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Adam Martin

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Musical Poetry:

A study of modern American Art Song

while setting: *The Raven*

Of all forms of music, few accomplish the goals of an artist like art song. The musical presentation of such an intimate medium as poetry, the simplistic yet powerful capabilities of keyboard accompaniment, and the primal allure of the human singing voice provide a venue of expression which captivates audiences, performers, and composers unlike any other. The highly expressive nature of this form makes it an invaluable tool of study when researching the lives of composers as well as the history and culture of their respective nationalities. Each composer writes song in his own way, but uses lessons learned from certain schools or styles, which are likewise influenced by their countries of origin. This results in trends and sounds typical to particular regions and countries; songs become identifiably “German” or “English,” etc.

These trends exist in American song as well. Due to the young age of the United States, only in recent years have we truly begun to develop a variety of trends within our national sound. Some of these trends are unique to the United States because of cultures or blends of cultures extant only in the American region and American history (with respect to Western music). Some come from movements in music history led or dominated by American composers. Others still have very strong European influences, but are uniquely American due to the specific influences in the lives of the composers. These kinds of influences, among other factors, are what join these very different trends as a unified “American” sound. This study, however, is more concerned with what makes these styles different, to the end of categorizing my newest addition to the United States’ collection of art song.

Edgar Alan Poe's poem, *The Raven*, is one of my all-time favorite works of literature. After I started composing music regularly, I was reintroduced to this poem and felt compelled to set it as an art song. The work in many ways begs to be presented musically; the story, form, poetic devices, and language all drive the reader to a complex but natural emotional path, providing countless opportunities for musical embellishment. At the same time, there are many factors that present a challenge to the composer, primary among which are the length of the poem and programmatic necessity of many of the verses. I considered a few options for setting this text, but I finally decided on solo art song to be the most appropriate. The only other setting I know of is for spoken narration and orchestra (my second choice) by Leonard Slatkin. The end result is a three movement cycle of the complete text. It is my hope that singers and researchers of this piece find the following passages concerning its formation helpful in their studies and pursuits.

It seems like a bit much for the art song setting, but there are many reasons, both poetic and musical, for the breadth and thoroughness of this piece. I would like to begin by discussing the finer elements in the poetry. The first thing I noticed about this poem (and my leading argument for an art song representation) is its unwavering scheme of rhythm and rhyme. For 18 stanzas, Poe maintains 11 lines of trochaic tetrameter, following (with very few exceptions) a consistent AAAB CCCB DBB rhyme scheme. In these verses, he presents an initially quaint, but eventually somewhat darker narrative discussing (at face value) three characters, two of which are present. The first person narrative allows the story to develop in such a way that maintains a mood of personal reflection, yet still allows for the other two more static characters (and is a perfect layout for the solo singer). Various poetic devices are used throughout in ways

that accent the rhythm and flow of the poem in conjunction with the mood and story, making it very natural to implement the same devices musically.

Before providing much of my own analysis of this poem, I would like to provide some insights from the poet himself. In letter to an admirer (dated January 1848), Poe writes of his recent “evil” poetic inspirations. He discusses the previous six years, a time in which his wife became ill and was pronounced dead, only to recover (yet remain very ill) and repeat the process many times until her death in 1847. He writes, “This ‘evil’ was the greatest which can befall a man...each time I felt all the agonies of her death.” It is this period of his life in which *The Raven* was published (1845). He discusses this work specifically in an essay, published in an 1846 edition of *Graham’s Magazine*, entitled “The Philosophy of Composition.” At first, and throughout, he discusses the mathematical rigidity of the poem and the process of writing it. In the first two phases of construction, (those of metrical charting and mood selection) Poe mentions a need for consistency. He heralds that a poem, by nature, should be brief enough to be read at one sitting, and therefore be written with the same complete continuity inherent in the reading experience. This led him to the consistent formula of rhyme and rhythm across the 108 lines of *The Raven*.¹ Later on, he says he decidedly incorporated a refrain, “Nevermore,” to further suit this quality. With the use of a one-word refrain, Poe afforded himself an opportunity to pivot the work on a recurring theme conducive to the tone and rhyme of the poem, such that each use can maintain some degree of variety. In his words, “I could make the first query...to which the Raven should reply, ‘Nevermore’...a commonplace one, the second less so, the third still less, and so on.” This creates a slowly developing dramatic effect that baits the reader with

¹ This line count is based on a 6 line stanza rather than the previously described 11. Poe’s 6 line format is the actual layout of the verse, but I included the 11 line layout for the sake of the extra line of rhyme Poe seems to consider coincidental.

relatable curiosity, and then builds gradually into fantastic climax and unforeseen resolution; Poe discusses this process of attaining beauty at length in earlier paragraphs of the essay.

