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Blue Mountain: A Chamber Opera for Winds and Voices by Justin Dello Joio: A Unique Contribution for Wind Band Literature

Armando Saldarini
University of Southern Mississippi

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The University of Southern Mississippi

BLUE MOUNTAIN: A CHAMBER OPERA FOR WINDS

AND VOICES BY JUSTIN DELLO JOIO

A UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION FOR WIND BAND LITERATURE

by

Armando Saldarini

Abstract of a Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate School
of The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

December 2014

ABSTRACT

BLUE MOUNTAIN: A CHAMBER OPERA FOR WINDS

AND VOICES BY JUSTIN DELLO JOIO

A UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION FOR WIND BAND LITERATURE

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December 2014

Blue Mountain is an opera in one act scored for four voices, and thirty-three instruments, commissioned by *Det Norske Blaseensemble*. Under the direction of Kenneth Jean, the premiere took place on October 8, 2007, at Kanonhalen in Oslo, Norway, as part of the Edvard Grieg Centennial celebrations and the 2007 Ultima contemporary Music Festival. The opera takes place in Troidhaugen, Norway, during the last days of Edvard Grieg's life. Suffering from emphysema, Grieg was being treated by his doctor with morphine that created great anxiety, fear, and mental torment. A visit from his friend, Percy Grainger, gave Grieg great pleasure prior to his death. This dissertation analyzes *Blue Mountain* in all its aspects from the draft of the libretto to the final opera.

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Armando Saldarini

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate School
of The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

Approved:

Dr. Catherine Rand
Committee Chair

Dr. Jay Dean

Dr. Gregory Fuller

Dr. Edward Hafer

Dr. Joseph Brumbeloe

Dr. Karen Coats
Dean of the Graduate School

December 2014

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Motivation

The purpose of this project is to fulfill requirements for the Doctoral of Musical Arts Degree in Wind Band Conducting. This four-part document explores the creative life of Justin Dello Joio and his one-act opera, *Blue Mountain* (2007), a work for four voices and an ensemble of thirty-three instruments. The author's interest in the multifarious connections between the two centuries of Italian and American wind band movements motivated the project.

The author's final project for the Master of Music in Conducting at St. Cloud State University entitled *Italian-American Wind Band Contributions: An Illustrated Chronicle*, describes the above connections. The work outlines the influences that Italian musicians had on the development of the American band movement beginning in 1805 when a group of Italian players joined the United States Marine Band.

The significant contributions of twentieth-century conductors and performers as William Revelli, Frank Bencriscutto, William Vacchiano, and Leonard Falcone are also discussed. Italian composers who emerged in the eighteenth century to the Italian-American generations of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries are studied. Among the most prominent of these composers are Vittorio Giannini, Vincent Persichetti, Norman Dello Joio, Frank Ticheli, and John Corigliano.

This author's past research served as the foundation for this project, for in the effort a marvelous composition by Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, was discovered. Upon listening to *Blue Mountain* for the first time, one will find a little-known contemporary

opera that is most aesthetically rewarding. The musical craft is clear and effective, while the text is both interesting and intriguing. When the work concludes, one knows that *Blue Mountain* is a special opera that deserves this study.

Research Questions and Overview of the Opera

Important questions about Dello Joio and his opera guided the writing of this project: Who is Justin Dello Joio? How did his mentors, Norman Dello Joio and Vincent Persichetti, impact his musical growth? What inspired Dello Joio to compose the opera? Why did Dello Joio rewrite the libretto? What was the compositional process? Which of Grieg's works did Dello Joio cite and why? Why is Grainger involved? How did Dello Joio decide on an appropriate musical style? What are the principal techniques of instrumentation? How did he choose the instrumentation? How important are his concepts of texture and color? Why is the work not performed? What problems of performance are intrinsic to the opera? And finally, what went awry in its publishing?

The libretto written by Andrew Boyle and edited by the composer recounts the end-of-life experience of the composer Edvard Grieg. Percy Grainger is a main character in the plot and citations of Grieg's music are used throughout.

While this is a contemporary work, some elements of "traditional opera" are present. The vocal parts are not stressed and a wonderful lyricism is conserved. The atonal musical structure allows for many color changes and effects befitting the libretto. Asymmetric rhythms and meter changes abound. Although the music and text do not overlap, together they form a singular and compact entity.

The opera, designed for wind ensemble, is rich in timbres that normally are not found in established wind band scoring. The combination of woodwind, brass, and

percussion, with the addition of solo violin, harp, celesta, and piano give the composition a kaleidoscopic variety of colors.

Blue Mountain, with its musical value and distinctiveness, deserves a place in the wind band literature; however, it is not well known. Investigating all of the above will reveal a deeper knowledge of *Blue Mountain* and hopefully increase audience appreciation for its future performances.

Description of the Document

Four main parts form the body of the paper: Chapter I, Introduction; Chapter II, Chapter III, and Chapter IV, Conclusion. The Introduction includes a description of the project. It presents and explains the motivation and questions that inspired the author to pursue this project. The Introduction further incorporates a narrative biography of Justin Dello Joio and examines key connections with influential people in his life. Dello Joio had a special relationship with each of his mentors. These mentors, icons of American music, Norman Dello Joio and Vincent Persichetti, carefully nurtured his growth as a musician. In addition, Dello Joio's experience as a young opera composer and his collaboration with important writers and novelists such as Johnny Gardner and Peter Shafer are explored.

Chapter II contains a synopsis of the plot and addresses the commission and the selection of the libretto. Insights into deviations by the composer from the original text are explained. Chapter III is a musical analysis of the opera in which texture and color, changes of meter, and instrumental techniques are discussed. In addition, *Blue Mountain* is discussed in terms of (1) the musical language as it relates to the libretto, (2) Dello Joio's innovative treatment of the four voices, and (3) the Grieg quotations.

The Conclusion found in Chapter IV is a critical evaluation of *Blue Mountain's* importance in the wind band repertoire. Only a few original works for voices and winds exist: *Little Three Penny Opera* (1928), Kurt Weill (1900-1950); *The Good Soldiers Schweik* (1957), Robert Kurka (1921-1957); and *Bandanna* (1999), Daron Hagen (b. 1961). Finally, interviews with significant musical personalities are in the appendices including one with the composer.

Justin Dello Joio

Justin Dello Joio was born on July 5, 1955, in New York City. An American composer and son of the composer Norman Dello Joio (1913-2008), he is a descendant of several generations of Italian and Italian-American musicians. At the age of five, he began to study piano and a year later composition. At seven he won a scholarship to the Juilliard Pre-College Program. As an eleven year-old, he composed a woodwind quintet, a brass quintet, and incidental piano music.

Dello Joio attended the Juilliard School of Music and earned his Doctor of Musical Arts degree studying with Vincent Persichetti, Roger Sessions, and David Diamond. Among his latest compositions are: *Due per Due for Cello and Piano* (2010), commissioned by Barlow Endowment for the New York Philharmonic principal cellist Carter Brey; *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra* (2010), co-commissioned by the *Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France* and the Boston Symphony for the pianist Garrick Ohlsson; and *Blue and Gold Music* (2008), commissioned for the tercentennial anniversary of The Trinity School in New York by the American Brass Quintet and organist Timothy Smith.¹

¹ Justin Dello Joio, "Official Web Site of Justin Dello Joio," <http://www.justindellojoio.com>

In 2006, he wrote *Blue Mountain* based on the homonym libretto written by Andrew Boyle. *Det Norske Blaseensemble* commissioned *Blue Mountain*, an opera in one act scored for four voices and thirty-three instruments. The premiere took place on October 8, 2007, at *Kanonhalen*, Oslo, Norway under the direction of Kenneth Jean as part of the Edvard Grieg Centennial Celebration and the 2007 Ultima Contemporary Music Festival. The work was recorded and released on Bridge Records in 2007.

Dello Joio and his work have been significantly recognized. Examples of his profile follow: (1) three awards from The American Academy of Arts and Letters; (2) John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship; (3) National Endowment for the Arts award; (4) an award from the New York State Council on the Arts; (5) the Aaron Copland Recording Foundation Award; (6) New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship; (7) two Meet the Composer Grants; (8) The American Music Center CAP Award; (9) and the Theodore Presser Foundation Award. On October 31, 2007, at Weill/Carnegie Hall, the Classical Recording Foundation awarded Dello Joio the Composer of the Year Award.²

The Dello Joio family has always held the operatic genre in high esteem. The elder dreamed of being an opera composer. However, according to Edward Downes: “...for a composer with such long-standing and profound admiration for Verdi, and so aware of his Italian heritage, Dello Joio has written surprisingly few operas.”³ For his third opera, *The Trial at Rouen* (1955), he wrote his own libretto. This last attempt,

² Ibid.

³ Edward Downes, “The Music of Norman Dello Joio,” *Musical Quarterly* Vol. 48 (April, 1962), 162.

largely unsuccessful, gave encouragement to increase his compositional efforts toward other genre and media.⁴

Clearly, the elder Dello Joio influenced his son Justin with his love for Verdi and opera. These influences were his role models for writing the vocal parts of *Blue Mountain*. According to Justin Dello Joio:

My father and I had some common ground in our taste of music. Basically, I enjoy and love the music that he loved, but I loved also all the music that he hated! So, by the end, we arrived at very different musical points. I think that his influences are very obvious, in the sense that I try to have melody and lyricism in my music, but I have other things as well.⁵

How Dello Joio arrived at his wind ensemble orchestration for *Blue Mountain* is humorous in that his first exposure to writing for winds came when the elder was arranging an orchestral suite from a television program entitled *Air Power*. He asked Justin to help complete a band version which he did. The elder reminisced "...and I gave it to him. But he changed it, and he made it how he liked!"⁶

At the Juilliard School, the young Dello Joio studied with Vincent Persichetti.

About his teacher, he recalls:

The thing about Persichetti that made him so marvelous is that he was a great, great teacher, a great musician, probably the best musician that I ever met, from a practical point of view and of course a fantastic man. He could hear a very complex twenty [sic] century orchestral piece, and then sit down and start to play it at the piano without the score. He had the most remarkable ear I have ever encountered. He had great practical kind of facility; he could read the score, getting a very clear sense in his heavy thoughts of what was going on, what the sound was like...⁷

⁴ Ibid., 165.

⁵ Dr. Justin Dello Joio, interview by author, New York City, May 20-21, 2013, transcribed and included in this work as Appendix A, 108.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid., 108

Persichetti's ability to read and play very complicated pieces at the piano is confirmed by William Schuman in the article *The Complete Musician: Vincent Persichetti and Twentieth-Century Harmony*.⁸ As a teacher, Persichetti did not impose his style, taste, or ideas on his students, rather he tried to help them improve what they were doing. About teaching, Persichetti asserts:

A musical creative gift cannot be recognized easily, and an honest teacher doesn't promise his composition students success, nor does he hide from them the many obstacles that lie ahead. He does everything possible to help the student acquire a well-developed knowledge of practical music. Composers cannot be fabricated by training. Creative talent must be clearly present. Creation is individualistic; it's a very private matter. The more talented a student is, the greater the number of my ideas that can be transmitted. The less talented students can often write music with continuity and structural proficiency, but without flair and originality. I find that the new entering graduate student who's been extensively trained frequently presents the most difficult problems.⁹

Persichetti's aphorisms influenced Dello Joio's own teaching. "I have many students, and I try to do similarly what he did, which is read music, hear very carefully with fresh ears, and I do not generally try to push them in the directions that are close to me. I just help them to do what they are trying to do. I think that his influence was very much that way."¹⁰

⁸ William Schuman, "The Complete Musician: Vincent Persichetti and Twentieth-Century Harmony," *Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 47, No. 3 (July, 1961), 380. "In contemporary music, for example, he has played virtually the entire 20th-century literature of chamber music and of piano with various solo instruments and voice. His score-reading ability has enabled him to play the most complicated orchestral compositions at the keyboard. His interest in the standard repertory and in the music of the earlier periods has always been as strong as his feeling for contemporary music. In short, there is no music he can resist."

⁹ Rudy Shackelford and Vincent Persichetti, "Conversation with Vincent Persichetti," *Perspectives of New Music*, Vol. 20, No. 1/2 (Autumn, 1981 - Summer, 1982), 130-131.

¹⁰ Dr. Justin Dello Joio, interview by author, New York City, May 20-21, 2013, transcribed and included as Appendix A, 109.

Justin Dello Joio's music is a mixture of both modern and traditional styles. A strong sense of lyricism and clear melodic writing combine with texture and color. These vital elements communicate feeling and emotion. While the harmonic language is largely atonal, strong tonal centers surface as in the music of Bartok (1881-1945), Britten (1913-1976), and Stravinsky (1882-1971).¹¹

In all of his music, and especially in *Blue Mountain*, the instrumental writing is strongly idiomatic.

I try to take full advantage of the players and their virtuosity, using instruments in the best way, exploring their potential and characteristics. That is part of the way I think as a composer and I believe that it influences my thinking compositionally, because I try to make music that can only be done on those instruments.¹²

He is also extremely cautious with the libretto. According to *Dal libro al libretto*, Pierluigi Petrobelli wrote:

...we must remember that the libretto, exclusively to be realized with music, is strongly connected with the realization of vocal parts and constantly tied with the instrumental accompaniment. It is important to keep in mind that the dramatic concept and the structure of a poetic text are much more linked with the composer (who will use them to write the score) than the writer himself/herself...composers such as, Verdi and later, Puccini went into the writer's studio dictating rules; the rules of his job.¹³ (Translated by Armando Saldarini)

Like Verdi and Puccini, he showed great interest in *Blue Mountain's* libretto, writing and re-writing many sections. His ability to work on the libretto came from Dello

¹¹ Joseph Straus and Igor Stravinsky, "Stravinsky's Tonal Axis," *Journal of Music Theory*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (Autumn, 1982), 261-262. "The need for a new theory, free of traditional or anachronistic associations, was also made clear by Stravinsky, the leading composer of non-tonal centric music...Stravinsky considered his music outside the sphere of diatonic tonality, yet organized around tone centres (or poles, or axes)."

¹² Dr. Justin Dello Joio, interview by author, New York City, May 20-21, 2013, transcribed and included as Appendix A, 104.

¹³ Mariasilvia Tatti, *Dal libro al libretto: la letteratura per musica dal '700 al '900*, Roma: Bulzoni, 2005, 21-22.

Joio's experience with two great writers, Johnny Gardner (1923-1982)¹⁴, and the American novelist and playwright Peter Shaffer. He and Johnny Gardner worked on a project for an opera based on the book *The Holy Sinner* from a Medieval epic poem by Thomas Mann (1875-1955). After four years on the project, Gardner completed a libretto.

We [Dello Joio and Gardner] ended up finally agreeing on how to do it, but in the course of all of this, I had a lot of chances to learn about [Gardner's intent], [and in] talking to the writer, how to plan for something. [We] had to take some preexisting material and start to figure out how [to decide the libretto] in the context of the opera. He gave me the chance to start to think in that way, because I am a composer and not a writer or author. This experience was very valuable. He ended up writing a complete libretto for the piece. I received the prologue of the first act and in a week or two the rest of the piece. But, just two or three days after I got the first draft, Gardner had an accident and was killed on his motorcycle. He was a really interesting guy, well read and well versed in music. Arguments in our discussion about how to do this or that were extremely important and useful because our minds and points of view were very different. He was always thinking of the characters and the words; I was thinking the opera.¹⁵

Upon Gardner's death, Dello Joio took the libretto, showing it to another important playwright, Peter Shaffer, a great opera fan and music lover.¹⁶ Shaffer's most

¹⁴ John Michael Howel, *Understanding John Gardner* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1993), 1. "John Gardner's death in a motorcycle accident near Susquehanna, Pennsylvania, on September 14, 1982, extinguished a vital force in American literature. He was a prolific author and an inspiring teacher and editor. Three of his novels – *The Sunlight Dialogus* (1972), *Nickel Mountain* (1973), and *October Light* (1976) became best-sellers at the time of publication; and *Grendel* (1971) ultimately, *Grender* is the most popular novel, is widely taught in American colleges and high schools."

¹⁵ Dr. Justin Dello Joio, interview by author, New York City, May 20-21, 2013, transcribed and included as Appendix A, 95.

