *Si addensano le nubi* (The clouds amass), *Venne e mi sedette accanto...* (He came and sat next to me...), *Scendesti dal tuo trono* (You stepped down from your throne), *Se taci...* (If you keep silent...), *Non so* (I do not know) *Non hai udito i suoi passi...* (You did not hear his steps...).

Non so

The poem tells about a girl who lost the love of her life. The protagonist thinks back, living again the moments when she met her beloved. Now she feels in turmoil, as if she would be ready to meet him again.

Non so da che tempi lontani
tu sei venuto verso di me.
Il tuo sole e le tue stelle
non potran tenerti per sempre celato.

I do not know from what remote time
you came towards me.
Your sun and your stars
cannot keep you forever hidden.

73. Harrison, 60.

Spesso alla mattina o alla sera
si sono uditi i tuoi passi
e il tuo messo è venuto nel mio cuor
di nascosto a chiamarmi.

Non so perché oggi
la mia vita è tutta in subbuglio.
Un vago sentimento di gioia
mi pervade il cuor.

È come se fosse venuta l'ora
di finire il mio lavoro,
e sento nell'aria il tenue profumo
della dolce tua presenza.

Often in the morning or in the evening
your steps have been heard
and your messenger came into my heart
secretly to call me.

I do not know why today
my life is in turmoil.
A vague feeling of joy
pervades my heart.

It is as if the time came
to finish my work,
and I feel in the air a tenuous scent
of your sweet presence.

Non so is written on a poem of four stanzas of four lines each, and it is structured as a through-composed song. The time signature is 4/4 and the tempo indication is *Tranquillo* (Tranquil). Toward the end of the song, in the middle of stanza four (m. 33), the tempo marking changes to *Più calmo* (More calm), to highlight the sweet and sensitive meaning of the words. The piano part doubles the vocal line for most of the song, but its texture is well elaborated, creating a perfect soundscape for the voice. Numerous are the expression and dynamic markings that Alfano wrote on the score to guide the musicians toward a delicate performance.

The song starts with five measures of piano introduction in which Alfano set a tone of calm. The right hand of the piano consist of sixteenth-note repeated broken octaves on a G-sharp – a pedal point which continues for 14 measures. The left hand, instead, presents some motivic ideas. When the voice makes its entrance (m. 5), the piano part continues in the same way, however the left hand adds chords whose notes at the top double the vocal line (see Fig. 5.10). This texture will remain the same throughout the first stanza, in which the vocal line smoothly develops with motions of eighth and quarter notes. The two intervals of a seventh do not break the dream-like atmosphere of this beginning.

The second stanza abruptly presents a different piano texture, made of a continuous trill in the right hand on a G-sharp. The left hand continues carrying chords of three notes each. The note in the middle is the one that doubles the vocal line. In this section, the text seems to move more actively, since the vocal line is mainly characterized by eighth notes. Further, the voice part is in a low range, compared with the first stanza, in which it was in the middle.

Fig. 5.10: Franco Alfano, *Non so*, mm. 5-6

A big change happens with the third stanza. The tonality of C-sharp that started the song enharmonically switches to D-flat (m. 23). Alfano wrote this section as if it were an accompanied recitative. In fact, the piano part is made mostly of half-note chords written in the low register of the piano. For the first time, the piano does not follow the vocal line note by note. It is simply responsible for creating deep harmonic colors on which the vocal line can develop. The vocal melody is now spread over a wide range. The placement of several triplets, along with a number of repeated notes, contributes to the sense of declamation.

For the first two lines of the last stanza, the texture of the music remains the same as in the previous section. Then the new tempo indication, *Più calmo* (m. 33), introduces the last two lines of the poem. The right hand of the piano is made of chords and the notes on top resume doubling the vocal line. The left hand, instead, presents sixteenth-note motion, resembling a harp, to sustain the delightful meaning of the text (see. Fig. 5.11).

The vocal line is made of long notes, mostly in the high register. After the poem is

finished, Alfano added a coda that includes six measures of piano solo that repeat the song's introduction. Then the words “*il profumo della tua dolce presenza*” (the scent of your sweet presence) are repeated in the low register on a new melodic idea. A D-flat major chord with added seconds and sixths concludes this beautiful song.

