

Henry Purcell Songs

Book two

Galliard

DAVID P. LOTZ 3.00


Henry Purcell Songs

edited by Peter Wishart and Maureen Lehane

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INTRODUCTION

A publication like this ought to be unnecessary, at this time. If even a third of Purcell's vocal and other works were easily and cheaply obtainable in a respectably accurate edition (like virtually all the keyboard works of Bach have been for many years, put out by various publishers), there would be less reason for dissatisfaction. As it is, very few of Purcell's songs are so available, with an accompaniment which is not only in his harmonic and contrapuntal style but at all imaginative. Usually they are neither. One recent scholarly publication even gives an altered bass in a famous song. Yet there are few English people, and probably fewer foreign musicians who would make the claim for any other composer to be our greatest.

We have chosen for these three books sixteen varied songs which we like, though we certainly do not claim that these are necessarily the greatest. Several we have omitted because the orchestral prelude is such an important part of the song that to play it on the piano would be pointless, and would take up far too much space. For similar reasons we have omitted those which require a chorus. In short, these are songs suitable for recitals; some are very well known, while others will be new to many singers.

THE TEXT

While we believe the texts are accurate and faithful, no attempt has been made to present an *Urtext*. The texts of most of the songs have been drawn from *Orpheus Britannicus* and *Harmonia Sacra*, though we have consulted other sources where there were obscurities.

REALISATION

In most cases all that we have from Purcell is the voice part and a bass, with occasional figures. Sometimes (as in 'Dido's lament' or 'Hark! how all things with one sound rejoice') Purcell has left us some string parts which give us an authentic harmonisation. Elsewhere we have realised the bass using a familiarity with Purcell's style gained over many years of loving study and performance. It might be said here that a sparsely figured bass does not, as some seem to think, give one the opportunity to use a keyboard style, and indeed a harmonic language, derived from twentieth century practice. There is no longer any need for Purcell's basses and harmony to be altered wholesale, even in the name of imaginative performance. The bass and top parts impose their style on the rest, just as much as if Purcell had figured them completely. Those who have a real knowledge of Purcell's style will, no doubt, simplify or complicate as they think fit. Others should leave well alone, as Purcell's style is extremely idiosyncratic and hard to imitate.

KEYS

Original keys are given in the footnotes where they differ from those chosen, which are, on the whole, those which suit our performance. There is even less virtue in

sticking rigidly to Purcell's keys (except where specific instruments are to be used) than in, say, German Lieder; the composers of the latter were not above altering technical awkwardnesses arising out of transposition, which showed that they expected it. Indeed it was an economic necessity for them.

Accidentals which are editorial suggestions are set small in front of the note.

NOTES ON PERFORMANCE

Recitative In Purcell's time this is not like the later *recitativo secco*. It should be sung so that the pulse is discernible, though the short notes should hardly ever be exactly equal or rigid. This does not mean that a long stretch of recitative should all be in the same tempo, and we have usually suggested desirable changes.

Changes of time These present some problem to the modern performer as the old methods derived from prolation are now forgotten by most musicians. We have therefore suggested tempo relationships, and the performer can choose an overall tempo which feels comfortable.

Breathing Occasional marks are put in where there seems a need. Otherwise breathing should depend, naturally, on the words.

Phrasing and dynamics One of the most important things in the performance of this music is to try to hear where the rhythmic and phrasing accents are. The terms 'first beat' ('Since from my dear', Book one) and 'second beat' music (parts of 'Hark! how all things with one sound rejoice', Book two) are useful. Very often springing rhythm can be obtained by shortening the note previous to the accent (as suggested in 'Sweeter than roses', Book one, in the accompaniment to bars 35 to 39).

Where dynamics are concerned so much depends on the room, the singer, and the individual conception that we have put in a minimum of marks. All such marks, phrasing and speed indications are our suggestions and the performer is free to go his own way with due regard to style. Occasionally, however, some indications are printed in bold roman type, and these distinguish Purcell's own marks.

Dotted notes For much longer than many people realise, a dot after a note signified an *unspecified* lengthening. No double dot existed in Purcell's day and the use of a triplet mark over two notes of a triolet (actual compound time apart) is so rare that it is almost an impossibility. Therefore considerable freedom is permitted, and the jerky double-dotting often heard in Purcell performance (in the name of correct style) is sometimes not only unmusical but unstylistic to boot. These dotted note runs are, as often as not, a notation in a simple time for triplet groups. The performer must also realise that a dotted crotchet, in a passage containing dotted quavers, will probably need to be lengthened to fit the general rhythm.

Sometimes rhythmic alterations are put above the staff; these, of course, are editorial suggestions.

Ornamentation This is a difficult question, and on the whole we have not added any ornamentation except in repeated passages. It ought to be said however that the notion of performing music as it stands on the page is a very modern one and certainly would have been thought odd in the late seventeenth century. The following

abbreviations have been used; their interpretation given here is rhythmically approximate.