In describing the action and plot of the poem, Poe begins with his selections in regard to setting. He chose a small room familiar to the narrator for a few specific reasons: this room bears memories of his lost love and intensifies the legitimacy of her character; it is a home and shelter to the narrator, and as such delays the ominous nature of the raven's character, but is also a small space that amplifies the danger of the raven's presence when it becomes apparent. The art song setting is quite conducive to this element of the poem's mood, as such literature is traditionally performed in similar venues (i.e. parlors, large guest rooms, etc.). The night is storming outside the chamber, both providing the raven with excuse of entrance and the reader with a tumultuous envelope for the narrator's false sense of security in his chamber. Every aspect of the setting contributes to a steadily darkening trap, which appears to be the underlying theme of the poem altogether.

Poe intentionally speaks very little to the topic of interpreting his work. This is surely in part to avoid letting a "true" or definite meaning spoil the readers' imaginations, but I believe the events in his life surrounding the publications of the poem and the essay have an influence in his reluctance. Both were written and released while his wife was ill, but before she passed. It is somewhat obvious to identify his wife's and own personifications in his work, and discussing such topics in a public analysis would surely open more questions than a tormented artist should care to answer. In consideration of his silence, any following comments with respect to interpretation or symbolism should be considered as my own and not observed in direct connection with Poe's essay.

As I read “The Philosophy of Composition” for the first time, I was taken aback by the alignment to my own interpretations and artistic process with which Poe described his work. He approached his poem with nearly the same methods and in nearly the same order as I approached setting the text to music. He approached shifting moods with the same motivations as I used shifting keys; he balanced the roles of each character with the same intention as I balanced their instrument and motif counterparts. We even were struck with the same late-poem verse as a starting point! Reflecting on the composition, I surmise that not a note would have been written differently had I read the essay beforehand, or that I would have satisfied my fascination with the poem and never written the song at all. My goal as interpreter throughout was to use the themes and techniques already present in the poem in a musical sense so as to accent the whole with the new element, rather than to add it as a new variable. I tried to think of the end result simply as a different (painstakingly scripted) method of recited delivery. I was very pleased to find that I very much succeeded with respect to following Poe’s intentions of craft. At this point in the discussion of the deeper themes in the text, I think it is appropriate to begin describing the musical elements in the song.

In the interest of inclusion, I want to discuss my process of setting the poetry from the beginning to the end. Before concerning myself with the text, I mused over more generally applicable elements such as key and instrument roles. In art song, the piano part has a very delicate and crucial role in the dramatic impact of the piece that supersedes that of simple accompaniment without overshadowing the singer.² I quickly drew a correlation between the role of pianist in art song and the role of the raven in *The Raven* as a passive but powerful driving dramatic force. This led me to shape the piano role as both a medium of mood and an

² Hall, *Art Song*, p. 9.

actor for the part of the raven. In the beginning measures of the score, it acts as the former, setting up the first accompaniment pattern, setting the key of f-sharp minor, and introducing the steady, somewhat melancholy and only slightly rushed tone soon to be taken by the narrator in the voice part. I chose this key primarily for the benefit of the pianist and secondly for the slightly shrill tone afforded by a few sharps in the key signature; I originally considered f minor, but decided it was more difficult to navigate and carried less intensity than if it were raised one half-step. In the first section of text I simply aimed to set up the phrase structure in the voice. The following lines of the first stanza incorporate simple word painting techniques, accenting the verbs in the line to provide audible scenery to the listener.