Più calmo (solenne)
(un filo di voce)

sen - - to nel - l'a - - ria il

Più calmo (solenne)

pp morbido

molto espress.
poco

7

Doubling the voice

Sixteenth-note motion

Fig. 5.11: Franco Alfano, *Non so*, mm. 33-34

Cinque nuove liriche tagoriane

Cinque nuove liriche tagoriane (Five new Tagorian lyrics) is the last set of Alfano's art songs composed on poetry by Tagore. The lyrics are taken from the volume of poetry entitled *Gitanjali*. The set was composed in 1947 and published in 1948; it is written for medium voice and talks about different aspects of love.⁷⁴ The songs contained in the set are *Sì, lo so* (Yes, I know), *Cogli, prendi questo fiorellino* (Pick, take this little flower), *Tu sei in cielo* (You are in the sky), *Colsi il tuo fiore, o mondo!* (I had picked your flower, oh earth!), *Il mio cuore, uccel del deserto...* (My heart, bird in the wilderness...).

Sì, lo so

The protagonist of this poem seems to have lost her beloved. She knows there is nothing else but his love. The elements of nature remind her of him and bring his message to her heart

⁷⁴ Harrison, 61.

and, once again, she feels his presence.

Sì, lo so.	Yes, I know it.
Non v'è nient'altro all'infuori del tuo amore, o mio diletto.	There is nothing else except your love, oh my beloved.
Questa luce dorata che brilla sulle foglie, queste pigre nubi che navigano a traverso il Ciel, questa brezza che passa, lasciando la sua freschezza sulla mia fronte.	This golden light that shines on the leaves, these lazy clouds that travel through the sky, this breeze that goes by, leaving its freshness on my forehead.
La luce del mattino m'ha inondato gli occhi.	The light of the morning filled my eyes.
Questo è il tuo messaggio al mio cuore.	This is your message to my heart.
Tu chini il viso, i tuoi occhi guardano nei miei.	You bow your head, your eyes look into mine.
E il mio cuore ha toccato i tuoi piedi.	And my heart touched your feet.

The song opens with the time signature of 2/4. It is elaborated around the tonality of E major and its structure is a modified strophic form, to accommodate two stanzas of poetry that are different in length. The tempo indication *Calmo* (Calm) at the beginning and the colorful harmonies design an intimate atmosphere to support the lyrics. The voice and the piano act independently; however, in several occasion the piano part doubles the vocal line, without obstructing its flow. Numerous are the dynamic and expression indications, to precisely guide the musicians towards a subtle performance (see Fig. 5.12).

Four measures of piano introduction open the song. The alternating eighth-note pattern between the two hands establishes the delicate pace of the music. When the vocal line enters (m. 5), it is centered in the middle and low range. At the words “*queste pigre nubi*” (these lazy clouds), both parts become more chromatic and the music intensifies harmonically and rhythmically (see Fig. 5.12). Later, the piano part, which retains its eighth-note motion, assumes a wave-like gesture and it intensifies, with harmonies recalling those of Debussy and Ravel (mm. 25-30). The vocal line follows the same emotion, introducing leaps from a fifth to an octave (mm. 20-30), culminating on the words “*questa brezza che passa*” (this breeze that goes by). Alfano continued by repeating the words “*che passa*” (mm. 31-32) and writing a *Poco più mosso* section followed by a *Meno [mosso]* section to take the intensity of the music at the end of the

first stanza back to the initial quiet (mm. 33-43).

20

que . ste pi . gre nu . bi che na . vi . ga . no a tra .

Expression markings

poco... cresc.

rit.

a tempo

f

Expression markings

Wave-like gesture

Fig. 5.12: Franco Alfano, *Sì, lo so*, mm. 20-27

Alfano returned to *Tempo I* (m. 44) and wrote another four-measure piano solo to connect the two stanzas. The rhythm of the piano continues with eighth notes, but the first beat now has triplets. The vocal line returns to its initial characteristics of calm with mostly small intervals. At the words “*Tu chini il viso*” (You bow your head), Alfano changed the time signature to 4/4 and the tempo indication to *Più calmo* (m. 58). Two measures in 6/4 (mm. 62-63), one of which is for solo piano, are followed by the last line of the poem, set in *Tempo I* (mm. 64-69). During the last two poetic lines, the piano part assumes longer note values, mostly half notes, and explores more consistently the lower register of the keyboard for the first time. The vocal line also stretches the length of the notes. In addition, a few dotted rhythms and triplets are used to give the lyrics the highest expression.