¹⁶ Dennis A. Klein, "Amadeus": The Third Part of Peter Shaffer's Dramatic Trilogy," *Modern Language Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Winter, 1983), 35. "Many of Shaffer's works fall into the category of being a part of a trilogy. There is, for example, the musical trilogy, composed of *Five Finger Exercise*, *The Private Ear*, and *Amadeus*, in which the theme of music becomes increasingly more important from its point of departure in the first play to its more overt use in the plot of the second, and finally as the very subject on which *Amadeus*, sub-titled "a black opera," is created."

famous success, *Amadeus* (1984), became a movie that won eight Academy Awards.¹⁷ Shaffer liked the libretto, but found it too long. "...I agreed with him. The problem was that we had opposite opinions; I suggested something to him, and he did not like it at all. What was good for me, was not good for him. What was clever for me, for him was not. Finally, we stopped working on the project."¹⁸ Once again, the collaboration with a great writer helped increase Dello Joio's knowledge and understanding of the libretto's importance.

Currently, Dello Joio is occupied with producing a new opera, *The House of Spirits*. The novelist, Isabel Allende, has granted the rights to adapt her novel/movie as an opera. The commission is under consideration by major opera houses throughout the world. In addition to his career as composer, Dello Joio teaches theory, composition and orchestration in the Department of Music and Performing Arts at New York University's Steinhardt School. He lives in New York City with his wife Marianne Bachmann and their daughter Chiara.¹⁹

¹⁷ Anna Tims, "How we made: Peter Shaffer and Felicity Kendal on *Amadeus*," *The Guardian*, (Monday 14, 2013). "I came up with the idea for this play after reading a lot about Mozart. I was struck by the contrast between the sublimity of his music and the vulgar buffoonery of his letters. I am often criticized for portraying him as an imbecile, but I was actually conveying his childlike side: his letters read like something written by an eight-year-old. At breakfast he'd be writing this puerile, foul-mouthed stuff to his cousin; by evening, he'd be completing a masterpiece while chatting to his wife."

¹⁸ Dr. Justin Dello Joio, interview by author, New York City, May 20-21, 2013, transcribed and included as Appendix A, 97.

¹⁹ Justin Dello Joio, "Official Web Site of Justin Dello Joio." <http://www.justindellojoio.com>

CHAPTER II

*BLUE MOUNTAIN: AN OPERA*The *Blue Mountain* Commission

Andrew Boyle, an Irish writer and musician, wrote a short stage play entitled *Blue Man*. Blue Man, a mountain in Bergen, Norway, was a favorite retreat of Edvard Grieg (1843-1907). The mountain was a place where he often found peace and inspiration for his compositions.²⁰ The play relates the end of Grieg's life, the narrative of which, according to Benestad and Halverson's *Edvard Grieg: Diaries, Articles, Speeches, Blue Man*, may be found in his diary entries dated July 27 and August 4, 1907. The final entry occurs August 31, shortly before his death on September 4. The play's most recent performances took place in Norway in 2000-2001.

In the July 27 entry, Grieg writes about the arrival of Percy Grainger on the morning of July 25. The entry elucidates the obvious joy that the young composer brought to the elder Grieg.

And this enchanting, natural, deep, serious, and childlike nature! To gain a young friend such as this – what a joy! I could forget the physical ailments if the contrast did not so forcefully announce, like writing on the wall: He is a crescendo, you are a diminuendo. And to look objectively at this truth is difficult.²¹

In the entry of August 4 other details are given by Boyle: "...we accompanied the dear Percy Grainger to the steamship that was to carry him to his mother in Denmark," -
 "...what a human being! What a high idealist, what a child – and at the same time, what a

²⁰ Finn Benestad and Dag Schielderup-Ebbe, *Edvard Grieg: the Man and the Artist*, translated by William H. Halverson and Leland B. Stateren. (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 391. Grieg wrote to Jonas Lee in 1888, "The mountainous terrain of western Norway continually draws me back with irresistible power. It is as if they still had so very much to tell me."

²¹ Finn Benestad and William H. Halverson, *Edvard Grieg: Diaries, Articles, Speeches*, (Columbus: Peer Gynt Press, 2001), 193.

great and highly developed view of life,” and later on “...perhaps I am partial of him because he has in fact realized my ideals regarding piano-playing.”²²

Eleven scenes with six characters and a vocalist divide *Blue Man*. All of the stage music, both vocal and instrumental, is that of Grieg. The characters are: (1) Grieg, the ailing and hallucinating Norwegian composer who communicates with the spirit of his deceased daughter, Alexandra; (2) A girl, who is the spirit of Grieg’s daughter; (3) Nina, Grieg’s wife, who loves and cares for Grieg; (4) Gronvold, the doctor who attends to Grieg; (5) Grainger, a young virtuoso pianist who makes Grieg’s music immortal; and (6) a nurse. Benestad and Halverson relate that Grieg’s true caregiver, Mrs. Clara Sofie Jensen, watched Grieg during his last two days. One might say that she witnessed his last bow.²³

In 2004, Gaute Solas, the director of the *Det Norske Blaseensemble*, The Norwegian Wind Ensemble, became a visiting student in Dello Joio’s orchestration class at New York University. In 2006, after returning to Norway, Solas contacted Dello Joio and commissioned a work to commemorate the 100-year anniversary of Grieg’s death. Solas sent the composer Boyle’s play, explaining that he was interested in making a one-act chamber opera for his ensemble.

Boyle, who had commissioned to write the libretto, adapted his stage work *Blue Man* by making some significant changes including: (1) cutting the vocalist and two

²² Ibid., 194.

²³ Finn Benestad and Dag Schielderup-Ebbe, *Edvard Grieg: the Man and the Artist*, translated by William H. Halverson and Leland B. Stateren. (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 390. “...Suddenly something remarkable occurred, something that I will never forget. Grieg sat up in bed – augustly, as it were- and made a deep, courteous bow. It was not merely an involuntary movement of some kind. I had no doubt whatsoever that it was a real bow, exactly like those that artist make when they bow to the audience. Then he sank quietly back on the pillow and lay there, motionless. When the others came in, none of them was absolutely sure that he really was death...”

characters (the girl and the nurse); (2) changing the name of the doctor from Gronvold to Rossing, (an invented name, for according to *Edvard Grieg: the Man and the Artist*, Grieg's doctor was Klaus Hanssen,²⁴ while Aimar Gronvold (1846-1926) was a close friend and Grieg's biographer);²⁵ and, finally, (3) abbreviating the libretto.

Dello Joio's Libretto and the Italian Libretto Tradition

Dello Joio, faced with *Blue Mountain's* libretto, made decisions consistent with the great Italian libretto traditions. From the origin of the opera in the seventeenth century, composers have helped poets and writers edit their libretti. Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643), a perfect example of this partnership between composer and poet, gave Alessandro Striggio (1536/37-1592) and Ottavio Rinuccini (1562-1621) suggestions to improve the dramatic aspects of the libretti for both Striggio's *Orfeo* (1607) and Rinuccini's *Arianna* (1608).²⁶

Mozart (1756-1791) collaborated with important librettists: Lorenzo Da Ponte (1749-1838); Giovanni Battista Varesco (1735-1805); and Emanuel Schikaneder (1751-1812). In *Mozart and His Librettists*, Da Ponte, speaking of the opera *Così Fan Tutte*, wrote:

“Yes, yes, I'm sorry, I agree with the people who say that the main title is an insult to women. It was not my fault; I wrote these three operas for a composer who insisted that the poetry must be the obedient daughter of the music.” And this in turn is relevant only if Mozart told him what to say. Da Ponte was a verbal

²⁴ Ibid., 389.

²⁵ Finn Benestad and William H. Halverson, *Edvard Grieg: Diaries, Articles, Speeches*, (Columbus: Peer Gynt Press, 2001), 217.

²⁶ Patrick J. Smith, *The Tenth Muse: a historical study of the opera libretto*, (London: Gollancz LTD, 1971), 7. “We do not know how much of a share for the improvement of the dramatics of the libretto must be credited to the composer of *Orfeo* and *Arianna*, Claudio Monteverdi, but there is no doubt that his suggestions changed what Striggio and Rinuccini originally wrote. Monteverdi's influence on the libretto is directly comparable to Verdi's two centuries later.”

virtuoso. But that did not oblige Mozart to let him write his solo parts; and I consider, for many reasons, that Mozart literally 'composed' them himself.²⁷

Mozart believed that the music comes first, and the words second. This concept was diametrically opposed to the ideas of Christoph W. Gluck (1714-1787), the composer of *Alceste* (1767). In the preface he wrote: "I sought to reduce music to its true function, that of supporting poetry." Gluck expected the librettist to provide "strong passion, interesting situations, the language of the heart, and a continually varied spectacle."²⁸ Respecting and knowing about Gluck and his operas, Mozart confirmed that the words of the libretto were to be seen as one with the music.

Mozart was reaching for the view that the composer must create the dramatic shape and pattern that he needs. Only the composer can really judge what the resources and problems will be. It is he who will provide: the librettist must obey.²⁹

Verdi (1813-1901) gained fame as a composer who significantly affected the libretto of his operas. Patrick J. Smith, in his *The Tenth Muse*, wrote:

Verdi must be treated as a librettist in any study of the form. He had such definite ideas about the dramatic shape of his works and insisted so strongly upon obtaining what he desired that his influence upon the libretto was almost as direct as his poets', and in most cases was more important.³⁰

Giuseppe Vecchi wrote:

Different circumstances make the story of a libretto personal, unique and characteristic... especially if the composer, such as Verdi, has a clear and dramatic

²⁷ R. B. Moberly, "Mozart and His Librettists." *Music & Letters*, Vol. 54, No. 2 (April, 1973), 161-162.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 162.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 163.

³⁰ Patrick J. Smith, *The Tenth Muse: a historical study of the opera libretto*, (London: Gollancz LTD, 1971), 237.

concept of words, making decision selecting or deleting poet's lyrics.³¹
 (Translated by Armando Saldarini)

The *Otello* (1886) libretto confirms how important Verdi's decisions were and how they affected the librettist. Verdi received the first text from Boito in 1879. He considered the plot well written and decided to buy it for a future project. The letter that certified and consigned the libretto to Verdi is dated December 2, 1879. Boito and Verdi wrote over the next several months; however, in 1880, work suddenly ceased due to Verdi's attention to a new version of *Don Carlos* (1884), compressing the five acts into four. Once Verdi finished the revisions of *Don Carlos*, he and Boito completed the *Otello* libretto in 1886. One must note that six years had passed before the completion of the final version of the *Otello* libretto.³²

Other examples of Verdi's libretto machinations may be found in letters that Verdi sent to Francesco Maria Piave (1810-1876). Piave was librettist for ten of the thirty Verdi operas, including *Ernani* (1844), *Trovatore* (1853), *Simon Boccanera* (1857), and *La Forza del Destino* (1862). Verdi found Piave's libretto of *Simon Boccanera* unsatisfactory and without telling the Venetian poet commissioned another poet to revise the libretto. Later, in a letter dated February 1857, Verdi wrote:

Here is the libretto for you, shortened and polished, more or less as it has to be. As I told you in my other letter, you can put your name on it or not. If what

³¹ Giuseppe Vecchi, (Per il libretto del *Don Carlos*) *Atti del III Congresso Internazionale di Studi Verdiani*, (Parma: Istituto di studi Verdiani, 1971), 148. "La storia di un libretto per musica e' sempre un fatto individuale, irripetibile, caratteristico, per le circostanze che ne determinano la scelta, gli elementi che ne accompagnano la stesura, gli accidenti che ne stabiliscono l'ultima definizione: soprattutto se il musicista, come e' il caso di Verdi, interviene con una sua ben chiara concezione drammatica della parola, determinando scelte e ridudii."

³² Eduardo Rescigno, *Vivaverdi*, (Milano: Bur Saggi, 2012), 968.

happened makes you unhappy, it makes me unhappy as well, and perhaps even unhappier than you, but I can only say to you: *it was necessary!!*³³

This explanation about composers' influences on librettists describes how the composer/librettist relationship has remained the same over centuries. The letter that Verdi wrote to Piave in 1857 could have been a letter written by Dello Joio to Boyle.

Dello Joio read the play *Blue Man* and initially did not care for it. He did not know Grieg's music on a personal level and in reading the play he did not find anything inspiring. While deciding to accept or refuse the commission, he was likewise perplexed about the instrumentation of voices and winds.

Furthermore, Dello Joio had a project based on Allende's *The House of the Spirits* under negotiation with the New York City Opera.³⁴ Isabel Allende's novel had been made into a successful film that had inspired Dello Joio. With the discontinuance of the project with the New York City Opera for administrative reasons, Dello Joio decided to accept the commission proposed by Mr. Solas with some conditions.

These conditions included the following: first, the libretto was too long with ideas too numerous and unnecessary. He recognized the truthfulness in Boyle's libretto; however, he had something more brief in mind. Conductor Kenneth Jean argued that:

In its original form, the libretto was really unusable as lyrics. It is one thing to be able to write a scenario that is suitable to be turned into an opera, but quite another to understand the difference between words that are to be spoken versus words that are to be sung.³⁵

³³ Mary Jane Phillips-Matz, "Open Letters with his librettist Francesco Maria Piave" *Opera News*, Vol. 58 Issue 12 (March, 1994), 14.

³⁴ *The House of the Spirits* is a novel by Isabel Allende, which became a best seller when was published in Barcelona in 1982. In 1993, it was made into a movie.

³⁵ Dr. Kenneth Jean, interview by author, October, 2013, included as Appendix B, 113.

Having worked with the above cited writers/novelists John Gardner and Peter Shafer on *The Holy Sinner*,³⁶ Dello Joio states that “arguments in our discussion about how to do this or that were extremely important and useful, because our minds and points of view were very different. He was always thinking of the characters and the words, I was thinking the opera.”³⁷

One significant difference is that Boyle suggested that Grieg was in love with Grainger. Dello Joio refused the idea immediately for no evidence of this exists. Boyle’s idea probably came from Grieg’s diary. On May 24, 1906 he speaks about a dinner:

...[it was] very nice, but I missed Johannes Wolff and the marvelous Percy Grainger, who turned pages for me at the concert and whom I love as if he were a young woman. It is a dangerous thing to be strongly admired, but when one admires in return, as I do in this case, that evens it out. I have not met anyone who understands me as he does. And he is from Australia. So what is there to this reproach by the honorable critics to the effect that my music is too Norwegian? It is stupidity and ignorance and that is all.³⁸

Dello Joio began working on the libretto by making changes that cut almost fifty percent of the text. Silence became a metaphor for the piece, for Grieg feared his death and the death of his music. Grieg’s fears became the first and most important message of the opera. Dello Joio said:

By the time we got through revisions, my time became short. I started writing the piece. By the time I got two thirds through there was not time to continue our discussions, because Boyle and I were far away both from a physical point of view, he was in Norway and I was here, but especially for the idea of the libretto.

³⁶ See Chapter I, 9.

³⁷ Dr. Justin Dello Joio, interview by author, New York City, May 20-21, 2013, transcribed and included as Appendix A, 96.

³⁸ Finn Benestad and William H. Halverson, *Edvard Grieg: Diaries, Articles, Speeches*, (Columbus: Peer Gynt Press, 2001), 133.

So, I took the parts that I agreed with and I wrote the end of the libretto, because I thought that it was the weakest part.³⁹

Initially Boyle did not take credit for *Blue Mountain*, but later decided to attribute his name to the work.

Comparison of Boyle's and Dello Joio's Libretti

There are two libretti, Boyle's original and the final revised Dello Joio version. While both are divided into scenes, Dello Joio's is shorter. The shorter became more useful and fluid, more like an opera than a stage play. As Verdi once said about the libretto "brevity is never a mistake...brevity is what the audience wants."⁴⁰

When comparing the text of the first three scenes of the opera, one sees that there are slight differences between the two versions. The three male characters, Grieg, Dr. Rossing, and Grainger are basically the same. Some lines are inverted, some words are changed, and lines removed. These modifications do not, however, impact the characters or the story.⁴¹

Nina, Grieg's wife, appears in a different manner in Boyle's version. In the second scene, she is tired of Grieg and his illness. Grieg makes her angry by saying "I can't put my name to a testament! Not until Grainger has been and left." She reacts by saying, "I am exhausted now, I am near to breaking, I can't find the faith I need to hope for a miracle." At the end she weakens with "I just want to see you find some peace."