17

got-ten lore; While I nod-ded, near-ly nap - ping, sud - den-ly there came a tap-ping,

22

As of some-one gent - ly rap-ping; rap - ping at my cham-ber door. 'Tis some vis-i - tor,' I

The staccato markings over the word “tapping” work with the consonant sounds of the word to create a light tapping sound as the narrator might hear at his door. The descending minor second repeated on the word “rapping” produce a slightly more deliberate contrast to “tapping,” and the theme is imitated in the right hand of the piano part. In the final line of the stanza, the text “Only this and nothing more!” is set on a descending scale to the tonic in an attempt at finality by the narrator. The next stanza of poetry introduces the most positive natured character, Lenore, and is accompanied by the first major-modal passages of music: in the beginning as if in fond reminiscence and at the specific mention of her name. The final stanza of the movement follows the word painting trend as well; rolled chords on the word, “rustling,” *accelerando* with the quickening of the narrator’s pulse, pneumatic motion as the narrator attempts to “still the beating of [his] heart,” and repeated notes on the text repeated in reassurance. I unofficially titled each of the three movements for my own benefit, the first being “Once upon a midnight dreary.” As does this line in the poem, this movement serves the purpose of setting the tone for the rest of the piece.

The second movement showcases the highest degree of musical variety, as it follows the section of the story in which the main character shifts his emotional focus most often.

“Presently my soul grew stronger, hesitating then no longer,
‘Sir,’ said I, ‘or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore.
‘But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
‘And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door
‘That I scarce was sure I heard you!’ Here I opened wide the door.
Darkness there, and nothing more.”

The first line is one that explicitly announces a major shift in the narrator's character. He shifts from a timid being too frightened by the storm to answer the door to a stronger soul eager to provide hospitality to an uninvited guest. However, he is led into a path toward a level of fear he has never known by the last line of the same stanza in which he first saw confidence. I emulate these quick shifts in mood within the scene with my choice of chords, focusing on shifting tonal focus without changing modality. The "stronger" sense of self is introduced in the new tonic of C major (utilizing subtonic harmony rather than a leading tone diminished chord for the sake of adding more major chords). The rhyming sequence beginning with the second couplet is harmonized with trilled notes resolving to major chords to follow the apologetic sense of innocence exhibited by the narrator (and hoped for in his visitor). In the second portion of these lines, the minor seventh is added to the resolution to drive toward the resolve of the larger rhyme scheme on "door" with the tonic. The tonic is then repeated on the next line to respect the ending of the sentence. The next measure, thickly harmonized with a sequence of diminished chords, is designed to portray the narrator's still wary footsteps toward his door, and ultimately resolves to the relative minor when the narrator's attempt to confront his visitor ends in ominous confusion.

The uncertainty in the next passages is highlighted in the accompaniment in various ways. Chiefly, the harmony is centered around the dominant without many strong resolutions, and none at poetic cadences. The countermelody consists of a repeated staccato on a mid range fifth scale degree, keeping the dominant sound as an element in every chord and using the "tapping" theme prevalent in the preceding sections. The slower tempo affords the singer a more cautious tone with which to discover and foreshadow the coming terrors. More musical painting effects are used to accent the poetic text, i.e. "long" in m. 20 introduced two beats early on a

dotted half note, repeated half-step patterns on the sequence of progressive verbs, and the piano silence for “but the silence...and the stillness...” In m. 34-39, the desired effect is one that shows difference in the narrator’s roles as teller of and character in his story. The first instance of dialogue, the narrator’s utterance of the word, “Lenore,” is sure, by the context evident in the poem, to be fearful and timid, and as such is marked *pianissimo* and *sotto voce*, markedly different than the more direct passages of narrative text. The second quotation, identified as an echo, uses the same pitches on doubled note values and is marked similarly, but at a lower dynamic. So long as there is clear and sensible difference between narrator, character, and echo, these markings may be approached with a degree of interpretive freedom (as should any in solo song). The remaining bars leading to the tempo change in m. 46 are an antecedent form of word painting: the pianist performs a series of elongated turns on chords that modulate to the opening key, foreshadowing the following phrase, “Back into the chamber turning.”

“Soon again I heard a tapping” brings back a motive from the first movement that is developed nearly for the rest of the piece. It requires the pianist to play chords alternating the hands in rapid succession, as if tapping with both hands, doubling the speed in a dramatic flourish on the phrase “somewhat louder than before” as the singer peaks in pitch (and volume) on the syllable, “loud.” The pianist develops on more tapping motives in subsequent lines, following the nature and intensity of the narrator’s tone as he races to the need to still himself from a thickly scored minor plagal cadence before further investigation (on a much softer tonic resolution). Again, the piano plays the role of foreshadower, first portraying the wind, then setting the urgency and boldness with which the narrator “flung the shutter” open. Here enters the raven, personified at last in the piano with “flirt and flutter” of layered duplets and triplets as the mood changes slightly to show the narrator’s relief of finding a somewhat ominous creature

in place of a haunting apparition. The final lines of this movement introduce the raven in the quaint nature observed by the narrator, with the slightest undertones of dissonance foreshadowing its truly malevolent nature. The movement closes with three more examples of blunt word painting: perched, high and crisply articulated with a staccato marking; sat, approached by descending fifth and lingering on a low tonic; and, the unofficial title of the movement, “and nothing more,” sung unaccompanied on a familiar melodic motif.