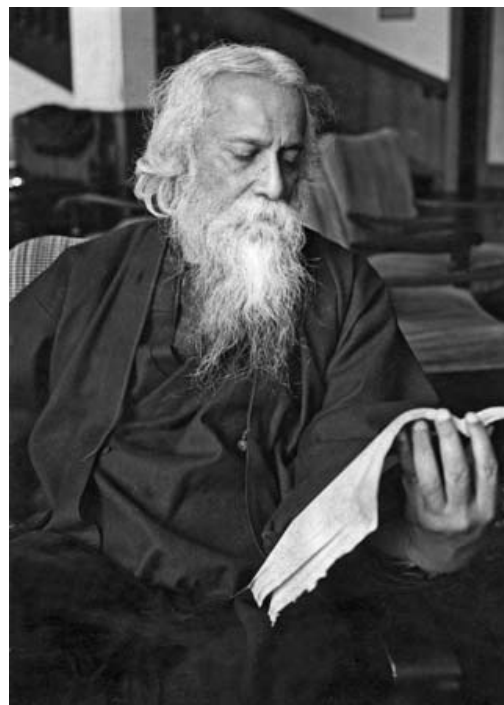
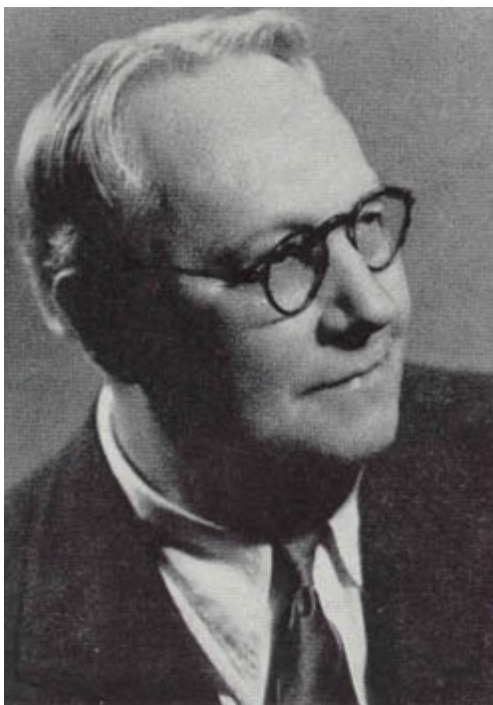


Fig. 5.13: Franco Alfano, on the left; Rabindranath Tagore, on the right
Respectively, courtesy of Wikipedia, accessed January 12, 2017,
and of Encyclopædia Britannica, accessed January 27, 2017

CONCLUSION

Nino Rota was a prominent composer and figure of Italian music in the 20th century. He gained popularity and fortune with film music, but unfortunately was not celebrated or beloved for his modern classical compositions; therefore, Rota's music is not included in the standard performance repertoire. I believe his compositions are remarkable, pleasingly complex, and offer particular colors and timbres that are unique in their own right. Rota did not adopt the language of many of his contemporaries who travelled through atonality and dodecaphonism, but kept his works within a line of simplicity, expressiveness, and rhythmic excitement. The trios do not present particular difficulties as a whole, but often have passages that require careful attention, especially for the wind and string instruments. The piano part, instead, reflects the pianistic ability of the composer.

Regarding his music, Nino Rota said on one occasion: "There are simplicities that are starting points and other simplicities that are arrival points. My music appears easy, and many are those who say that they know it all. But at the end, nobody remembers anything of it because the notes disappeared in front of them. I believe that every artist aspires to simplicity and to communicate his/her own feelings to everyone, without distinctions. Personally, I believe that the best compliment one can give to a musician is to always define him/her as contemporary."⁷⁵

Franco Alfano was also one of the most important Italian composers who significantly contributed, along with Rota, to the development of modern Italian music. Born in the late 1800, he is best known for his operatic works, especially his completion of Puccini's *Turandot*; however, his large musical output also includes works of relevant importance. Alfano's music is not consistently performed; however, I believe that Alfano's individual style and creative harmonies make his works worth performing. His Tagore settings, specifically, contain a substantial amount of expressivity and depth of feeling. Often very difficult for both the singer and the pianist, they offer a distinct musical imagination that brings the listener very close to the sensitivity of the poetry.