Written:



Performed:



Pianoforte and harpsichord Until there is a harpsichord (let alone a chamber organ) in every place where people perform, and a cellist in addition to the harpsichord in rooms of any size at all (particularly remembering that the accompanying harpsichords of Purcell's day had even less bass than most modern instruments, and certainly had no 16' stops), the pianoforte will continue to be used as an accompaniment to Purcell's songs. These are piano accompaniments, but can be transferred to the harpsichord or organ easily enough; experience or experiment will guide the player to adapt where necessary. It will sometimes be found that a large modern piano will serve best if the lid is shut down and the desk placed on top. Held bass notes intended for the organ (e.g. 'Lord, what is man', Book one) which cannot sound long enough on a piano, may have to be repeated.

It is worth reiterating, however, that the two things which Purcell left are the voice and the bass parts, and they should both be heard, so that harpsichord without a bass to match the voice and no cello (viola da gamba or whatever) is an insult to Purcell's art.

Introductions In those songs where there is no introduction (the majority), a simple tonic chord is the best beginning, though sometimes the last line of the song will do.

Sex of singers In Purcell's day people were indifferent to the sex of the singer, and many of Purcell's most passionate men's songs (as far as the words tell us) would have been sung by women or, indeed, boys. So ladies need not feel bashful about performing these.

We hope that experienced professional singers who may use this volume will not be offended by our simple directions for performance. They will surely know that beginners are often frightened off composers like Purcell because they have simply no idea where to start in the interpretation of them.

They may however find the collection useful in other ways.

PETER WISHART

MAUREEN LEHANE

Frome, Somerset, 1976.

DIDO'S LAMENT

Nahum Tate



Henry Purcell

VOICE

KEYBOARD

Notes The obvious problem in this aria is to sing these beautiful flowing legato lines with a tone quality which does them justice, and yet to give the impression that you are in fact a dying woman. Don't sing the dotted figures too jerkily; incorporate them into the long smooth phrases. The recitative of course does not have this difficulty. It lays the scene for the aria to come: use the rests as much as possible to help the effect of near collapse.

Source *Dido and Aeneas*

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Very soft

15

When I am laid, am laid in earth, May my

20

wrongs create No trouble, no trouble in thy breast.

25

When I am laid, am laid in

30

earth, May my wrongs create No trouble, no

35

trou - ble in thy breast. Re - mem - ber me, re -

- mem - ber me, but, ah! for - get my

cresc.

40

fate, re - mem - ber me, but, ah! for - get my

poco f

45

fate. Re - mem - ber me, re - mem - ber me, but,

pp

50

ah! — for — get — my fate, re — mem — ber me, but,

55

ah! — for — get my — fate.

60

dim.

AH! HOW SWEET IT IS TO LOVE

John Dryden

Henry Purcell

Andante

VOICE

Ah! — how sweet, ah! — how sweet, how

KEYBOARD

sweet — it is — to — love; Ah! — ah!

5 1

ah! — how gay — is — young de — sire!

Notes The singer here is surely no longer young. The song is almost one long, rather sad sigh, but there's a smile there too. When you come to 'all, all', emphasise the off beat; it gives a sighing effect.

Source *Orpheus Britannicus*. Original key G \flat minor.

2

-sire! And what pleas - - ing pains, and what

10

pleas - - ing pains we prove, When first, when

first we feel a lov - er's fire; Pains of

love are sweet - - er far, Than all, all,

15

all, all, all, all o - ther_ plea - sures_ are;

Pains of love are sweet - - er far, Than

20

all, all, all, all o - ther plea - -

1 2

- - - sures_ are. And what are.

FROM ROSY BOW'RS

Tom Durfey

Henry Purcell



Slow (Suddenly mad)

VOICE

From ro - sy bow'rs where sleeps the God of Love,

KEYBOARD

quicker

Hi - ther, hi - ther ye lit - tle wait - ing Cu - pids

mf

fly, fly, fly, hi - ther ye lit - tle wait - ing Cu - pids

Notes 'A Mad Song: by a lady distracted with love' says Durfey. (The directions in brackets are his.) Here you have a veritable scena, almost an opera in itself. Everything that is within the scope of a composer, but everything, has been done for you. Each tiny detail is painted - the cupids flying, for instance. But don't sing those notes like the ones for 'daring' a few bars further on; these latter lend themselves to being caressed. Listen to the cold despair as it falls . . . falls, or to the dead march. The scheme of the whole is recitative, aria, recitative as in opera, and as such it should be treated dramatically. Don't be afraid to act; after all you are a mad woman.