³⁹ Dr. Justin Dello Joio, interview by author, New York City, May 20-21, 2013, transcribed and included as Appendix A, 98.

⁴⁰ Mary Jane Phillips-Matz, "Open Letters with his librettist Francesco Maria Piave" *Opera News*, Vol. 58 Issue 12 (March, 1994), 14.

⁴¹ See Appendix H, *Original and Final Libretto Compared*, 128.

This last sentence elicits sympathy for her, for it intimates that Grieg's death would be liberation.

Another ambiguous moment in the third scene between Rossing and Nina comes as Rossing states that "Grieg will stay alive for few weeks." Nina replies, "If it's true, you must help me be strong. He seems to want to fight on and on." The impression is that Nina fears that Grieg will live longer than a few weeks.

In Dello Joio's version, Nina also becomes angry with Grieg; however her reaction is more sympathetic, answering and talking to her husband warmly and gently; using words as "...my love" and "...my Edvard." In the second scene, Nina's words are no longer ambiguous. Dello Joio separated Nina's sentences, and the character of those words changed. Nina pleads with Rossing, "You must help me be strong." Rossing answers: "All pain can be stilled," and Nina replies, "Grieg wants to fight on and on, with every last breath."

The third scene begins with an amusing dialog between Dr. Rossing and Grainger, while the fourth scene begins with a fun dialog between Grainger and Grieg, who did not recognize his young guest. In this scene Dello Joio's manipulation of the text is quite evident. The manipulation is a perfect example of Dello Joio's ability to condense and cut the unnecessary text, while saving the meaning, and improving the strength and musicality of the message. In the Boyle version, Grainger states:

My father left us when I was little while my mother was strict enough for two—or more. She forced me to the piano, an unwilling boy in a godforsaken corner of Australia. Then I stumble over music of Grieg, written nowhere near conservatory halls. Near a glacier perhaps, or some exotic place, was the man who wrote this music. You broke free from a lifetime of illness broke loose from the silence around you. Yes, an alpine rose in meager soil, but to bloom against the stiffest odds! Beauty in defiance.⁴²

⁴² See Appendix H, *Original and Final Libretto Compared*, 140.

Dello Joio compresses this lengthy dialogue as follows: “You have lived a lifetime of illness, but your music is like an alpine rose; it blooms against all odds, its beauty in defiance, your music sings. It sings for all who hear.” Dello Joio summarized the meaning, deleting unnecessary words and writing lines that are more mellifluous. This scene expresses Grieg’s desire to visit the mountains a last time; the mountains that give him peace, where he could laugh away his doubts and fears.

In scene four, Dello Joio made the first large cut to the dialogue. Several of Nina’s and Rossing’s interactions are deleted. A momentous change occurs with Nina’s anger over Grieg’s desire to adopt Grainger. Once again Boyle’s Nina complains to her husband, and expresses her anger, fear, and exhaustion saying:

I have been bent too often from black to white; now I’m near to breaking.
 The role of Mother? I got bad reviews. The role as your Muse?
 For this season only another has been given that part. Which leaves only minor parts.⁴³

Dello Joio’s Nina is different. She describes a life without a child that was difficult for both of them. However, he [Grieg] had his music. Nina tells him that his music warmed his heart and life, saying: “how hard it is for me, we both are childless, but you had the joy of your music, your music, is your joy.”

Dello Joio completely deleted Boyle’s scene five that describes Nina and Dr. Rossing’s discovering that Grieg and Grainger had gone to Blue Peak.⁴⁴ Worried, Nina and Rossing leave the house immediately and go to the mountain to help them. In this

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Blue Peak is the original name of the mountain.

ersion Nina is sweeter, showing her concern for Grieg's health and renewing her faith for the future.

Dello Joio's cut transformed the journey to Blue Peak into something that was only imagined by the two friends. About the change Dello Joio said, "It is like an idea that there is a place where he can go, in his mind or in reality, it does not matter, that gave him a sense of being powerful or being able to do what he wants to and feel everything that was in front of him."⁴⁵ It seems that Dello Joio did not want to give greater importance to Nina and Rossing than to the two musicians, Grieg and Grainger.

The last scene, Grieg's last night, differs the greatest. In Boyle's libretto two scenes are presented on the stage at the same time. The first involves Grieg and Grainger. Grieg arrives at the last moments of his life. He remembers the trip to Blue Peak with Grainger. Grieg imagines Grainger as his son and says, "Come closer, I can hear you, so lovely you are singing. It's a miracle that you were born at all and look at my daughter now!" Furthermore, Grieg shows love for his country, "Young and beautiful as Norway. Close closer and hold me now." And the second scene is Nina's narration of Grieg's last night and his last bow.

Dello Joio's finale version, different and musically effective, is confusing when one reads the text. In fantasy, Grieg and Grainger were on the Blue Peak. When Grieg says "I feel reborn," they disappear from the stage. With the two characters, Grieg's fears and struggles seem gone. Grieg has no fear, neither for his death, nor for his music's death. He no longer hallucinates. The last words that he utters from off stage, "Silence,

⁴⁵ Dr. Justin Dello Joio, interview by author, New York City, May 20-21, 2013, transcribed and included as Appendix A, 98.

oh silence,” confirm that all of Grieg’s troubles have vanished and that he finally has found peace.

In Dello Joio’s finale, Nina tells the story of Grieg’s last night. Nina’s words however lack clarity and are somewhat confusing, “And then...and then...and then...Still,” followed by Grieg’s, “Silence, oh silence.” These last words could be interpreted as the silence after Grieg’s death, or the silence of his music. The lack of clarity in the finale is reinforced by Jay Batzner who wrote: “The ending of the opera is nebulous and does not clearly convey the action in this audio-only setting. The plot description lacks detail on the moment as well, but the music is ethereal and touching so my lack of visual stimulus doesn’t bother me.”⁴⁶

In comparing Boyle’s and Dello Joio’s versions, some important differences arise that make relevant changes in the underlying message. Among the main characters, Nina’s role is the one that Dello Joio changed. She has a different attitude for her husband. It seems that Boyle looked at the couple’s past, while Dello Joio considered the last period of their life together. In *Edvard Grieg: The Man and the Artist*, Nina and Grieg had many difficulties in their love relationship from its outset. In Grieg’s diary dated 1866, there are only a few notes about Nina. And in a letter written by Benjamin Feddersen to Grieg, one understands their “strained relationship.”⁴⁷ Nonetheless, they married in 1867.

⁴⁶ Jay Batzner, “Blue Mountain Justin Dello Joio Bridge Records,” *Sequenza 21, the Contemporary Music Community*, CD Review, Bridge Records, (December 30, 2008).

⁴⁷ Finn Benestad and Dag Schielderup-Ebbe, *Edvard Grieg: the Man and the Artist*, translated by WilliamH. Halverson and Leland B. Stateren, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 98. “How I regard Miss Hagerup I would prefer to say to her directly. I am sorry that she has not understood her relationship with you; for no matter how much you may wish to excuse her I still maintain that she is not the woman who deserves to support and encourage you in the development of your talent...”

Around 1875, rumors from different circles of Bergen intimated that Nina had relations with John Grieg, Edvard's brother. During the following years, from the 1880s to the 1890s, the couple had many problems concerning their love story. In 1883, Grieg left Nina for six months. During that period, Nina is seldom mentioned in Grieg's diary. Furthermore, he was attracted to Leis Schjeldrup,⁴⁸ a young painter from Bergen who was living in Paris. Grieg did not want to return home. He describes his needs in a letter to his friend Beyer, "...I repeat: to come home now would be my undoing. It would be like putting me back in school, aborting my development – the process of fermentation that I can only undergo where I am."⁴⁹ Grieg finally made the decision to return home and stay with Nina. After their reunion, Edvard and Nina went to Rome.⁵⁰

After the reconciliation, Edvard and Nina had a new love story. From that moment forward they became inseparable. They travelled together, visiting many countries giving and attending numerous concerts. As witness to their rebuilt relationship Grieg related, "... [Nina has] great talent in communicating her intentions and mine to others..."⁵¹ or "...she is the only true interpreter of my songs."⁵² The best description of their love and their peaceful relationship may be found in a letter from Nina to Anna Bredsky dated December 14, 1906:

I am so happy during these evening hours, when after the day's work...we sit quietly and securely together and sense the warm mood that pervades the room.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 254

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 255.

⁵¹ Ibid., 305.

⁵² Ibid., 303.

We read aloud, engage in a bit of intimate conversation – in short, we are ourselves. It is the best time of the day. Therefore we get to bed too late, for we can't bring ourselves to allow these lovely evenings to end.⁵³

When one considers the two different periods of Edvard and Nina's life and the type of relationship that they had, one finds that Dello Joio's version of Nina's behavior and reaction toward her husband is more accurate and reliable.

According to Njål Sparbo, who performed the *Blue Mountain* premiere singing the role of Edvard Grieg, the libretto did not represent Grieg's figure well. He said:

I think the composer made many alterations to the libretto in order to improve it, but he should have been given a better libretto to start off with. Grieg wrote many letters, and the author should have based his libretto on Grieg's own style - his perspectives on life, and interesting comments about culture, society and humanistic themes.

Grieg was very troubled in this opera, sick and dying. In real life he was used to having poor health, and even if he had many things to complain about, he had a great sense of humor and witty remarks. With a better libretto, we could have displayed more of his character and his engagement in the European culture and politics.⁵⁴

While it is true that Grieg was a man involved in many fields including arts, politics, and religion, *Blue Mountain* only involves the last few weeks of his life. From Grieg's diary, we know that Grainger arrived on July 25, 1907 and left August 6. Grieg died a month later. After August 6th, Grieg's diary has only notes about his suffering. On August 25th, he wrote, "The 6th to the 25th has been continuous suffering. Difficulty in breathing and insomnia increasing... Today the 25th I am miserable after breakfast..."⁵⁵

⁵³ Ibid., 384.

⁵⁴ Njål Sparbo, interview by author, November, 2013, included as Appendix C, 117.

⁵⁵ Finn Benestad and William H. Halverson, *Edvard Grieg: Diaries, Articles, Speeches*, (Columbus: Peer Gynt Press, 2001), 194-195.

Grieg's illness was present months before his death. In May 1906, a letter from Grieg to his friend Rontgen describes his ill health, "The Adagio time has come. I suddenly feel two thousand years old and do not even have a desire to compose! I want only to get rest, rest!"⁵⁶

When one considers Grieg and his music and the importance of his country to him, it is evident that Dello Joio's finale ignores this aspect of Grieg. Examples of his love for his nation are declared in letters to Beyer, the first dated October 1887 and the second February 1898.

Yes, Norway! Norway! Let Ibsen say 100 times that it is the best to belong to a large nation: I can perhaps agree with him in the practical sense, but not a step further. Because ideally I do not want to belong to any other nation in the world!⁵⁷

When Norwegian music is performed in such a way that it has the effect of strengthening the love of our country, so that people develop a better understanding of our native art, then the effort to achieve this result is dictated by nationalism.⁵⁸

When making final considerations of the above, one may assume that Grieg was indeed a tired and sick man who wanted to find peace; therefore, both Boyle and Dello Joio both rendered accurate descriptions of his character.

Percy Grainger, the young Australian pianist and friend, was twenty-five years old when he visited Grieg. He was like a beacon of light. With him, the old and sick Norwegian composer found serenity and joy, hope for his music and strength to continue to fight his illness.

⁵⁶ Finn Benestad and Dag Schielderup-Ebbe, *Edvard Grieg: the Man and the Artist*, translated by William H. Halverson and Leland B. Stateren, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 388.

⁵⁷Ibid., 331.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

In Boyle's version, Grainger seems to be more fun and merry. An example of his contagious joy comes in the third scene. Grainger grabs Grieg lifting him up onto his back like a sack. Both laugh.⁵⁹ Cyril Scott, Grainger's friend wrote, "As a man Percy Grainger is one of the most original, dynamic, lovable and warm-hearted people I have ever met. Just as his enthusiasm for music is unbounded and undying, so is his affection for and generosity towards his friends."⁶⁰ When thinking of Grainger's attitude toward his friends, it is not difficult to imagine a situation like the one described above set by Boyle in his third scene. Dello Joio's shorter version presents Grainger in a more essential and less fun manner.

The last character of the opera is Dr. Rossing, known in the *Blue Man* as Gronvold. The parts have few differences with the exception of their length. Boyle states:

The figure of the doctor has been fashioned almost entirely from my imagination. There are certain facts that I have adhered to. Klaus Hanssen was a close friend. And he did rather over-medicate Grieg. As he is not a very positive figure in the play, and so much a figure of my own creation, I thought it unfair to give him the name of a real person.⁶¹

Both Boyle and Dello Joio versions include Nina's description of the night in which Grieg died. The description of that night may also be found in the statements of Clara Sofie Jensen, the nurse that was with Grieg at the moment of his death.⁶²

⁵⁹ See Appendix H, *Final and Original Libretto Compared*.

⁶⁰ Cyril Scott, "Percy Grainger: The Man and the Musician" *The Musical Times*, Vol. 98, No. 1373 (July, 1957), 369.

⁶¹ Andrew Boyle, interview by author, June, 2013, included as Appendix F, 125.

⁶² Finn Benestad and Dag Schielderup-Ebbe, *Edvard Grieg: the Man and the Artist*, translated by William H. Halverson and Leland B. Stateren, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 390.

Synopsis

The opera takes place in Troidhaugen, Norway, during the last days of Edvard Grieg's life. Suffering from emphysema, the composer is being treated by his doctor with morphine. Alone and afraid of silence, Grieg believes that both silence and drugs are consuming his life. In the midst of his mental anguish and turmoil, however, one bright occurrence ensues in that a visit from the young, famous Australian pianist, Percy Grainger, changes his entire physical and psychological state. Throughout the libretto Grieg exhibits an underlying fear that his music will die with him. The young performer assuages this fear through his admiration and understanding for Grieg's music. Through their relationship, Grieg is consoled and filled with hope for the future of his work.

Grainger's arrival in the libretto appears while the doctor confirms that the composer has little time to live. During the visit, Grieg perceives sounds coming from his studio. Recognizing his piano concerto, he thinks that he is mad. He enters. Grainger is near an old phonograph. Hence, Grainger reassures Grieg.

The opera concludes with Grieg's spontaneous, "Bring brandy and telescope! I'll show you the Blue Peak!" The two appear at the Peak of *Blue Mountain*, the source of much of Grieg's creative inspiration. From the top of the mountain, Grieg exclaims he feels reborn and full of confidence regarding his future and music. He laughs at his fears and doubts and the musical climax of the opera occurs. While his wife sings of his death, Grieg suddenly sits up and bows, as if to say goodbye to his audience. The opera concludes with the composer's voice from offstage with the first words of the libretto "Silence, oh Silence."

CHAPTER III
BLUE MOUNTAINS MUSICAL ANALYSIS

Musical Elements

Form. *Blue Mountain* is through-composed with a musical structure that is organized following the different scenes in the libretto. The score, divided into the following sections, is 740 measures long.

Section	from measure	to measure
Musical introduction	1	74
First scene	75	180
Second scene	180	361
First interlude	361	401
Third scene	401	494
Second interlude	495	505
Fourth scene	506	623
Third interlude	624	635
Fifth scene	636	698
Sixth scene	699	727
Epilogue	727	740

Figure 3.1. Scenes and Interludes.

Tempo and Meter. *Blue Mountain* has countless tempo changes. These vary from major to slight, small *accelerando*, *rallentando*, *senza misura*, *ad libitum*, *fermata*, and *caesura*. Generally all tempo nuances are connected with an expression of emotion in the text, increasing its dramatic power and emphasizing the sentiments of the characters. In

addition to tempo changes, there are one hundred and eighty-two meter changes giving one fourth of the work a changing meter. These simple, compound, and irregular meters make the work enormously challenging. The variety of changes and the rhythmic complexity suggests aleatory moments, which musically describe elements like madness, darkness or anxiety.