The final movement opens with the development portion of the work as a whole. The new key, d-sharp minor, is used to maintain the minor mode while allowing the key of f-sharp to be used in both major and minor modalities, as the relative major of the section and home key of the larger work, respectively. The opening piano lines maintain the melancholy tone, but do so in a more delicate, almost playful manner not yet seen. This mood is maintained and even shifted through major modes as the narrator is introduced to the raven. The allegro marking in m. 27 is used to bring out the narrator’s astonishment and wonder at his guest, a change in tone intended by Poe as well, as mentioned in his “Philosophy of Composition” essay. This carnival-like tone is quickly done away with by a reprise of the depressing development theme at “But the raven...” in m. 39, (also similarly identified by Poe) this time in an f-sharp minor mode and closer to the first tempo in the movement. The melody of this stanza is aimed to follow speech patterns as much as possible while still following some sort of harmonic progression. I identified this text (as well as the remaining text until the setup for the climactic section, beginning in m. 95) as very slowly developing and low action. This presents difficulty because it is essential to the development of the plot, but lacks interest dramatically, and therefore lacks interest musically if accurately presented with respect to its surroundings. I combated this by drawing attention to poetic devices present in the text (ex. sequenced motifs on successively rhyming passages such

as 65-67 and 77-78), continued use of word painting effects (ex. *accelerando* on “fast and...faster m. 67, descending sequence at m. 76, “Then upon the velvet sinking,” etc.), and leaving room for dramatic embellishment on the part of the singer (ex. *con rubato* and stilled accompaniment m. 61 on “Doubtless”). Poe incorporates a technique in this section that causes the reader to break the monotony of his reading rhythm by using a dash in place of a poetic foot.

“Of never – Nevermore.”

When I read this part of the poem, I mentally inserted accompaniment chords on the missing eighth notes in the line; thus, a continued feeling should be observed in m. 70 as this text is so punctuated by the piano following the recurring “Nevermore” (the final unofficial movement title) motif.

The following three stanzas create the climax of the narrator’s emotion. The opening lines, transitional to the animated dialogue beginning with “Wretch!” are set accordingly, creating a “denser,” more ominous mood and relaxing into Seraphim’s “tinkling footsteps,” showcasing the alliteration with *staccato* markings. The final theme is then introduced, slightly developed, and climactically realized by the subsequent strophes in m. 99-143. I will draw attention to m. 119, the beginning of the first stanza drafted by Poe and first set by myself. The entire section (beginning in m. 99) should be approached by the performers in preparation for this end, but one should also notice the similarities between this passage and the piece in its entirety. This section heavily incorporates themes and techniques used in all other areas of the song. It begins with noticeable melancholy and begins to relax harmonically at “heaven,” a word suggestive of such a change. It progresses utilizing a phrase sequence for the larger sentence, but also using short motif sequences for rhymed and assonated passages. It follows a strict melodic

pattern for the text, “Quoth the raven, ‘Nevermore.’” The drastic tempo change and successive accelerando opening the final stanza has been repeatedly foreshadowed by the previous passages in the third movement. The following lines showcase the highest degree of vocal requirement, emulating the narrator’s official statement of the bird’s malicious and metaphorical nature with the words, “Take thy beak from out my heart,” peaking with a desperate unpitched shout in his final quoting of the raven, answered finally by the appropriate actor, the piano. This answer is delayed by a mocking repetition of the “Quoth the raven” motif, followed by a dramatically elongated version of “Nevermore” from the piano now realized as a fully participating character.