Sources *Don Quixote* and *Orpheus Britannicus*. ('This was the last song that Mr. Purcell sett, it being in his sickness.')

slow 10

fly; Teach me, teach me in soft me - lo-dious songs to move With

ten - der, ten - der pas - sion, my heart's, my heart's dar - ling -

15

joy. Ah! let the soul of mu - sic tune my

voice, To win dear Stre-phon, ah! ah! let the soul of mu - sic tune my

20

voice, to win dear Stre-phon, dear, dear, dear Stre-phon who my soul en-

(Mirthfully mad)

← d = d →

25

- joys. Or if more in - flu - en - cing is to be brisk and

leggiero

ai - - ry, With a step and a bound, and a frisk from the ground, I will

30

trip like a - ny fai - - ry; As once on I - da dan - cing, were

35

three ce - les - tial bo - - dies, With an air and a face, and a

shape and a grace, let me charm like beau - ty's god - - dess, with an

40

air and a face, and a shape and a grace, let me charm like beau - ty's god - dess.

← d = d →

Slow (Melancholy madness)

45

Ah! ah! 'tis in vain, 'tis all, 'tis all, all in

vain, Death and des-pair must end the fa - tal

50
pain; Cold des - pair, cold, cold des - pair dis-guised like snow and

rain Falls, falls, falls on my breast. Bleak winds in tem-pests

55
blow, in tem-pests blow, My veins all shi-ver, and my

fin - - gers glow, My pulse beats a

60
Dead, Dead March, my pulse beats

a Dead, Dead March for lost re -

65
-pose, And to a so - lid lump of ice my

(Fantastically mad)

70

poor, poor, fond heart is froze.

75

Or say ye Pow'rs,

80

say, say ye Pow'rs, my peace to crown, Shall I,

85

shall I, shall I thaw my - self or drown? Shall I,

90

shall I, shall I, thaw my - self or drown A - mongst the

95

100

foam - ing bil - lows, In - creas - ing all with tears I shed, On

105

beds of ooze, and crys - tal pil - lows, Lay down, down, down, lay

110

down, down, down my love - sick head; - say, say ye

115

Pow'rs, say, say__ ye Pow'rs, my peace__ to crown,

120

shall I, shall I, shall I thaw my - self__ or__ drown?

125

130 $\leftarrow d = d \rightarrow$

Shall I, shall I, shall I thaw my - self__ or__ drown?

Swift frenzy (Stark mad)

No, no, no, no, no, I'll straight run mad, mad, mad, mad, mad, That soon, that

soon my heart will warm, When once the sense is fled, is fled,__ Love,

135

love has__ no__ pow'r, no, no,__ no,__ no, no pow'r to__ charm, love has__ no__

pow'r, no,__ no,__ no,__ no, love has__ no__ pow'r, no,__ no,__ no,__ no,__ no,__

140

no, no pow'r to__ charm: Wild__ thro' the woods I'll fly,__

wild thro' the woods I'll fly,

Robes, locks shall thus, thus, thus, thus be tore, A thousand,

thou-sand deaths... I'll die, a thou-sand, thou-sand deaths... I'll die, Ere

thus, thus in vain, ere thus, thus in vain, thus in vain a-dore.

145

150

THE FATAL HOUR COMES ON APACE

Anonymous



Henry Purcell

Slow

VOICE

The fa - - - tal hour, the fa -

KEYBOARD

- - - tal hour comes on, comes on a -

- pace, Which I had ra-ther die

5

Notes An exercise in disciplined freedom, in rehearsed spontaneity. The vocal line of the first section has to be spun out, almost as you go along. Individual semiquavers do not want to be equal but, of course, the pulse must remain steady. This will pose problems for the accompanist, but it will teach him to listen.

Source *Orpheus Britannicus*. Original key E minor.

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than_ see; For when fate calls

you from this place, You go to

cer - - tain_ mi - se-ry, you go to

cer - - tain, cer - - - tain_ mi - se-ry.

15 The thought does stab me to the heart, And gives me pangs

no_ word can_ speak, It wracks_ me,

it wracks_ me in each vi - tal part; Sure, sure when you

25 go, sure when you go, my heart_ will break, sure,

Not too fast



30

sure my heart will break. Since I for you so

35

much. for you so much en - dure, May I not,

40

may I not hope you will, you will be - lieve;

45

'Tis you a - lone, 'tis you a - lone these wounds, these

wounds, these wounds can cure, Which are the

50

foun - tains of my grief; 'tis you a - lone, you a -

55

- lone, you a - lone these wounds can cure, which are the

60

foun - tains, are the foun - tains of my grief, grief.

HARK! HOW ALL THINGS WITH ONE SOUND REJOICE

Anonymous

Henry Purcell



VOICE *Quickly*

KEYBOARD *f*

5

10

Sources *The Fairy Queen and Orpheus Britannicus.*

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15

Hark! hark how

mf

20

all things with one sound re -

25

- joice, re - joice, re - joice, re -

30

- joice,

35 1

re - joyce. Hark! hark how

2 40

-joyce. And the world seems to have one

45

voice, the world seems to have one voice,

50 *V*

to have one

55

voice. Hark! hark how all things with

60

one sound re - joyce, re -

V 65

-joyce, re - joyce, re - joyce,

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