Harmony. The opera has moment of both tonal and non-tonal elements. The tonal centers are strongly connected to each other by tonal relations. For example, the main tonal center of the introduction is B, while that of the first scene is Gb. The enharmonic change makes the relationship between these two tonal centers evident (Cb = B or Gb = F#). In addition, at times a sense of a key (tonality) may be discerned, for instance, at measures 109-111 in which the chords Gb-Db-Gb elicit a I-V-I. “I write music that most of the time has a tonal center, which changes and moves from one area to another and the way those centers are created is the way that it is been done since the beginning of the twenty century music collapse of tonality.”⁶³

Alongside the tonal centers, there are aleatoric and “tone cluster” moments. Dello Joio states: “...the aleatoric parts are also difficult, if you want to create something musical and not just noise,”⁶⁴ and the conductor Kenneth Jean stated: “...players who have never seen this sort of practice will need to have everything made clear and perhaps even demonstrated, to succeed a good result and not just confusion.”⁶⁵ *Blue Mountain* is idiomatic and colorful. Conductor Jeffrey Renshaw of the University of Connecticut said:

⁶³ Dr. Justin Dello Joio, interview by author, New York City, May 20-21, 2013, transcribed and included in this work as Appendix A, 104.

⁶⁴ Ibid.,114.

⁶⁵ Jean Kenneth, interview with author, October, 2013, included as Appendix B, 116.

“I don’t think that an in depth harmonic analysis is necessary in this work. It’s more about pacing and emotion.”⁶⁶

Dynamics and Articulations. Due to its instrumentation, *Blue Mountain* has a wide dynamic range that goes from extremely soft moments (measure 90 or 103) in which the sound is almost imperceptible to other situations in which the power of the entire ensemble is expressed (measure 60 or 126). A perfect example of how the collaboration of dynamics and articulations increase the music’s expressivity can be found from measure 109 to 111. Among all the articulations, *sforzando* (sfz) and forte-piano (fp) are copiously used throughout the composition.

Orchestration and Instrumental Techniques. In making the instrumentation for *Blue Mountain*, Dello Joio used Stravinsky’s *Symphony for Wind Instruments* and Persichetti’s *Divertimento for Band* as a model. He chose these two monumental examples of wind band literature because they were orchestrated with the avoidance of doubling, therefore giving the works clarity. “One thing that I do not like about wind ensemble music is that sometimes there are so many doublings, which make the ensemble’s color gray... I do not like this kind of writing.”⁶⁷

In opening the first page of the score, one realizes immediately that color and texture are two vital elements of this composition. In the first five measures, the composer utilizes eighteen different sounds in a very distinctive manner with all the instruments involved as soloists. The eighteen sounds are 3 different tam-tams, breath sounds played by the brasses, alto flute, Bb clarinet, muted trombone, harp, piano,

⁶⁶ Dr. Jeffery Renshaw, interview with author, December, 2013, included as Appendix G, 126.

⁶⁷ Justin Dello Joio, interview with author, New York City: May 20-21, 2013, transcribed and included in this work as Appendix A, 102.

pizzicato strings, marimba, inverted large cymbal on timpani, Eb clarinet, bassoon, muted trumpet, stopped horn, crotales and vibraphone played with bass bow, celesta, and finally strings bowed.

In the preparation of the instrumentation, Dello Joio uses instruments not normally utilized in the wind ensemble setting such as alto flute, clarinet in A, and trumpets in C. On the other hand, the traditional parts, baritone sax and second alto sax, are missing. When one considers the entire wind band repertory, it is rare to find a solo violin in the ensemble without its being “the soloist.” Imagining some delicate parts of the opera, Dello Joio felt the need to use a solo violin. He explained:

It is really amazing what the sound of a solo violin can offer in terms of colors! I wanted to have the possibility to create a combination using the solo violin with the wind instruments and also with the percussion. It is really interesting... I thought that the sound of the violin helped me a lot in texture; thinking about some particular moments in the piece, where the sound of the violin helps so much, because it is so warm...you cannot have it with wind instruments.⁶⁸

In addition the instrumentation includes piano, celesta, and harp. These instruments help to increase the sound spectrum of the ensemble. In several measures they play alone creating a very distinctive sound and the illusion of a different ensemble. Finally, there are twenty-seven percussion instruments that enormously expand the colors and sound effects of the entire ensemble.

As for the instrumentation, Dello Joio said, “I thought that I was treating it pretty much as a chamber group and not as a regular wind ensemble.”⁶⁹ His concept of the ensemble as a chamber group and his vision of the sound are immediately clear by simply perusing the score. There are countless solos and entire sections of the piece that are

⁶⁸ Ibid., 103.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

performed by small groups of instruments. All the instruments and sections are independent but masterfully connected to each other. Finally, the technique of doubling parts is not used. Conductor Renshaw remarked about *Blue Mountain's* instrumentation: “The orchestration is what first attracted me to the work. It is very fresh and effective. The more we rehearsed the more the colors emerged!”⁷⁰

Woodwinds	Percussion
Flute 1, doubling Piccolo	Percussion 1: small Tam-Tam, Marimba, Crotales, Sizzle Cymbals, Small Splash Cymbal, Glockenspiel, Temple Blocks (5), High Bongo, Large Metal Sheet, Chimes.
Flute 2, doubling Piccolo	
Flute 3, doubling Alto Flute and Piccolo	
Oboe 1	Percussion 2: Medium Tam-Tam, Vibraphone, Vibraslap, Wood Blocks (5), Bass Drum, Whip.
Oboe 2, doubling English Horn	
Clarinet 1 in Bb	
Clarinet 2 in Bb	Percussion 3: Medium Gong, Large Tam-Tam, Hi-hat, Timpani, Snare Drum, Tom-Toms (5), Timbales, Pedal Bass Drum, Sizzle Cymbals, Large Splash Cymbal, Mark Tree.
Clarinet 3 in Bb, doubling Contra Bass Clarinet	
Clarinet 4 in Eb, doubling Clarinet in A	
Bass Clarinet	Harp
Alto Saxophone in Eb	
Tenor Saxophone in Bb	Piano doubling Celesta
Bassoon 1	
Bassoon 2	Solo Violin
Brasses	Solo Contrabass ⁷¹
Horns 1 – 4 in F	
Trumpets 1 – 3 in C	
Trombones 1 – 2	
Bass Trombone	
Euphonium	
Tuba	

Figure 3.2. Instrumentation.

Another important distinction in the opera is the instrumental writing. Clearly, instruments are not just used in a “traditional manner.” They are asked to produce many sound effects that are created by particular instrumental techniques, aleatoric sections,

⁷⁰ Jeffrey Renshaw, interview with author, December, 2013, included as Appendix G, 126.

⁷¹ Justin Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, (Anderson: Piedmont Music Company, 2007).

and very difficult overlapping rhythms. Dello Joio commented: “my vocal writing is simpler than my instrumental writing.”⁷²

Dello Joio is a composer and orchestrator who writes idiomatic music. He sees the potential that instruments can offer by taking advantage of their colors and nuances. “...I try to make music that can only be done on those instruments.”⁷³ All the instrumental techniques and sound effects requested and utilized in *Blue Mountain* are listed below in.

Figure 3.3.

Section / Instrument	Effects/Instrumental technique	Measure Number
Brasses	Breathe sound through instrument	1
Piano	Dampen string with finger at the node with L.H., play with R.H.	2
Perc. 3	(Inverted Large Cymbal on Timpani) Move pedal on timp. slowly	3
Perc. 1-2	Vibraphone played with Bass bow, arco	5
Trb. 1-2	Very rapid double tonguing, not flutter tongue	6
Tpt. 1-2	Alternate open and closed (with hand), not synchronized with rapid tonguing	7
Flutes	Flutter tongue	8
Strings	Glissando	10
Tpt.3/Trbs.	Rapid alternation of open and closed, not synchronized with rapid double-tonguing	11
Bsns, Ob, Hns, Sxs	Very rapid staccato, double-tongue if possible, with short rests, like Morse code	13

⁷² Dr. Justin Dello Joio, interview by author, New York City, May 20-21, 2013, transcribed and included in this work as Appendix A, 101.

⁷³ Ibid., 105.

Bsns, Ob, Hns, Sxs	(Playing 16 th notes)Very rapid, very length of breath	16-19
Trbs, Hns	Glissando	32
Tb, Eu	Clap mouthpiece	34
Tam-Tam	Scape with Triangle beater	71
Piano	Lowest cluster	83
Cb.	Release open A string do not stop on pitches	91-92
Pno, Hp	Very length of pause, very quiet, murmuring	100-104
Cls, Hns	Continue freely, without regard to meter or tempo	143
SD	Begin roll, slow down and diminish	233

Figure 3.3. Instrumental technique and sound effects.

Grieg's Music. In *Blue Mountain*: Dello Joio inserts fragments of four major Grieg compositions: (1) *Evening in the Mountain*, from *Two Lyric Pieces*, Op. 69 (1898); (2) *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra in A minor*, Op. 16 (1869); (3) *Violin Sonata in C minor*, Op. 45 (1865-1887); and (4) *Hall of the Mountain King*, from *Peer Gynt*, Op. 23 (1875).

Dello Joio embedded Grieg's music with the desire to create a musical tribute to the great Norwegian composer. He did not, however, seek to realize "a pasticcio" or to insert simple quotations. Dello Joio said: "...I treated it [Grieg's music] as counterpoint; I knew that I could use this line or that line of Grieg's music, which became part of the fabric. Whenever Grieg speaks of his music there is something there."⁷⁴

⁷⁴ Ibid.

It is interesting to observe the works that Dello Joio chose and how he used them. *Evening in the Mountain* is an original composition for voice and piano, later arranged for oboe, horn and strings in 1899. It is a “pastoral, a pure sensitive nature impression with echoes of goat-horn melodies that had so bewitched the two friends [Grieg and Beyer] on their trip to the Jotunheimen Mountains in the summer of 1887.”⁷⁵ Dello Joio used this quote in the first scene of *Blue Mountain* when Grieg sings: “Over my music there hangs a spell, a hollow echo to every note I write...”⁷⁶ A perfect connection between the *Blue Mountain* text and the above description of the original melody is evident.⁷⁷

The Concerto for Piano and Orchestra in A minor, Op. 16 is one of the most important of Grieg’s compositions. Certainly, it gave him international recognition as a composer. Dello Joio said that he was not familiar with Grieg’s music. He did not know it “at a personal level.”⁷⁸ However, this piece has several musical elements that connect very deeply with Dello Joio’s opera. These connections go beyond the mere fact that Grainger was a pianist who knew and played the *Concerto*, or that Grieg considered Grainger a great interpreter of his music.

⁷⁵ Finn Benestad and Dag Schielderup-Ebbe, *Edvard Grieg: the Man and the Artist*, translated by William H. Halverson and Leland B. Stateren. (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 353.

⁷⁶ Justin Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, (Anderson: Piedmont Music Company, 2007), 142.

⁷⁷ Brian Schlotel, *Grieg*, (London: BBC Publication, 1986), 21. “When conducting the work, Grieg used to conceal the oboist, who is given the long solo melody, immediately in front the conductor’s rostrum, so that his sound seems to be coming from far away and beyond the audience’s sight.”

⁷⁸ Justin Dello Joio, interview with author, New York City: May 20-21, 2013, transcribed and included in this work as Appendix A, 93.

Grieg's *Piano Concerto in A minor* has certain characteristics that are noteworthy. After the six-measure introduction to the first movement, the first theme begins, and at measure ten a "typical Grieg device emerges – the bold use of the augmented fourth."⁷⁹ At measure 30 a bridge based on Grieg's famous Norwegian folk dance "halling" rhythm connects the first theme to the second.⁸⁰ The use of a major second interval is an important structural device. Thus, in the opening of *Blue Mountain*, two elements are immediately presented and constantly used: the intervals of a second and an augmented fourth that become fundamental to the construction of the entire opera. In addition to melodic elements, many rhythmic motives are used, for example, the dotted eight-note characteristic of the first theme of the piano concerto.

The *Violin Sonata in C minor*, Op. 45 was Grieg's last chamber work. It took him two decades to complete.⁸¹ In *Blue Mountain* three measures of the sonata are used. There are theories on Dello Joio's embedding the C-Minor Sonata in the opera. First, this sonata is considered the legacy of Grieg's chamber music, and, in *Blue Mountain*, Dello Joio used a fragment of it when Dr. Rossing states: "...Edvard Grieg's legacy..."⁸² A second hypothesis is that having a solo violin in the ensemble made Grieg's composition for violin a natural choice. It could be surmised that Dello Joio scored the ensemble with violin specifically with Grieg's C-Minor Sonata in mind.

⁷⁹ Finn Benestad and Dag Schielderup-Ebbe, *Edvard Grieg: the Man and the Artist*, translated by William H. Halverson and Leland B. Stateren. (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 116.

⁸⁰ Halling is a Norwegian traditional folk dance.

⁸¹ Finn Benestad and Dag Schielderup-Ebbe, *Edvard Grieg: the Man and the Artist*, translated by William H. Halverson and Leland B. Stateren. (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 275-276.

⁸² Brian Schlotel, *Grieg*, (London: BBC Publication, 1986), 63. "The mood of the *Violin Sonata No. 3 in C minor*, Op. 45, composed at Trolldhaugen in the autumn of 1886 and finished there the following January, is prevalently tragic."

In the Hall of the Mountain King is the last Grieg composition used in the opera. This work is included in the second act of *Peer Gynt*, Op. 23, one of Grieg's most famous compositions.⁸³ In 1888, *In the Hall of the Mountain King* became the fourth and last movement of the *Peer Gynt Suite No. 1*. In 1891, just three years after it was published, the publisher confirmed that his *First Suite* had been performed on all five continents. The development of the piece is based on a constant intensification of dynamics and tempo. "This idea was later picked up by Ravel (*Bolero*) [and] Honegger (*Pacific 31*)..."⁸⁴ In homage to Grieg, Dello Joio features dynamics and tempo as the two vital elements in *Blue Mountain*.

Voices

Dello Joio, influenced by Italian opera since childhood, gained his love and appreciation for the genre and in particular for Verdi from his father. He used his knowledge of opera, a mixture of traditions and experiences, in making musical decisions in the selection of voices for his characters in *Blue Mountain*.

From a vocal perspective Verdi represented a cornerstone in Italian vocal style. In contrast to Rossini's elegant *bel canto* style, Verdi realized a total reformation in the use of voices during the Romantic period. This reformation began with the music of Rossini, Vincenzo Bellini (1801-1835), and Gaetano Donizetti (1797-1848). The new style

⁸³ Ibid., 85. "Audience were at once attracted by the picturesqueness of the movements, whose titles gave just enough programmatic information to make their subjects enticing."

⁸⁴ Finn Benestad and Dag Schielderup-Ebbe, *Edvard Grieg: the Man and the Artist*, translated by William H. Halverson and Leland B. Stateren. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 187.

arrived in the middle to late Romantic period with Verdi who earned the nickname “Attila of the Voice.”⁸⁵

In 1858, Rossini said: “Sing my running notes as the singers of the past did, so you will perceive the *accenti nascosti* (hidden accents) that a *vocalizzo* (vocalization) could have.”⁸⁶ Rossini’s statement was a warning for the emerging new vocal style that was more syllabic; a singing style closer to speaking style, progressively far from vocal virtuosity. Late Romanticism and its composers introduced a new kind of voice that was more syllabic, full of unison and instrumental doubling with tessitura that emphasized high registers. In short, the voice was more violent, stronger, and sharper compared with the *dolce* vocal style of Rossini.⁸⁷

Another interesting difference between Rossini and Verdi was the compositional decision regarding the use of the “leading voice” in terms of texture, balance, and color.

Rossini used the contralto as the principal voice. He wrote:

In order to maintain good intonation, the alto line in any composition must be given careful attention. If one wants good intonation, therefore, one should concentrate on the mid voice. Extreme ranges always project and by giving them too much attention the ensemble's sound is destroyed resulting in a shrill, out of tune, and unpleasant sound. (Translated by Armando Saldarini)⁸⁸

Verdi, instead of the contralto preferred the baritone voice to express tender and lovely emotions or stating principles of justice or freedom. Verdi used the baritone, but in

⁸⁵ Rodolfo Celletti, *Atti del III Congresso Internazionale di Studi Verdiani* (Parma: Istituto di studi Verdiani, 1972), 81.

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 81.

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 81.