The final section should be approached with an intensity that truly invites the audience into the life of the narrating character. The use of the present tense, contrasting with the rest of the piece, invites the reader to imagine the raven as currently observing the retelling of the story; in the live recital setting, this ideally should suggest that such a creature is watching from the rafters of the concert hall! With this passage, the piano part is invited to think of itself entirely as playing the raven, considering accompaniment role passages as the scenic observer adding validity to the narrator’s story simply through its presence. The reprise of the original theme brings the listener back to quiet chamber, this time at a slower, defeated tempo rich with dissonant melancholy in place of the somewhat safer harmonic clarity. After the singer pours out his soul with the final line of text, (either descending from the high A natural, or continuing to the dominant C-sharp if he is so inclined) the piano closes with a somewhat lengthy coda. The final bars start with a reprise of the “Nevermore” passage from earlier in the movement, but progress to a major VI chord (plagal in the relative major key) resolution not previously seen. This is intended to symbolize the hope so desperately sought by the narrator, and is appropriately thwarted by the ominous bell tones of the minor fourth degree leading to the reprise of the

familiar chamber motif, closing with a quickly articulated reference to the phrase, “and nothing more,” as it is introduced in m. 15 of the second movement.

The underlying emotional drive of this piece (poem and song alike) is its most powerful quality. While interesting, the methods and constructs are not so much innovative in their own rights. Poe uses a strictly constructed verse which I emulate with a very straightforward and repetitive rhythm. The mood is consistently somber with regular glimpses of light showing just long enough to be dimmed right back out. These characteristics seem rudimentary or blunt until one realizes their true metaphoric significance: this is exactly what was happening to Poe at the time. His wife was repeatedly reported ill, dying, dead, alive, and ill again for three years before the publication of *The Raven*. Just as he had to relive her death, his narrator was haunted by the memory of his lost love via his “ghastly, grim” acquaintance. According to “The Philosophy of Composition,” this parallel would likely be cited as merely coincidental by the author, but I feel it central to the affect of the poem and incorporated it intentionally into the fabric of the song. The singer and pianist are equipped with haunting melodies, powerful harmonies, and relentlessly recurring themes with which to pull the audience into the same beautiful torment endlessly suffered by the character and the author.

Having discussed the details of the work, it is time to find its place among the annals of American art song. While none (to my knowledge) have endeavored to do so, it is evident that other composers would surely have set this text quite differently for a multitude of reasons. Some American styles would have used very different methods of harmony, expressing the same moods and characteristics with different keys, scales, and/or cadential styles. Others would likely have chosen to accent or ignore different elements of the source text when realizing it as a musical score. Let us explore some of these styles, using as reference examples from other

settings of American poetry, and try to find which group of composers would likely have set the most similar version of *The Raven* to my own.

Bearing in mind that American song is still a very young art form, we should limit our possibilities of classification to those most actively relevant to the genre. This eliminates most categories of jazz, musical theatre, and popular secular music from our concerns. This negates also such forms that have yet to mature and take hold with the researching and performing world. To seek only those forms that are most popular with these groups essentially focuses the attention to three groups: Euro-reminiscent/Neoclassical song, Experimental/Avant Garde song, and ethnically driven genres of song, chief among which is African-American music.³ Each of these genres shares some characteristics with *The Raven* as it stands, but all would surely show some (or many) discrepancies were they to bear their own setting of the text next to mine.

I would first like to compare *The Raven* with the elements of African-American spiritual songs. One could listen to one minute of the piece side-by-side with one minute of any spiritual and quickly identify that they are very different, but there are some common themes if we do some digging. Many spiritual songs use a high concentration of plagal, or IV-I (or iv-i) cadences. This is a commonly used technique in choral music as a sign of reverence for a Deity, (an “Amen” cadence) but is used much less often or deliberately in most art song genres. It is, however, incorporated into certain passages of *The Raven* to acknowledge elements of the supernatural. Although the greatest tie *The Raven* has to this genre is harmonically based, it still sounds at face nothing like a spiritual song. This is because it utilizes highly tonicized minor scale-based modalities, whereas most spirituals, major and minor, are focused on pentatonic

³ This selection of genres is based on the volume of available research. In my pursuit of the “most viable” styles of American song, these three were by far the most consistently mentioned.

scales. The opening theme of “Deep River,” a spiritual arranged by Harry T. Burleigh, is a perfect example of the style commonly employed in spirituals. The melody uses each note of the pentatonic scale and no others, and the harmony follows a clear progression colorfully accented by a few added notes and secondary dominant harmonies. This results in much less strident harmonies and much less angular melodies than those found in *The Raven*.