Rota and Alfano represent Italian music of the late 19th and 20th centuries. I believe their compositions to be remarkable, pleasing, and rich of individuality. I hope that their works may be rediscovered and performed more consistently.

75. De Santi, xi.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

- Borin, Fabrizio. *La filmografia di Nino Rota*. Firenze, Italy: Leo S. Olschki, 1999.
- Das Gupta, Uma. *Rabindranath Tagore: A Biography*. New Delhi, India: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- De Paoli, Domenico. *La Crisi Musicale Italiana (1900-1930)*. Milano, Italy: Ulrico Hoepli, 1939.
- De Santi, Pier Marco. *La musica di Nino Rota*. Bari, Italy: Editori Laterza, 1983.
- Della Corte, Andrea. *Ritratto di Franco Alfano*. Torino, Italy: G.B. Paravia, 1935.
- Dryden, Konrad. *Franco Alfano: Transcending Turandot*. Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2010.
- Dyer, Richard. *Nino Rota: Music, Film, and Feeling*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan on Behalf of the British Film Institute, 2010.
- Fabris, Dinko. "La musica non filmica di Nino Rota: Ipotesi di un catalogo." In *Musica senza aggettivi: Studi per Fedele D'Amico*, ed. Agostino Ziino. Vol. II. Firenze, Italy: Leo S. Olschki, 1991.
- Ghosh, Nityapriya. *Rabindranath Tagore: A Pictorial Biography*. New Delhi, India: Niyogi Books, 2011.
- Lakeway, Ruth C., and Robert C. White. *Italian Art Song*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989.
- Lombardi, Francesco. *Fra cinema e musica del Novecento: Il caso Nino Rota: dai Documenti*. Firenze, Italy: Leo S. Olschki, 2000.
- . *Nino Rota: Catalogo critico delle composizioni da concerto, da camera e delle musiche per il teatro*. Firenze, Italy: Leo S. Olschki, 2009.
- . *Nino Rota: Un timido protagonista del Novecento musicale*. Torino, Italy: EDT s.r.l., 2012.
- Morelli, Giovanni. *Storia del candore: Studi in memoria di Nino Rota nel ventesimo della scomparsa*. Firenze, Italy: Leo S. Olschki, 2001.
- Nicolodi, Fiamma. *Musica e musicisti nel ventennio fascista*. Fiesole, Italy: Discanto, 1984.
- Rizzardi, Veniero. *L'undicesima Musa: Nino Rota e i suoi media*. Roma, Italy: Rai Eri, 2001.
- Streicher, Johannes. *Ultimi splendori: Cilea, Giordano, Alfano*. Roma, Italy: ISMEZ, 2000.
- Waterhouse, John C. G. *The Emergence of Modern Italian Music up to 1940*. Oxford: Bodleian Library, 1978.
- Zanetti, Roberto. *La musica italiana nel Novecento*. Vol. I, II, III. Busto Arsizio, Italy: Bramante, 1985.

Dissertations, treatises

Crossen-Richardson, Phyllis Jane. "Selected Clarinet, Cello, and Piano Trios: Unknown or Forgotten." PhD diss., University of Maryland, 2004. Accessed October 13, 2016. <http://drum.lib.umd.edu/bitstream/handle/1903/1382/umi-umd-1384.pdf;jsessionid=43D3C0CB179DA644A87D5841527F48ED?sequence=1>.

Harrison, Luvada Anthonette. "Lyric Vocal Songs for the Salon of Franco Alfano." Doctoral treatise, Florida State University, 2006. Accessed October 20, 2016, <http://fsu.digital.flvc.org/islandora/object/fsu:182397/datastream/PDF/view>.

Journals

Coppola, Carlo. "Rabindranath Tagore and the Western Composers: A Preliminary Essay." *Journal of South Asian Literature* 19, no. 2 (Summer, Fall 1984): 41-61.

Gatti, Guido M. "Some Italian Composers of To-Day. II. Franco Alfano (Continued)." *The Musical Times* 62, no. 937 (1921): 158-61.

———; Theodore Baker, translation. "Franco Alfano," *Musical Quarterly* 9, no. 4 (October 1923): 556-577.

Oliphant, Ernest Henry Clark. "The Songs of Young Italy." *The Musical Times* 9, no. 2 (April 1923): 191-210.

Websites

Anderson, Martin. "Rota [Rinaldi], Nino." *The Oxford Companion to Music*. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press. Accessed December 9, 2016. <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.lib.fsu.edu/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e5765>.