⁸⁸ Rodolfo Celletti, *Atti del III Congresso Internazionale di Studi Verdiani*, (Parma: Istituto di studi Verdiani, 1972), 87.

a high range, close to the tenor. For this reason, a group of theorists proposed a change of the baritone's name to *mezzo tenore* in 1860.⁸⁹

In *Blue Mountain*, Dello Joio pushed the bass voice towards the highest notes rather than strictly copying Verdi's preferences. At the end of the instrumental introduction, Grieg begins singing with an impetuous "Oh silence!" reaching the high Gb, like a beacon in the night. In *Blue Mountain* there are four voices, which, in a different register, represent the four characters of the libretto. Edvard Grieg, Doctor Rossing and Percy Grainger are three male voices--bass, baritone, and tenor, respectively. Nina, Grieg's wife, is a mezzo soprano.

I read the play, instantly I knew what I wanted. About Grieg, I just had the sense that he should be a bass, having a feeling about the character. I knew that Grainger should be a tenor, having a baritone for the doctor. It is a kind of personality, a kind of character; the voice and the character's voice go together somehow. And Grieg's wife is an old woman, so she cannot be a young soprano. So, I decided for a mezzo-soprano.⁹⁰

Dello Joio, writing for voices in *Blue Mountain*, looked to Verdi's *Don Carlo* (1867) as a model, especially for the bass.

I looked at Verdi's *Don Carlo*. In this particular piece, there is a duet for two bass voices in the scene of the Great Inquisitor and Philip II: it is a very famous duet and it is one of my favorite of Verdi's works...I like Verdi very much. In this duet both the characters are basses. They have a range from low F to F two octaves above, and that is the register that I used.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Ibid., 88.

⁹⁰ Justin Dello Joio, interview with author, New York City: May 20-21, 2013, transcribed and included in this work as Appendix A, 100.

⁹¹ Ibid.

There are recitatives, *ariosi*, and arias in *Blue Mountain*. Full ranges are used expressing perfectly the feelings of the characters. The instruments are frequently used to help the singers, offering reference points for pitches.

Professional singers from the Norwegian Opera in Oslo who premiered *Blue Mountain* appreciated and commented positively on the quality of the vocal parts. Mr. Sparbo, who sang the character of Grieg stated, “The vocal parts are great to sing. Justin is a brilliant composer, and obviously knows the voice well...He used the whole range of the voice, and I really looked forward to the performances.”⁹² Mr. Soedal, the tenor who performed the part of Grainger remarked, “I wouldn’t say I found it difficult to learn these parts. The music and the libretto fluctuate in an organic way.”⁹³ Finally, Mrs. Marianne Andersen who performed the part of Nina said:

I loved singing the role of Nina Grieg. It goes both high and low in pitch which is a great treat for a mezzo who loves using the whole register of the voice. The composer writes very well for the voice and there were no particular difficulties that I can remember. Good vocal lines.⁹⁴

The above professional opinions support and recognize Dello Joio’s extraordinary abilities in composing for voice.

⁹² Njål Sparbo, interview by author, e-mailed October 23, 2013, included as Appendix C, 117.

⁹³ Nils Harald Soedal, interview by author, November 3, 2013, included as Appendix E, 122.

⁹⁴ Marianne Andersen, interview by author, December 10, 2013, included as Appendix D, 119.

Analysis

The following figure is a formal analysis of the Introduction of *Blue Mountain*.

Measures	Meters	Major tempi <i>Fermata/caesura</i>	*Aleatoric parts ^ Grieg music	Tonal Center
1-7	4/4	(m.1) ca. 50-52		B - at m.5 there is the first unison
8-10	3/4			
11	4/4	(m.11) ca. 112	*(m.11) →	
12	2/4			
13	5/4		*(m.13) →	
14	3/4			E - m. 14
15-30	4/4	(m.20) ca. 126 (m.21) ca. 108	*(m.16-17) →	B - m.21
31-35	3/4	(m.33) ca. 120	*(m.32) Fl. →	
36	2/4			
37-46	4/4			m.39-45 sequence
48-50	3/4			
51-55	4/4			Clusters - m.51-57 - colors and dynamics' game.
56	3/4			
57-58	4/4	(m.58) ca. 132		
59-60	5/4			Db - m59
61-63	4/4	(m.61) <i>fermata</i> lunga 10 sec.	*(m.60-61) Brass →	
64	5/8 (3+2)			
65	2/4			
66	5/8 (3+2)			

67	3/4		
68-74	4/4	(m.72) <i>fermata</i> (m.73) ca. 46-48 (m.74) <i>fermata</i>	Gb - m.68

Figure 3.4. Introduction.

At the outset of the opera in measures 1-7, a strong sense of instability describes Grieg's madness. It is generated by a multitude of different colors and sound effects that pass from one instrument to another. The major/minor 2nd and the perfect/augmented 4th are the four intervals largely utilized.

The musical score for the introduction of *Blue Mountain* (measures 1-4) is presented in 4/4 time. The score includes parts for Trombone 1, Trombone 2, Bass Trombone, Euphonium, Tuba, Percussion 1, Percussion 2, Percussion 3, and Harp. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major/D minor).

Low Brass Parts:

- Trombone 1:** Features a melodic line with dynamics *pp*, *mf*, *ppp*, and *p*. A "harmon mute" is indicated above the staff.
- Trombone 2:** Dynamics *pp* and *mf*.
- Bass Trombone:** Dynamics *pp* and *mf*.
- Euphonium:** Dynamics *pp* and *mf*.
- Tuba:** Dynamics *pp* and *mf*.

Percussion Parts:

- Percussion 1:** Small Tam-tam (dynamics *n* to *p*), Marimba (soft mallets, dynamics *n* to *mp*), and Crota (take bass).
- Percussion 2:** Medium Tam-tam (dynamics *n* to *p*), Vibraphone (take bass bow), and Inverted Large Cymbal (Move pedal on timp, soft II).
- Percussion 3:** Large Tam-tam (dynamics *n* to *pp*), and Timp (dynamics *pp*).

Harp: Dynamics *poco sf*.

Example 3.1. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, low brass and percussion, mm. 1-4. *Blue Mountain* by Justin Dello Joio, Libretto by Andrew Boyle, Copyright © 2007 by Piedmont Music Company. Used by permission.

First attempts to create a motif occur at measures 8-12. In measure 8 the augmented 4th becomes predominant due to the entrance of the bass trombone solo at measure 10.

Musical score for measures 8-10 of *Blue Mountain* by Dello Joio. The score includes parts for B. Tbn., Marimba, Crotonal (Crot.), Vibraphone (Vib.), Gong, Harp (Hp.), Celesta (Cel.), Solo Violin (Solo Vln.), and Solo Cello (Solo Cb.). The B. Tbn. part features a solo starting in measure 10. Percussion parts include Marimba, Crotonal, Vibraphone, and Gong. The Harp part includes chords: Eb F# G# and D#.

Example 3.2. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, low brass and percussion, mm. 8–10.

The motif finds its shape at measure 13 with the bass trombone.

Musical score for measures 11-13 of *Blue Mountain* by Dello Joio, focusing on the trombone parts. Tbn. 2 has a rapid alternation of open and closed mutes, not synchronized with rapid double-tonguing. B. Tbn. has a solo starting in measure 13. The score includes dynamics like *sfz* and *p*.

Example 3.3. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, trombones, mm. 11-13.

⁹⁵ Motif A = F-E-F# = down half step-up whole step
 Motif A' = E-F-F# = up chromatic half steps
 Motif A'' = E-F#-F = up whole step-down half step

From measure 16 to measure 20, a variation of motif A is played by timpani, bass trombone, horns, and saxophones. Aleatoric parts combined with a crescendo and accelerando create agitation.

The image shows a musical score for measures 16-20 of Dello Joio's *Blue Mountain*. The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes Horns 2, 3, and 4, and C Trumpets 1 and 2. The second system includes C Trumpet 3, Trombones 1 and 2, Bass Trombone, Marimba, Vibraphone, and Hi-hat. The score features a variety of dynamics and articulations, including *poco sf*, *sf marcato*, *mp*, *pp*, *mf*, *f*, *ffz*, *con energico*, and *open*. A specific section is labeled "Variation of motif A" with arrows pointing to the horn and trumpet parts. Performance instructions include "rapid double-tongue, not flutter" and "remove mute" for the brass instruments. The percussion parts include Marimba (hd mlts, med mlts), Vibraphone (hd mlts), and Hi-hat. A "Timpani Solo" section is also indicated.

Example 3.4. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, brass and percussion, mm. 16-20.

The situation drastically changes in measures 22-30 with the sudden arrival of an ethereal moment. The sound totally shifts. Celesta, harp, vibraphone, and glockenspiel with two flutes and two clarinets make this section truly light and dreamy. The sense of madness disappears. A bass clarinet solo brings back the previous situation at measure 30.

The image shows a musical score for measures 22-24 of Dello Joio's *Blue Mountain*. The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes Glockenspiel and Vibraphone. The second system includes Harp and Celesta. The score features a variety of dynamics and articulations, including *mp*, *p*, and *mf*. The performance is characterized by a light and ethereal sound.

Example 3.5. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, percussion, harp, and celesta, mm. 22-24.

A series of *glissandi*, *sforzandi* and overlaid complex rhythms recreate the tension that arrives at its climax in measure 37 with a powerful statement of motif A' in the horns, bass trombone, and euphonium.

This musical score shows the brass section from measure 36 to 39. The instruments are Horns 1-4, C Trumpets 1-3, Trombones 1-2, Bass Trombone, and Euphonium. The key signature has one flat (B-flat major/D minor) and the time signature is 2/4. The score features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes. Dynamics range from *p sub.* to *ff*. A 'Solo' section is circled in measure 37 for the C Trumpets 1 and 3, and the Bass Trombone. The Euphonium and Horns 1-4 play a powerful statement of motif A' in measure 37.

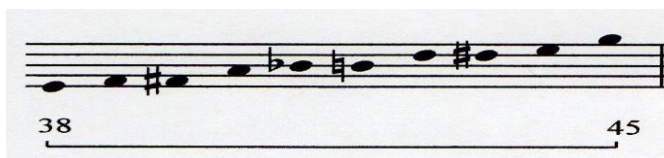
Example 3.6. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, brass, mm. 36-39.

Once again the bass trombone calls out in measure 38. Two intervals, a descending major 2nd and an ascending 4th both augmented and perfect, formed a new motif.

This musical score shows the trumpet and trombone section from measure 38 to 40. The instruments are C Trumpets 1-3, Trombones 1-2, and Bass Trombone. The key signature has one flat (B-flat major/D minor) and the time signature is 2/4. The score features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes. Dynamics range from *f* to *sfmf*. A 'Solo' section is circled in measure 38 for the C Trumpets 1 and 3, and the Bass Trombone. The Bass Trombone calls out in measure 38 with a descending major 2nd and an ascending 4th interval.

Example 3.7. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, trumpet and trombones, mm. 38-40.

A sequence played by the trumpets based on a pattern built on motif A' begins in measure 38.



Example 3.8. sequence, mm. 38-45.

A cascade of descending notes ends this section. This passage begins with high woodwinds, continuing with the brass, then falls into a solo timpani roll on F# and C (the interval of a diminished 5th or augmented 4th).

Example 3.9. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, percussion, mm. 48-52.

This new section (ms. 51-61) could best be described as “a color and dynamics game.” The instrumental sections play very quick crescendos and diminuendos creating an illusion of something that emerges and then disappears. At measure 58, a brassy rhythmic section leads to the first important aleatoric moment under a *fermata lunga*. This aleatoric moment vividly portrays Grieg’s madness.

Example 3.10 shows the brass section of Dello Joio's *Blue Mountain*, measures 60–62. The score includes parts for Tbn. 1, Tbn. 2, B. Tbn., Euph., Tuba, and S.D. (Soprano Drum). The brass instruments play a powerful, rhythmic line with dynamics ranging from *ff* to *f*. A Timpani solo is indicated for measure 62 with the instruction "Solo feroce".

Example 3.10. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, brass, mm. 60–62.

A timpani solo (m. 62) prepares the last part of the introduction. The following measures are very rhythmic accompanied with an intense crescendo. The tension continues, increasing and arriving in a desperate need for silence. Grieg screams, “Oh silence!”

Example 3.11 shows Grieg's vocal line in *Blue Mountain*, measures 69–72. The score includes the vocal line with lyrics "Oh si - - - - - lence!". The dynamics range from *ff* to *p*.

Example 3.11. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, Grieg, mm. 69–72.

Everything releases into silence, and a dramatic pause precedes Grieg's repetition. This second utterance is *tenebroso*, soft, and one octave lower.

Example 3.12 shows Grieg's vocal line in *Blue Mountain*, measures 73–74. The score includes the vocal line with lyrics "O, si - lence.". The dynamics range from *p* to *tenebroso, brooding*.

Example 3.12. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, Grieg, mm. 73–74.

Measures	Meters	Major tempi <i>Fermata/caesura</i>	*Aleatoric parts ^ Grieg music	Tonal Center
75-77	4/4			G/Gb
78	3/4			
79-92	4/4	(m.84) ca. 88		Gb - m.79 Bb - m.84
93	5/4	(m.93) ca. 68		
94-101	4/4		*(m.100-108)	
102	2/4	(m.102) <i>fermata</i>		
103-108	4/4			Gb - m.103
109-110	3/4	(m.109) ca. 60		Gb-Db-Gb I V I
111-118	4/4	(m.115) <i>fermata</i> (m.116) ca. 48-50		B - m.116
119-128	3/4			Gb - m.121
129-133	4/4	(m.129) <i>liberamente</i> (m.130) ca. 69		Cluster - m.129 (hns)
134	3/4			B - m.130
135-137	2/4			Onomatopoeic sound describes steps
138	3/4			
139-151	4/4	(m.144) ca. 56 (m.148) <i>fermata</i> (m.149) ca. 44 (m.151) <i>fermata</i>	*(143-147) → ^(m.144-145) ⁹⁶	
152-170	4/4	(m.152) ca. 66-69 (m.170) ca. 50	^(m.162-163) ⁹⁷	m.152 -156 little clusters

⁹⁶ *Evening in the Mountains*, Two Lyric Pieces, Op. 68, book 9.

⁹⁷ *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra*, Op. 16.

			Bb - m.157
			Gb - m.158
171	3/4		
172	4/4		
173-175	6/4		
176-178	4/4		
179-180	6/8	(m.179) ca. 100	

Figure 3.5. First Scene.

The introduction to the following Grieg recitative then occurs. The beginning of the opera is recalled with the breath sound generated by the brasses and the sound of the percussion. The woodwinds prepare Grieg's entrance playing rapid descending passages.

The image shows a musical score for woodwinds and saxophones. The instruments listed on the left are: Ob. 1, Cl. 1, Cl. 2, Cb. Cl., Cl. 4 (A) (labeled 'Clarinet 4 in A'), B. Cl., A. Sax., and T. Sax. The score consists of several measures of music. The woodwinds play rapid descending passages. Dynamics include *mp*, *pp*, and *ppp*. A 'Solo' marking is present above the Oboe 1 part. The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines.

Example 3.13. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, clarinets and saxophones, mm. 75-78.

A muted trumpet and oboe play a brief canon at measure 76 that is based on the inversion of motif A', only rhythmically modified. The two parts move in augmented 4th intervals.

Example 3.14. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, solo oboe and trumpet, mm. 76-78.

Grieg confesses that he is scared of silence and death. Appropriately his part is formed by intervals of a 2nd, augmented 4^{ths}, and 7^{ths}. Here Dello Joio's marriage of instrumentation and text is masterful. The color of the accompaniment is dark, produced by instruments in their low register.

A dark sound is also required from the percussion. However, the instrumental parts are not thick, so they can balance well with the solo voice.

Example 3.15. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, percussion, harp, piano and Grieg, mm. 80-83.

Grieg thinks that he is going mad and sees a dark future for his music and himself. Silence conveys his meaningless life. Measure 93 acts as an introduction to the following

arioso. Motif A' is present in many sections but overlaid with different rhythms. The *arioso* is divided into three parts with these parts being determined by the same number of fermatas.

In the first part, the instrumentation is very light. There is a rhythmic-melodic figure (a)⁹⁸ that bounces from one instrument to another in “quasi-hocket style” creating the effect of madness. The solo violin, using glissandi, imitates a cry.