The image displays a musical score for the spiritual "Deep River" by Harry T. Burleigh. It is arranged for Voice and Piano. The score is written in common time (C) and the key signature has three flats (B-flat major or D-flat minor). The tempo is marked "Lento" and the dynamics are "p" (piano) and "pp" (pianissimo).

The first system shows the beginning of the piece. The voice part starts with a rest, followed by the melody: "Deep — riv - er, my". The piano accompaniment consists of chords in the right hand and single notes in the left hand.

The second system continues the melody: "home is o - ver Jor - dan, — Deep —". The piano accompaniment continues with similar harmonic support.

The third system concludes the phrase: "riv - er, Lord, I want to cross o - ver in - to camp ground." The piano accompaniment features a more active bass line in the final measures.

This results in much less strident harmonies and much less angular melodies than those found in *The Raven*.

By stark contrast, we turn our attention to a style of American song much more striking in quality than *The Raven*. In the early twentieth century, a number of American composers were searching for noticeably original voices.⁴ One such type of voice was a very dissonant, angularly melodic, scrupulously crafted style born of methods such as 12 tone serialism and intended atonality. Composers abandoned a need for beauty of song in pursuit of undeniable originality; this is not to say that this style is inherently not beautiful, but it is clearly neither the focus nor the traditional idea of what is beautiful. An example of this style can be found in this excerpt of *Charlie Rutlage* by Charles Ives.

⁴ Oja, *Making Music Modern*, 178-9.

faster and faster - - - fff louder and louder - - -

cut-ting horse he spurred; An - oth-er turned; at that moment his

22

mp slower

horse the creature spied and turned and fell with him, beneath poor Charlie died, His

fff

mp loco

p

* fists

8va lower

slower

r. h.

l. h.

The tonality of this section is littered with quick key changes, parallel chords, and numerous added dissonant tones. Both instruments are employing extended techniques; the voice is no longer singing, but speaking on approximated pitches, and the pianist is called to employ his fists to play the notated clusters. These, along with many other nontraditional techniques, create an entire realm of American music that sound, in the words of the cited composer, might “have little musical value,” “be given to students as examples of what not to sing,” or “cannot be sung” at all. (Hall, 284 – explain) While such extreme may not ring true in the ears of some listeners, this genre is very clearly discernible from other styles of American music.

The final American style under investigation is the American Neoclassical. It is this style with which I find *The Raven* to be most closely aligned. This music is characterized by its similarity to more traditional and European styles.⁵ Much like *The Raven*, this music uses traditional principles of harmonic motion and rhythmic arrangement as guides by which to focus more modern chord vocabularies and melodic contexts.

The image displays a musical score for the song "The Raven" by Edgar Allan Poe. It consists of three systems of music. The first system shows the vocal line with the lyrics "keep, And miles to go be - fore I" and the piano accompaniment. The second system continues the vocal line with "sleep, And miles to go be - fore I" and includes dynamic markings such as *p*, *pp*, *ppp*, *colla voce*, and *l.h.*. The third system shows the vocal line with the word "sleep." and the piano accompaniment, which includes a *rit.* (ritardando) and *pp* (pianissimo) marking. The score is written in 4/4 time and features a variety of chord voicings and melodic lines.

A beautiful example of this style is *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening* by Paul Sargent.

This piece, pictured above, exhibits many of the dissonant characteristics of rivaling

⁵ Hall, *Art Song*, 272.

experimental music, but maintains an air of harmonic sensibility commonly (and intentionally) lacking in its avant garde counterparts. *The Raven* employs such tactics as well; there are recurring examples of layered polychords and dissonances added for dramatic (as opposed to tonal) effect, but never so much that the progression (traditional or otherwise) is hindered or abandoned.

It is an interesting experience to comparatively analyze my own work. I feel as though I have learned as much about my own style as I have about the others with which I have surrounded it. I feared, in the beginning of this endeavor, that I might find much to change about *The Raven* as I considered the ideas of the American masters, or that I might find it altogether inadequate. Quite to the contrary, I am pleased to discover and account for the similar tactics employed by myself, composers who garnish so much of my respect, and the poet of my source text. I hope that those who observe this document and its appendices may learn as much; the composer to consider his poet and the thoughts of his contemporaries, the singer the motives and interpretations of his composer, and any artist to take time to reflect on his work and its impact upon his culture.