Ask the Editors, at Infoplease. © 2000–2015 Sandbox Networks, Inc., publishing as Infoplease. Accessed December 10, 2016. <http://www.infoplease.com/ipea/A0151192.html>.

Banerjee-Guha, Swapna and N.K. Sinha. "Kolkata." *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., October 5, 2012. Accessed January 2, 2017. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Kolkata>.

"De Mérode, Cléo." *The Red List*. Accessed January 3, 2017. <http://theredlist.com/wiki-2-24-525-770-925-view-1900s-1-profile-cleo-de-merode.html>.

Gianturco, Carolyn. "Longo, Alessandro." *Grove Music Online*. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press. Accessed December 3, 2016. <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.lib.fsu.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/16953>.

Hilton, Ruth B. "Scalero, Rosario." *Grove Music Online*. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press. Accessed December 9, 2016. <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.lib.fsu.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/A2092701>.

- Montecchi, Giordano. "Rota, Nino." *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press. Accessed October 19, 2016. http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.lib.fsu.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/23924?q=ninorota&search=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit.
- "Nino Rota Music Catalogue." Nino Rota Music Catalogue. Accessed October 11, 2016. <http://www.ninorota.com/>.
- Pironti, Alberto. "Alfano, Franco." *Treccani. Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani – Volume 2 (1960)*. Accessed December 16, 2016. [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/franco-alfano_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/franco-alfano_(Dizionario-Biografico)/).
- Radice, William. "Tagore, Rabindranath." *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press. Accessed January 26, 2017. http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/27380?q=tagore%2c%20rabindranath&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit.
- Robinson, W. Andrew. "Rabindranath Tagore" *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc. Accessed December 14, 2016. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Rabindranath-Tagore>.
- Saslaw, Janna. "Jadassohn, Salomon." *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press. Accessed January 24, 2017. <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.lib.fsu.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/14087>.
- "The Nobel Prize in Literature 1913". *Nobelprize.org*. Nobel Media AB 2014. Accessed January 4, 2017. https://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1913/.
- Waterhouse, John C.G., et al. "Alfano, Franco." *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press. Accessed January 25, 2017. <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/00547>.

Scores

- Alfano, Franco. *Corro come il cervo muschiato*. Milano, Italy: G. Ricordi & C. - Editori, 1936.
- . *Liriche*. Milano, Italy: Ricordi, 2008.
- . *Tre liriche*. Milano, Italy: Carish S.p.a., 1953.
- . *Tre poemi di Rabindranath Tagore da "Il Giardiniere."* Milano, Italy: G. Ricordi & C. - Editori, 1919.
- Liriche del Novecento italiano*. Milano, Italy: Ricordi, 2005.
- Rota, Nino. *Trio per Clarinetto, Violoncello e Pianoforte*. Mainz, Germany: Edition Schott, 2002.
- . *Trio per Flauto, Violino e Pianoforte*. Milano, Italy: Casa Ricordi S.r.l., 1958.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Francesco Binda's study of piano started in Italy, where he received invaluable private lessons. There, he graduated with the Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance at the Conservatorio Arrigo Boito in Parma, Italy. After moving to the United States, he obtained a diploma at the Cleveland Institute of Music and the Master of Music degree at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, both in Piano Performance. Most recently, Francesco Binda completed the program for the Doctor of Music in Piano Performance – Collaborative Piano at Florida State University.

As a pianist, Francesco Binda has performed numerous concerts as soloist and collaborator, both internationally and domestically. In Italy, prior to studying in the United States, he participated in public and private concert series. Domestically, he has continuously upheld his European roots and passion for diverse music, engaging himself in numerous ensembles, student recitals, seasonal orchestral concerts, and solo performances. During these years, he had the opportunity to perform for several renowned figures of the music world, which resulted in a stimulation of his critical thinking and expansion of his musical horizons.

As an educator, Francesco Binda teaches piano and coaches soloists and chamber ensembles. He maintains a private studio as well as teaching in private musical institutions. These experiences reflect his desire to guide students toward their growth as people and as musicians. Additionally, Francesco Binda teaches Italian, his native language. His practice extends from private coaching to instructing university graduate majors. Furthermore, he reached an intermediate knowledge of German and French through his degree program, that provided training in diction and vocal coaching. Francesco Binda's skills extend to the organ, harpsichord, continuo bass, and music technology.