The image shows a musical score for two instruments: Chimes and Vibraphone (Vib.). The Chimes part is in the upper staff, marked 'Chimes' and 'Solo', with dynamics 'sfz' and 'mp'. The Vibraphone part is in the lower staff, marked 'slow motor' and 'Solo', with dynamics 'sfz' and 'mp'. An arrow labeled '(a)' points to a specific rhythmic-melodic figure in the Chimes part.

Example 3.16. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, percussion, mm. 93–94.

At measure 100, brass sections reintroduce the effect of the “color and dynamics game” (see ms. 51-57). Clarinets, harp, and piano play freely repeated descending notes creating a tenebrous atmosphere and preparing Grieg’s word, “darkness.”

The image shows a musical score for three instruments: Harp (Hp.), Piano (Pno.), and Grieg. The Harp part is in the upper staff, marked 'mf' and 'pp'. The Piano part is in the middle staff, marked 'p' and 'pp'. The Grieg part is in the lower staff, marked 'mf' and 'f'. The score includes lyrics: 'a - head is on - ly dark - ness'.

Example 3.17. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, harp, piano, and Grieg, mm. 100.

⁹⁸ (a) = Two sixteenth notes and the interval of minor 3rd.

The second part begins with the same accompaniment as above; however, at measure 109 an intense crescendo increases the tension arriving at a dramatic sforzando in measure 111. This musical moment illustrates Grieg's desperation. He says, "...silence that washes my life." He dramatically and religiously repeats "my life" three times. These measures have a strong tonal feeling originated by the chords Gb-Db-Gb that as noted earlier create a quasi I-V-I progression. In the last four bars before the fermata, the instrumentation returns to dark, and figure (a) is played by the first clarinet and alto sax. The third part (ms. 116-129) is a "dialogue" between Grieg and the solo violin. Grieg remembers the death of his daughter. Both voice and violin are lyrical and the interval of the augmented 4th disappears in favor of bittersweet tender sounds.

Example 3.18. Dello Joio, harp, piano, and Grieg, mm. 118–122.

At measure 128, woodwinds match the violin and together arrive at measure 129 that concludes with a short and dry sforzando. Under the following fermata, a sustained sound of horns accompanies Grieg's solo. Grieg suffers from hallucinations and believes that he hears his daughter's voice. Musical elements used in previous sections that describe madness, for example, the breath sound, glissandi, "quasi-hocket" entrances in different sections, and figure (a), are still present. The trumpets play a counterpoint in

measure 135 based on a new rhythm that could be considered an anticipation of Grieg's piano concerto.

Example 3.19. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, trumpets, mm. 135-137.

At measure 139 bassoons and saxophone introduce a new rhythmic accompaniment based on eighths notes (b).⁹⁹ The section ends with a fermata at measure 143. Horns, clarinets, and harp begin to play in an aleatoric manner.

Example 3.20. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, horns, mm. 142-143.

In measure 144, Grieg states, “Over my music there hangs a spell...only your voice could break the spell”. Saxophones and bassoons play the first measures of *Evening in the Mountain*. These instruments are used as counterparts to Grieg's singing.¹⁰⁰ The voice becomes more lyrical compared to the previous measures.

⁹⁹ (b) = Repeated eighths note with a minor third as interval

¹⁰⁰ The melody of *Evening in the Mountain* is formed by the following intervals: two major seconds (B-A and A-G), a minor third (G-E) and a perfect fourth (E-B).

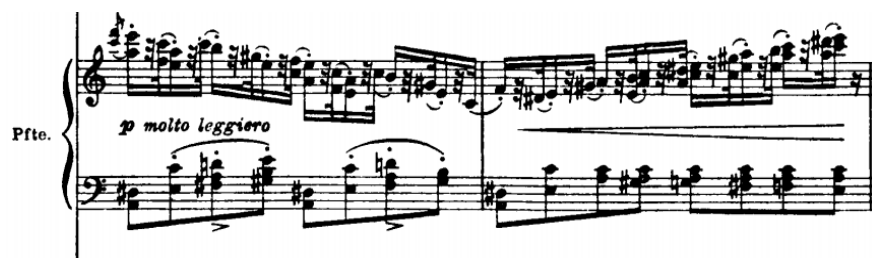
The image shows a musical score for four instruments: A. Sax., T. Sax., Bsn. 1, and Bsn. 2. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of two measures. Each instrument part begins with a double bar line, followed by a dynamic marking of *p* and the instruction *espr.*. Above each staff, there are two asterisks (**). The music features a melodic line with a long slur across both measures, with some notes marked with accents.

Example 3.21. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, saxophones and bassoons, mm. 144–145.

There is a pause of silence in measure 148. Grieg listens carefully, wanting to be sure. He then speaks, saying, “She is gone again.” The end of the section concludes as Grieg sings, “The awful night will finish me.” The color of the ensemble returns ominously dark with the use of the tuba, trombones, horns, and low reeds.

At this point in the opera, Grieg’s madness returns underlined by the return of the augmented 4th and violin glissandi. Trumpets and trombones play in counterpoint similar to measure 134. Element (a) is present in the bassoons and the English horn. The accompaniment (b) is played by horns and euphonium first, then in measure 157 by flute, clarinet, harp, and keyboard percussion. Grieg states that the following day will be a good day because Grainger is coming. His part becomes more lyrical, and once again the augmented 4th disappears. The oboe and solo violin play a contrapuntal part to Grieg. At measure 162, Grieg sings, “I heard Grainger play my music...”, and the piano enters with two measures of *Grieg’s Piano Concerto in A minor* (m. 35 and 36 of the original score).¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Edvard Grieg, *Piano Concerto in A minor*, Op. 16 (Leipzig: C. F. Peters, n.d.)



Example 3.22. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, piano, mm. 144-145.

At measure 164, Grieg leaves his lyricism, going back to a recitative style. The first scene ends with a return of Grieg’s madness. At measure 172, a dark color is sustained by harp and piano that play “*oscuro, murmuring,*” while the solo violin, flutes, and trombones play descending glissandi to *niente*.

 Musical score for harp (Hp.), piano (Pno.), Grieg, and Solo Vln. from Example 3.23. The score is in 4/4 time. The harp part is marked *mf* and *p*. The piano part is marked *pp* and features a descending glissando. The Grieg part has the lyrics "O, si - - - lence." and is marked *pp*. The Solo Vln. part is marked *pp* and features a descending glissando.

Example 3.23. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, harp, piano and Grieg, mm. 172–173.

Suddenly, in a last agitated moment, Grieg’s anxiety grows, musically underscored by an *accelerando* and overlaid with *sforzandi* in all the brass instruments. The low reeds ascend rapidly. Grieg’s screams are powerfully moving, “Oh the silence!” at measure 179, closing the first scene and opening the second.

Measures	Meters	Major tempi <i>Fermata/caesura</i>	*Aleatoric parts ^ Grieg music	Tonal Center
181	9/8 (2+2+3+2)			G/Gb
182-183	6/8			
184	10/8 (2+2+3+3)			
185	6/8			
186	9/8 (2+2+3+2)			
187	5/8 (3+2)			
188-189	9/8 (3+3+3)			
190	6/8			
191	7/8 (2+2+3)			
192-194	6/8			D - m.193
195	10/8 (3+3+2+2)			
196-202	6/8			
203	9/8 (3+3+3)			
204	6/8			
205	12/8			
206-212	6/8			Bb - m.206
213-214	9/8			
215-225	6/8			Eb - m.221 Bb - m.224
226-228	9/8			

229-234	12/8			
235-236	4/4	(m.235) ca. 50 (m. 236) <i>fermata</i>		Db - m.235
237	6/8			Bb - m.237
238	9/8			
239	10/8			
	(3+3+2+2)			
240	9/8			
241-246	12/8			
247	5/8 (2+3)			
248-254	12/8			
255	6/8			
256-260	12/8			
261-270	4/4	(m.261) ca. 90	*(m.262-267) →	G - m.268
271	6/4	(m.271) <i>fermata</i>		
272-276	4/4			D - m.272
277	6/4	(m.277) ca. 69		
278-296	4/4	(m.282) ca. 126-132	^(m.278) ¹⁰² ^(m.279) ¹⁰³ *(m284-286) →	Bb - m.279 Db - m.294
297	6/8	(m.297) ca. 96		
298	8/8 (3+2+3)			
299	6/8			

¹⁰² *Violin Sonata in C minor*, Op. 45.

¹⁰³ *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra in A minor*, Op. 16.

300	8/8 (3+2+3)			
301	6/8			m.301-304 There are open 5 th in the brass
302	8/8 (3+2+3)			
303-304	6/8			Bb - m.304
305	8/8 (3+2+3)			
306	9/8			
307	6/8			
308	8/8 (3+2+3)			m.308-310 open 5 th in the brass
309-316	6/8			
317	9/8			
318-319	6/8			
320	12/8			
321	9/8			
322	6/8			
323-324	4/4	(m.323) ca. 96		
325	3/4			
326	6/8		Trio	Ab - m.326
327	8/8 (3+2+3)			
328	6/8			
329	9/8			
330-331	12/8			
332-333	6/8			Db - m.333

334	8/8 (3+2+3)		
335	6/8		
336	9/8		
337	6/8		
338	8/8 (3+2+3)		
339-342	9/8		
343-357	12/8		Ab - m.353 - open 5 th in all the sections.
358-360		solo voices	C – m.358

Figure 3.6. Second Scene.

The second scene begins with the entrance of Dr. Rossing. It is the longest and most difficult. Grieg's persistent anxiety is musically described by a fast tempo, asymmetric meters, many *sforzandi*, and a fragmented accompaniment based on the idea (b) and motif A'. The eighth notes are very short, dry and "Stravinsky-like." Brasses, tenor sax, and bassoons drive the accompaniment.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a brass section. Each system contains staves for T. Sax., Bsn. 1, Bsn. 2, Hn. 1, 2, Hn. 3, 4, C Tpt. 1, 2, C Tpt. 3, Tbn. 1, Tbn. 2, and B. Tbn. The notation includes various dynamic markings such as *sfz*, *con energico*, *sfmf*, *mp*, and *f*. Performance instructions like "a 2" are also present. The score is written in a common time signature and features complex rhythmic patterns and articulation marks.

Example 3.24. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, brass, mm. 179-182.

Due to his use of morphine during the interval between measures 201 and 202, Grieg exclaims, “I will lose my mind.” In the following three measures, Dello Joio describes these words with a technique that could be called “cartoon music.” The music

continues with the same eighth-note rhythmic idea of the accompaniment (eighth notes). This section becomes increasingly lyrical with more legato phrases. There are two reasons for this change of mood: (1) Grieg speaks of Grainger, his dear friend, and (2) Nina is about to appear (m. 213). Dr. Rossing wants to give more morphine to Grieg, and in a few measures the music shifts to describe the effect of the medicine.

The fast descending notes of clarinets, bassoons, and the harp's glissando generate the illusion of Grieg's spinning head.

The image displays a musical score for reed instruments, specifically measures 216-219. The score includes parts for Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), Contrabass Clarinet (Cb. Cl.), Clarinet 4 (A) (Cl. 4 (A)), Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.), Bassoon 1 (Bsn. 1), and Bassoon 2 (Bsn. 2). The notation features eighth-note patterns with dynamic markings such as *pp*, *p*, and *mf*, and is characterized by slurs indicating legato phrasing.

Example 3.25. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, reeds, mm. 216-219.

Nina's short *arioso* begins in measure 229 with the same legato accompaniment of the previous measures. The section ends with a delicate accompaniment arriving at measure 234 with solo snare drum (on rim) preparing the solo bassoon (C# - G) and Nina's part. Nina asks Dr. Rossing to inform Grieg that Grainger will not come.

The image shows a musical score for percussion and vocal parts. The percussion parts include T. Bl., Wbl., Snare Drum (on rim w/sticks), Six Cym., and Celesta. The vocal parts include Nina and Rossing. The score is marked with dynamics like *pp* and *f*, and includes performance instructions such as "begin roll, slow and diminish" and "he'll not take it".

Example 3.26. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, percussion and Nina, mm. 233-235.

Dr. Rossing tells Grieg that he sent a telegram to Grainger postponing his visit. Grieg becomes very upset. The vocal parts are written in *arioso* style, and the accompaniment is very light with piano, oboe, and English horn soli playing in counterpoint to Rossing's part. This music illustrates Rossing's care in telling the news to Grieg. Suddenly the music changes in order to describe Grieg's anger. The accompaniment is filled with nervous, short notes and *sforzandi*. Rossing tries to calm Grieg in the final part of this section. A sparse accompaniment returns with bass and contra bass clarinets soli playing the accompaniment. Rossing sings soothingly.

In the central section of the second scene (m.261-271), Nina dreamily sings alone in a section accompanied by aleatoric instrumental parts. The piano, a harp, and clarinets build a dark background, describing the northern storm, and representing the bad period in which she and her husband are living. A sense of hope for the future returns in the last three measures. Sustained tones sound as Nina says, "the weather will be fine."

Nina tells her husband that his testament is ready to be signed. Rossing explains to Grieg that giving his estate to young musicians is a noble thought, but Grieg refuses to

sign it until Grainger visits and leaves. From measures 279-281, two of Grieg's works are used by Dello Joio as counterpoint to the voices: the *Violin Sonata in C minor*, Op.45, and the *Piano Concerto in A minor*, Op. 16. In measure 279, the Violin solo plays the first measure of the violin sonata transposed a sixth higher.



Example 3.27. Edvard Grieg, *Violin Sonata in C minor*, Op. 45, solo violin, mm. 1-2.¹⁰⁴

Example 3.28. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, solo violin, mm. 278-279.

In the meantime, the solo English horn plays the first two measures of the first theme of the piano concerto, originally played by oboe and clarinet in A.

Example 3.29. Edvard Grieg, *Piano Concerto in A minor*, Op. 16, reeds, mm. 7-8.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴Example 27 comes from the score of Edvard Grieg's *Violin Sonata in C minor*, Op. 45. (Leipzig: Edition Peters, n.d.), 55.

¹⁰⁵Example 29 comes from the score of Edvard Grieg's *Piano Concerto in A minor*, Op. 16. (Leipzig: Edition Peters, n.d.), 2.

From measures 282-296, Nina becomes angry with Grieg because he does not want to sign the legacy. The tempo increases and the accompaniment is based on sixteenth notes. The counterpoint played by trumpets and horns is formed by motif A. The accompaniment becomes relaxed and played in a legato style by the woodwinds, while the brasses, harp, and piano play accented open fifths from measures 297-325. Upon Rossing's entrance the musical atmosphere returns to anxiety and tension.

All three characters sing an intriguing arioso with separate lines of thought (ms. 325-361). Nina expresses her tenderness by singing, "my Edvard...my dear love..." Grieg asks "when Grainger will come." Dr. Rossing insists that Grieg needs more morphine. All the elements that were presented during the previous measures are present. Only one rhythm is new, the sixteenth in a compound meter. This rhythm, however, is an augmentation of figure (b). The last three measures are beautifully displayed *a cappella*.

Example 3.30. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, voices, mm. 357-359.

Measures	Meters	Major tempi <i>Fermata/caesura</i>	*Aleatoric parts ^ Grieg music	Tonal Center
361-366	4/4	(m.361) ca. 120		Clusters - m.361-366 - colors and dynamics' game.
367	2/4			
368-377	4/4			m.370-377 sequence

378-379	3/4		
380	2/4		
381	4/4		
382-385	7/8 (2+2+3)		E - m.382
386-399	4/4		
400	5/4		
401-402	4/4	(m.401) <i>fermata</i> (m.402) <i>fermata</i> <i>lunga</i>	

Figure 3.7. First Interlude.

Measures 361-366 are again “a color and dynamics game,” the same effect encountered at measure 53. The instrumental sections play very quick crescendos and diminuendos creating the illusion of something that dramatically emerges and then disappears. A brassy signal sounds the beginning of a sequence – the same sequence expressed in m. 40.

The image shows a musical score for brass instruments, specifically measures 361-364. The score is arranged in a system with six staves. From top to bottom, the staves are labeled: Bsn. 1, Bsn. 2, Hn. 1, 2, Hn. 3, 4, C Tpt. 1, 2, and C Tpt. 3. The music is written in 4/4 time. The dynamics are marked as *ppp* (pianississimo) and *f* (forte). The articulation is marked with accents. The score shows a sequence of notes that are played with a very quick crescendo and then a quick diminuendo, creating a dramatic effect. The notes are primarily quarter and eighth notes, with some rests. The overall effect is one of a sequence that dramatically emerges and then disappears.

Example 3.31. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, brass, mm. 361–364.

New and fresh soundscapes prepare Grainger's entrance in measure 382. This episode begins with a rhythmic and melodic ostinato played by the flutes, clarinet, and piano. Four measures later another rhythmic and melodic ostinato is played by the saxophones and horns. A jazz-fusion feeling is created in measure 394 with trumpets, trombones, and hi-hat. Grainger then arrives. Only the vibraphone plays, while Dr. Rossing asks, "Who are you? What do you think you are doing?"

Measures	Meters	Major tempi <i>Fermata/caesura</i>	*Aleatoric parts ^ Grieg music	Tonal Center
403-405	7/8 (3+2+2)	(m.403) ca.76		E - m.403
406-407	7/8 (2+3+2)			
408-411	7/8 (2+2+3)	(m.411) <i>fermata</i>		
412-413	7/8 (3+2+2)			
414	6/8			
415	9/8			
416	7/8 (3+2+2)			
417-419	5/8 (3+2)			
420-421	7/8 (3+2+2)	(m.421) <i>fermata</i>		Bb - m.420
422-424	4/4	(m.424) <i>caesura</i>		
425-428	6/8			E - m.425
429	7/8 (3+2+2)			
430	9/8			
431-455	4/4	(m.437) <i>caesura</i> (m.452) <i>fermata</i> (m.453) ca. 76		F - m.431
456	5/4	(m.456) ca. 60		

457-464		(m.457) ca. 76 (m.459) ca. 69	
465	3/4		
466	7/8 (3+2+2)		E - m.466
467	6/8		
468	4/8		
469-471	6/8		
472	9/8		
473-476	4/4	(m.473) ca. 50	Bb - m.473
477-478	3/4		
479	4/4		
480	3/4		
481	4/4		
482	3/4		
483-495	4/4	(m.495) <i>fermata</i>	B - m.483

Figure 3.8. Third Scene.

This scene is the most fragmented with many changes. From the musical point of view, fermatas, caesuras, and tempo changes follow the text perfectly by increasing its dramatic power. A fun dialog between Grainger and Dr. Rossing occurs. Here the vocal parts are written as recitative. The meter is 7/8 with accent changes (3+2+2, 2+3+2, and 2+2+3), which combined with a light instrumentation in the accompaniment imparts a feeling of nonchalance. The bassoon is the leading instrument in this section. Its nasal quality contributes significantly to create a comic atmosphere. The fermata at measure 411 is a humoristic pause serving to emphasize Grainger's answer, "O really?"

Example 3.32. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, clarinets and bassoons, mm. 403–407.

From measure 414 to measure 421, the accompaniment does not change; however, Grainger sings in an *arioso* style with an expanded range. Dr. Rossing tells Grainger to leave. The trombones play motif A with very short, pianissimo eight-notes. The tempo accelerates, and the vocal part becomes more excited. The instrumentation follows Grainger’s change of mood. The woodwinds play sixteenth notes using rhythm (a) to make these measures more animated.

From measures 435-437, Rossing responds to Grainger, “you seem the sort who’d be good at that.” Ironic glissandi underline Rossing’s words, giving him the role of a buffoon, and for a moment, *Blue Mountain* becomes an *opera buffa*.

Example 3.33. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, horns and trombones, mm. 435–437.

In measure 441, Grainger announces who he is and the instrument he plays. As he pronounces the words “play the piano” a very short two beat quotation of Grieg’s piano concerto appears. This embedded musical example is veiled by the horns and trumpets at the *sforzando-piano* creating an illusion. This leads the listener to ponder, “Did I just hear Grieg’s *Piano Concerto*?” A solo bassoon plays in counterpoint to Rossing’s part in measure 447. In measure 455 the bassoon and solo trumpet emerge from Grainger’s arioso in measure 444.

Grainger

prac-tise the con-cer - to with the old man him-self, then off to Eng-land on a whirl-wind tour.

ff (triumphant)

Example 3.34. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, Grainger, mm. 442-43.

Nina welcomes Grainger. At this point, Rossing tells the young pianist that he can stay overnight but that he must leave the next day after meeting with Grieg. The bassoon, oboe, and horn play a soft accompaniment based on motif A and A'. In measure 466, there is a short reprise of the beginning of the scene. Nina tells Grainger to go inside the house. A dark sound made by the low brass support Nina’s recitative (ms. 473-495).

Nina

Rossing

Is it true? on-ly a week, is it true? he just has a week or two? *free, brightening*

I'm sor-ry, I did-n't see you there.

Example 3.35. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, Nina and Rossing, mm. 473-475.

She asks Rossing if it is true that Grieg will only live a short time. From measures 476 to 478 the music is free of metric constraints. Rossing sings alone answering Nina's question. A duet with Nina and Rossing singing in *arioso* style occurs. Rossing is always accompanied by the low brass, while Nina's entrance is marked by clarinets. The scene ends with Rossing singing, "He can't live for long." A dramatically low and dark chord concludes the scene.

Measures	Meters	Major tempi <i>Fermata/caesura</i>	*Aleatoric parts ^ Grieg music	Tonal Center
496-504	4/4	(m.496) ca. 84 (m.497) <i>fermata</i>	*(497-498) —————→ ^(499-500) ¹⁰⁶ CD recording ¹⁰⁷	A - m.499
505	3/4			Bb - m.505

Figure 3.9. Second Interlude.

Dello Joio begins this interlude using the same concept of instrumentation as the introduction. The percussion (bass drum, tam-tam, and thunder sheet) and breathing sounds produced by the brass are heard.

The first two measures of Grieg's piano concerto are played by the piano, transposed a half step higher. A recording of the concerto is required. In measure 503 and 504, a brassy entrance prepares the beginning of the fourth scene.

¹⁰⁶ *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra in A minor*, Op. 16.

¹⁰⁷ Dello Joio considered the use of a CD recording of Grieg's *Piano Concerto*. Older recording preferred for scratchy sound.

The image shows a musical score for Example 3.36, which is a piano and CD recording of Dello Joio's *Blue Mountain*, measures 499-502. The score is arranged in five systems. The first system includes staves for Th Sht (Timpani), Ig B. D. (Large Bells), and Timp. (Timpani). The second system includes staves for Hp. (Harp). The third system includes staves for Pno. (Piano). The score features various musical notations, including dynamics (ff, sfz), tempo markings (a tempo, poco rit., a tempo), and performance instructions like 'Solo' and 'feroce'. The piano part has a 'Solo' marking and a 'feroce' marking. The harp part has a 'Solo' marking. The timpani part has a 'sfz' marking. The large bells part has a 'Solo' marking. The score is in 4/4 time and features a complex rhythmic structure with many rests and dynamic markings.

Example 3.36. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, piano and CD recording, mm. 499-502.

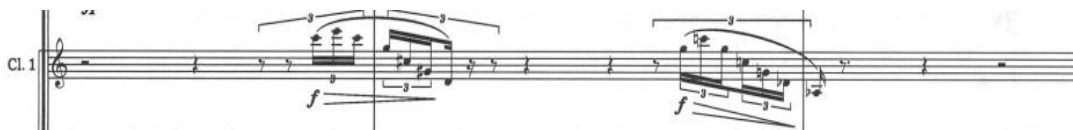
Measures	Meters	Major tempi <i>Fermata/caesura</i>	*Aleatoric parts ^ Grieg music	Tonal Center
506-515	4/4			Bb - m.506 F - m.510 A - m.516
516	<i>Senza misura</i>		CD recording	
517-520	3/4	(m.520) <i>fermata</i>		
521-526	12/8	(m.521) ca. 69 (m.522) ca. 93		
527	9/8			
528-536	12/8	(m.532) <i>fermata</i>		
537-543	4/4	(m.537) ca.82	^(m.538-541) ¹⁰⁸	E - m.537
544-545	3/4			
546-547	4/4			
548-551	3/4			m.548 Cluster made by 2 transposed

¹⁰⁸ *Evening in the Mountains*, Two Lyric Pieces, Op. 68, book 9.

				motifs A' overlapped.
552-562	4/4	(m.562) <i>fermata</i>		B - m.556
563-582		(m.563) ca. 50 (m.568) ca. 63 (m.575) <i>fermata</i>		Gb - m.565 B - m.577
583	2/4	(m.583) <i>fermata</i>		
584	3/4			Bb - m.584 open 5 th
585-590	4/4			
591-592	3/4			
593-604	4/4	(m.593) ca. 104 (m.603) ca. 50	^(596-597) ¹⁰⁹	Bb - m.603
605-608	3/4			
609-623	4/4	(m.609) ca. 104 (m.623) <i>fermata</i>		

Figure 3.10. Fourth Scene.

Grieg hears his piano concerto, and the deep, dark color of the horns prepare his entrance with the words, “the silence is drawing me to madness...” Madness is depicted by a capricious clarinet entrance.



Example 3.37. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, first clarinet, mm. 510-512.

¹⁰⁹ *Violin Sonata in C minor*, Op. 45.

In measure 514, Grieg says “my music” and a recording of his piano concerto emerges in measure 516 (*senza misura*).

The image shows a musical score for percussion. The top staff is labeled 'T. Bl.' and the bottom staff is labeled '1g B. D.'. The music is written in a 3/4 time signature. The first part of the score (measures 514-515) is marked *ppp* and includes a 'rit.' marking. The second part (measures 516-517) is marked '(Solo)' and *pp*. The score includes various rhythmic patterns and dynamics.

Example 3.38. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, percussion, mm. 516-517.

Grieg and Grainger are together in measures 522-524 when the composer says to his young friend that he dreamed that he heard Grainger play his music. A very legato accompaniment, played by the woodwinds, describes the tenderness between the two friends. Moreover, Grainger’s childlike freshness is described by a motif that is much like a children’s song.

The image shows a musical score for four clarinets. The staves are labeled Cl. 1, Cl. 2, Cl. 4 (A), and B. Cl. The music is written in a 3/4 time signature. The score includes various rhythmic patterns and dynamics, with markings for *mp* and *pp*. The music is characterized by a very legato accompaniment.

Example 3.39. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, clarinets, mm. 522-524.

From measure 526, Grieg’s vocal part becomes increasingly lyrical. There are no intervals of the “devilish” augmented 4th. An *arioso* by Grieg begins in measure 537. He is afraid that his music will die with him. In measure 538 a solo English horn plays Grieg’s *Evening in the Mountains* while the solo violin plays extended harmonics. Both

of these parts work as a counterpoint to Grieg's arioso. In measure 548, brasses sustain long tones, the first bassoon plays (a), and Grieg sings motif A' inverted.

The image shows a musical score for two parts: Bsn. 1 (First Bassoon) and Grieg. The Bsn. 1 part is in the treble clef and features a melodic line with slurs and accents, marked with a '3' and 'mf'. The Grieg part is in the bass clef and features a vocal line with lyrics: "I fear my mu-sic will die with me." The score is in 3/4 time and includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Example 3.40. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, bassoon and Grieg, mm. 548-552.

The woodwinds play rhythm (b) with variations and a layering of motif A. In measure 555, the horns have a similar figure played previously in measure 507 however, higher and lighter. This section ends with Grieg saying that he has a private ghost. Musical elements that earlier described madness enter, for example, trombone glissandi and a capricious entrance of the bass clarinet. Solo timpani dramatically sustain the sound while Grieg tells Grainger that he and Nina lost a child.

From measure 568 to measure 583, Grainger sings that Grieg's music is like "an alpine rose." It is one of the most poetic and lush moments of the opera. The accompaniment is heavier compared to the other sections. It is the first time that almost the entire ensemble plays in unison. Grainger sings lyrically arriving heroically to a high Bb on the fermata in measure 575.

The image shows a musical score for three parts: Pno. (Piano), Grainger, and Solo Vln. (Solo Violin). The Pno. part is in the treble clef and features a dense, rhythmic accompaniment with slurs and accents. The Grainger part is in the bass clef and features a vocal line with lyrics: "mu sic sings. It sings for all who." The Solo Vln. part is in the treble clef and features a melodic line with slurs and accents. The score is in 3/4 time and includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Example 3.41. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, Grainger, mm. 573-575.

In measures 577-583, Grieg says to Grainger that “he makes his music fresh.” Clarinets, saxophones, piano, harp, marimba, and vibraphone sustain this short arioso. In the last two measures Grainger continues to sing alone. Grieg remarks to Grainger that he would like to see the mountain for the last time (ms. 584-623). The piano, chimes, vibraphone, and glockenspiel play the “mountain motif,” overlaid by a series of open fifths.

Example 3.42. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, percussion and piano, mm. 584-586.

In measure 593, Grainger sings that they will be able to go to the mountain. The accompaniment to Grainger is similar to the one in measure 522.¹¹⁰ Then in measure 596 the *Violin Sonata in C minor* is inserted as counterpoint. Word painting likewise occurs in measure 599. A staggered entrance of the brasses gives the idea of a mountain, while Grainger sings: “how splendid, what a view, what do you see there?”

¹¹⁰ At m. 522, the woodwinds play the accompaniment in legato style.

Example 3.43. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, trumpets and trombones, mm. 599-601.

In measure 602, Grieg answers the question saying that the mountain is a special place for him. From there he has no doubts or fears. The accompaniment is made by short and simple chords played by trombones and horns. In measure 609, Grieg is interrupted by Dr. Rossing. He asks what they are doing. The scene ends with a fermata held by piano and harp.

Measures	Meters	Major tempi <i>Fermata/caesura</i>	*Aleatoric parts ^ Grieg music	Tonal Center
624-635	4/4	(m.624) ca. 76		B - m.624

Figure 3.11. Third Interlude.

These few measures depict a dialog between the alto flute and the solo violin.

Measures	Meters	Major tempi <i>Fermata/caesura</i>	*Aleatoric parts ^ Grieg music	Tonal Center
636-641	4/4			B - m.636
642	3/4			
643-657	4/4	(m.646) <i>fermata</i> (m.650) <i>fermata</i>		
			*(652-656) →	

658	2/4	(m.658) ca. 45	
659	4/4		
660	6/4		
661-666	4/4	(m.661) ca. 50-54	A - m. 661
667	2/4		C - m.667
668-672	4/4		
673	3/4		
674-698	4/4	(m.686) <i>fermata</i> (m.688) <i>fermata</i> (m.689) ca. 60 (m.696) ca. 50 (m.698) <i>fermata</i>	*(m.698) <i>ad lib.</i> → ^(m.691-692) ¹¹¹ Ab - m.691
697			

Figure 3.12. Fifth Scene.

Nina readies for a boat trip. Grieg would like to go; however, she refuses Grieg knowing that he is too tired. The accompaniment flows played by the woodwinds and horns, while in measure 641, there is almost no accompaniment. In measure 643, the two voices are sustained by the clarinets and flutes at a triple and double piano. Grieg sings, “let’s adopt him.” The following measures are aleatoric representing Grieg’s instability.

The musical score consists of four staves. The top staff is for the Harp (Hp.) with the instruction *mp sentito*. The second staff is for the Piano (Pno.) with the instruction *leggiero ppp*. The third staff is for Nina, with lyrics: "What, what do you mean?". The bottom staff is for Grieg, with lyrics: "son, a-adopt him." The score shows complex rhythmic patterns and dynamic markings, including a fermata over a measure in the piano part.

Example 3.44. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, Nina and Grieg, mm. 652–653.

¹¹¹ *In the Hall of the Mountain King*, from *Peer Gynt*, Op. 23.

Then, Nina becomes angry. Rapid notes between the piano and flutes with a sudden brassy crescendo and sforzando describe her reaction.

The image shows a musical score for three trombones (Tbn. 1, Tbn. 2, B. Tbn.), Piano (Pno.), and a vocal line for Nina. The trombone parts feature dynamic markings of *sf* (sforzando), *p* (piano), and *sfz* (sforzando). The piano part has a *mf* (mezzo-forte) marking. The vocal line includes the lyrics "nough, what are you think-ing?".

Example 3.45. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, trombones and piano, mm. 657.

From measure 661 to measure 688 there is an Aria that exalts the unique vocal qualities of Dello Joio's mezzo. Nina sings about both of them being childless, but "he had his music, which gave him joy." The accompaniment is flowing and does not present new elements. During Nina's last two measures in recitative style, she tells Grainger to read the document. She then leaves.

Grainger reads Grieg's legacy. In measure 691, a musical fragment from *Peer Gynt*, *In the Hall of Mountain King* played by the alto sax is inserted.

The image shows a musical score for an Alto Saxophone (A. Sax.) solo. It includes a **Solo* marking and dynamic markings of *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *espr.* (espressivo).

Example 3.46. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, alto saxophone, mm. 691-692.

Fittingly, the excerpt from *Peer Gynt* is inserted over the words, "the Edvard Grieg foundation will only be used in development and production of music in Bergen."¹¹²

¹¹² See page 42 of this chapter.

In measure 697 and 698, the tempo of these two measures is *ad libitum*. It is an aleatoric section created by a waterfall of notes played by the woodwinds that builds a dreamlike atmosphere. Under a fermata all the instruments independently play a long note with crescendos and diminuendos.

Example 3.47. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, reeds, mm. 697–698.

Measures	Meters	Major tempi <i>Fermata/caesura</i>	*Aleatoric parts ^ <i>Grieg music</i>	Tonal Center
699-703	3/4	(m.699) ca. 50	*(m.699-700)	→
704	4/4			m.702 mountain motif. ¹¹³
705	3/4			
706-707	4/4			
708-716	3/4	(m.710) ca. 60		m.710 Rhythmic Ostinato on the note Gb-Db

¹¹³ It is an overlaid series of descending open fifths.

717-718	4/4		
719-720	3/4		
721-727	4/4	(m.724) ca 54 (m.727) <i>fermata</i>	B - m.724

Figure 3.11. Sixth Scene.

In this last scene from the mountain, Grieg states that he feels no fears or doubts. Grieg has found a new strength in his young friend, the strength to climb the mountain and to hope for a new future for his music and him. From measure 710 to measure 721, a rhythmic *ostinato* appears based on the notes Gb and Db. The scene ends on a fermata with the word “reborn.” In all of this section, the accompaniment is composed of all previously presented musical elements, for example, the mountain motif (with an echo effect played by the horns), the “color and dynamics’ game,” and “motives A, A’ and A.”

Measures	Meters	Major tempi <i>Fermata/caesura</i>	*Aleatoric parts ^ Grieg music	Tonal Center
727-729	4/4	(m.727) ca. 50		m. 727 Descending clusters Gb - m.732
730-734	3/4			
735	4/4	(m.735) <i>fermata- caesura</i>		
736-740	4/4	many <i>fermatas</i> for each measure - freely	*(m.738) →	

Figure 3.12. Epilogue.

The closing section of the opera begins in the same manner as the beginning of the opera, thus creating an overall “bookend effect.”

Musical score for brass and percussion instruments. The score includes staves for Horns (Hn. 1, 2 and Hn. 3), Trumpets (C Tpt. 1, 2 and C Tpt. 3), Trombones (Tbn. 1, Tbn. 2, and B. Tbn.), Euphonium (Euph.), and Tuba. The percussion section includes Small Splash Cym, Glockenspiel, To sm Tam, lg Bass Drum, Vibraphone, To med Tam, and lg Tam. The score features dynamic markings such as *pp* and *mp*, and includes 'breath sound' annotations for the brass instruments.

Example 3.48. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, brass and percussion, mm. 727-729.

A descending line played by the piano and woodwinds creates a dreamlike sensation giving the listener a ride into the past. In measure 732, the solo violin plays in counterpoint with Dr. Rossing in augmented 4th intervals.

Musical score for Rossing's voice and solo violin. The score includes staves for Rossing (voice), Solo Vln., and Solo Cb. The lyrics are: "He al - most board-ed a steam - er. But it was not to be." The score features dynamic markings such as *p*, *mf*, *fp*, and *dim.*, and includes performance instructions like "Solo espr. arco" and "pizz.".

Example 3.49. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, Rossing's voice and solo violin, mm. 731-734.

The narration of the last few minutes of Grieg's life is contained in measure 736-739. The great composer takes a bow, and then dies. The narration is sung by Nina.

Musically, this last recitative has free measures played by percussion instruments, harp, and piano.

738

The musical score consists of seven staves. The percussion instruments (Glock., Vib., Mar.) and Harp (Hp.) play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The Piano (Pno.) plays a similar pattern. Nina's part is a recitative with lyrics: "He made a bow, there was no doubt he bowed an art-ist to his au-di- ence. and then and then and then Still...". Grieg's part is a distant, off-stage vocal line with lyrics: "Si-lence. Oh, si-lence.".

738

Glock. *ppp poss.*

Vib. *ppp poss.*

Mar. *ppp poss.*

Hp. *ppp poss.*

Pno. *ppp poss.*

Nina

He made a bow, there was no doubt he bowed an art-ist to his au-di- ence. and then and then and then Still...

Grieg

(from off stage)
p
Si-lence. Oh, si-lence.

Example 3.50. Dello Joio, *Blue Mountain*, percussion, Nina and Grieg, mm. 738-740.

The opera closes with Grieg singing distantly, off stage, "Silence. Oh, Silence."

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

Use of Winds in Opera

Blue Mountain is a unique work of considerable importance in the opera and wind ensemble genre. Prior to *Blue Mountain*, only three original major works for opera and wind ensemble existed: *Little Three Penny Opera* (1928) by Kurt Weill (1900-1950), *The Good Soldiers Schweik* (1957) by Robert Kurka (1921-1957), and *Bandanna* (1999) by Daron Hagen (1961).

Little Three Penny Opera is a corner stone in the history of music and drama during the period between the two World Wars. The singers were not professional singers, but stage actors, and the orchestra was reduced to a few instruments. The instrumentation was in great contrast to the huge orchestra of *Wozzeck* (1925) by Alban Berg (1885-1935) composed just three years earlier. *Three Penny Opera* was an unexpected surprise for German audiences, and its success astounded many including the composer and producer. According to H.W. Heinsheimer, *Three Penny Opera* broke with traditions by presenting fresh sound and ideas. The opera delivered an instantaneous success. Heinsheimer gives an important account of the musical worth of the *Three Penny*:

One is left ignorant of the sometimes imperceptible transition from the spoken word to musical lines, the strikingly successful integration of spoken dialogue (which occupies by far the largest section of this "play with music") with songs, little ensembles, and musical accompaniment, and one remains unaware of the brilliant and utterly convincing logic that interrupts the spoken word with music just when it is needed, not too often and not too rarely either... It was something unorthodox, new in every respect...

The work had made so little sense, even at the final dress rehearsal, that the bewildered producer, Ernst Aufricht, called in the cast on the very morning of the

opening night to announce that in his opinion *Dreigroschenoper* wouldn't last a week and that he was beginning rehearsals for a new play the next morning. He eventually played the work over 300 times and it was produced, immediately, all over Europe... His [Weill] music is simple, yet sophisticated; lyrical, yet never cheap; sharp, aggressive, and sometimes of almost primitive directness, yet never banal. He did away with the large orchestra of the contemporary operatic stage and scored his music for nine players - a small solo ensemble that was seated on the stage.

The clean, sharp sounds of the orchestra of *L'Histoire du Soldat*, *La Creation du Monde* or Weill's own *Mahagonny* (1927) appeared on a stage whose public had been trained to the luscious sounds of Franz Schreker, Richard Strauss, or Alban Berg, or had been softened by the glissandi and harp solos of Lehar, Kalman, or Oscar Straus. It is easy to see how *Dreigroschenoper* excited these audiences at a time when serious music threatened to move away from the people and when the traditional Viennese operetta had run into a dead end from which it was never again to find its way out.¹¹⁴

The influence of Weill and Stravinsky is tangible in Kurka's opera *The Good Soldier Schweik*. It is an opera scored for a chamber ensemble of fifteen winds and percussion. "Kurka's score is light - the subject virtually demands that - but it is also smart and tough, often funny and ultimately poignant. It isn't hard to identify the decadent influence of Weill (and Brecht) here, the astringent echoes of Stravinsky there."¹¹⁵ This opera offers unusual and interesting musical moments: marches, waltzes and jazzy ballads. The vocal parts mix spoken parts with narrative. Kurka shows ability to toss between different genres and styles, while exuding a good sense of lyricism.

Fellow composer, Leslie Bassett, wrote the first short review in 1957:

The *Good Soldier Schweik* is a composition of solid musical stature. Most of the six divisions of the work display the composer's fondness for fast tempos, energetic rhythms, and an almost limitless amount of timpani pounding. The texture, not at all dissonant, is fresh and clear; the piece has been put

¹¹⁴ H. W. Heinsheimer, "Die Dreigroschenoper by Weill," *Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (January, 1953), 156-157.

¹¹⁵ Martin Bernheimer, "Kurka: The Good Soldier Schweik," *Opera News*, Vol. 67 Issue 2 (August 2002), 53.

together by a man who knows his craft and has something to say. Figure work in the individual parts follows traditional patterns of triad outlines and broken chords. The piece propels itself with energy primarily by means of regularly recurring eighth-notes, quarters, and syncopated patterns. The piece has brilliance and it flows well, although the melodies seem to be not especially memorable or expressive. The instrumentation is excellent, the parts carefully notated for accurate performance, and the movements well-balanced in length and content. Certainly this piece would be an unusual attraction on any band concert.¹¹⁶

Critic George Jellinek also gave an insightful review:

An American composer of Czech ancestry, Kurka created a fast-moving sequence of brief and colorful episodes in which the action is at times interrupted by Czech-flavored dances and marches, perfectly in character. The scoring is for a chamber orchestra of fifteen players, winds and percussion, with the strings notably absent. Apart from being ingeniously crafted, the overall sound well captures the plot's grotesqueries (to cite an extreme example: there is a sextet in act 2 in which a dog is an active participant).¹¹⁷

Nonetheless, this marvelous, engaging opera did not receive great attention from wind band conductors, theatre managers, critics, or opera experts. This was in spite of all the favorable reviews that *The Good Soldier Schweik* received for its performances. In 2002, the Chicago Opera Theatre made the first recordings of the opera. In his presentation of the opera, the American music critic Martin Bernheimer, raised the pertinent question, "Why did it take forty-four years for this engaging adventure to be recorded?" The indifference for this opera remains a mystery.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ Leslie Bassett, "The Good Soldier Schweik by Robert Kurka" *Notes, Second Series*, Vol. 14, No. 4 (September, 1957), p. 616.

¹¹⁷ George Jellinek, "The Good Soldier Schweik," *The Opera Quarterly*, Volume 19, Number 1 (Winter 2003), 157-158.

¹¹⁸ Martin Bernheimer, "Kurka: The Good Soldier Schweik," *Opera News*, Vol. 67 Issue 2 (August 2002), 53. "Perhaps Schweik seemed too dependent on dramatic visuals to make much impact with sound alone. Perhaps Kurka was ultimately too stubborn in his avoidance of sentimentality. Perhaps the inherent sociopolitical attitudes discouraged broad commercial support. Perhaps industry executives found the esthetic values of the opera too edgy to warrant high investments. In any case, this premiere recording is especially welcome because it is so long overdue."

In 1999, Daron Hagen composed another opera for wind ensemble based on the libretto written by the Irish poet Paul Muldoon, entitled *Bandanna*. Forty-two years had passed from the last time that someone wrote an opera for wind instruments. This opera was commissioned by the College Band Directors National Association and premiered by the University of Texas in 1999 with Michael Haithcock conducting. It was orchestrated for a thirty-piece wind ensemble. The sound creates a distinctively vibrant, ear-catching fabric. There are strings in the instrumentation; however, the violins that are present form an onstage mariachi band. One of their uses occurs when three violinists play an accompaniment to the Act II "Prayer" for Mona, Morales's wife.¹¹⁹ According to opera critic Roseblum:

In musical terms, Hagen combines elements of the vernacular and the opera house, drawing on both sacred (a recurring "Dona nobis requiem") and folk (the Mexican "Day of the Dead" celebration) traditions. Hagen's contemporary-music bona fides are impressively in evidence, but the popular element is never far off, as in, for example, a series of dances in the Act II wedding (waltz, bossa nova, tango), plus the frequent contributions of an onstage mariachi band.¹²⁰

Bandanna is based on the William Shakespeare play, *Othello*, used by Rossini for his *Otello* (1816), libretto by Francesco Maria Berio (1765-1820), and Verdi's *Otello* (1887), libretto by Arrigo Boito (1842-1918).¹²¹ The *Bandanna Overture* and *Bandanna Dances*, both set in 1998 for large wind ensemble, seem to have disappeared from band programs. *Bandanna* is not considered a totally convincing work from both the libretto and musical standpoints. Two articles by Roseblum and Kilpatrick give evidences of its

¹¹⁹ Joshua Rosenblum, "Hagen: *Bandanna*," *Opera News*, Vol. 71, Issue 6 (December, 2006), 93.

¹²⁰ Kilpatrick, "Hagen: *Bandanna*," *American Record Guide*, Vol. 70 Issue 2, (Mar/Apr 2007), 72-73.

¹²¹ Eduardo Rescigno, *Vivaverdi*, (Milano:Bur Saggi, 2012), 968. See also Chapter II of this work.

weaknesses. The bittersweet review by Carl Robert who was impressed by Hagen's music but had troubles with Muldoon's libretto follows:

...Hagen is an extremely savvy and lyrical composer. His text setting is great for highlighting the strengths of each vocal type, and it leads to almost flawless English enunciation. One of the work's greatest coups is the orchestration, which is for wind ensemble. The result is so fluent one really doesn't ever miss the strings... especially considering the great logistical burdens new operas face. So many superb bands now exist on the university/conservatory level; it's a thing to ponder for many composers now... The overall result is dramatically sure and lyrically compelling... I also can say that the piece has steadily grown on me with two listening, and I admire its musical virtues.

I actually have more trouble with the libretto, and that's where my greatest reservations lie. The problem is not the words themselves... One is the Othello trope. Somehow it just seems a little too pat. Between both Shakespeare and Verdi, it becomes a guessing game for the listener over time to determine how Hagen will finesse this or that situation with his contemporary version... The libretto seems concerned to layer on a whole series of social references that don't always sustain their weight in the action... Considering the fact that the time of the action is 1968, at the height of the heroic struggle of César Chávez, and also considering how today we have at least as much political as racial prejudice poisoning the atmosphere, I'm afraid this conceit just plays into bad influences, in its own little way... So the review is mixed, much more positive for the music than the drama. Hagen is definitely one to watch.¹²²

Roseblum is much more severe in his views. Clearly, he did not like either the music or the libretto.

The mariachi band (two trumpets, guitar and bass, in addition to the violins) doesn't give the proceedings nearly the energetic kick one might expect, and the wedding dances are oddly inert. The syrupy tune intoned by the chorus in the prologue, and reprised at key dramatic moments, sounds like a conscious sop to the "give-us-a-tune-we-can-hum" crowd and seems stapled on to the text. A long seduction scene, which could have been deliciously ominous, doesn't really go anywhere.

Still, the characters are compelling and musically differentiated. The cast conveys the grand passions effectively and with full conviction, if not absolute vocal perfection, Muldoon's libretto manages to be both poetic and dramatic; Hagen

¹²² Carl Robert, "Hagen: Bandanna," *Fanfare – The Magazine for Serious Collectors*, Vol. 30, No. 5 (May 2007), 110-111.

saves the librettist when the metaphoric imagery occasionally threatens to spin out of control.¹²³

Kilpatrick is sarcastic, writing that he saw a “great effort.” For him, the opera was too artificial, lacking a natural flow.

Perhaps my strongest impression of the entire effort is that it is just that: a mighty effort. Librettist Muldoon worked hard to write a text (one that often rhymes, the way rap lyrics do) that conveys the plot, develops characters, deals with larger issues, and reflects events of the late 1960s. Composer Hagen worked hard to blend musical styles, walk the tonal-dissonant line, and create effective arias, ensembles, and instrumental parts.

The lead characters work hard to be real while negotiating strange texts and often-strange music. And the University of Nevada-Las Vegas students (the choruses of immigrants and towns-people, the mariachi band, the wind orchestra) work hard to perform at a professional level.

The awareness that everyone is working so hard makes things seem unnatural and un-comfortable much of the time. I enjoy this opera when it simply seems to be unfolding, but too often it sounds like people dealing with challenging words and music...

The final scenes are too much. An eight-minute ‘Mona’s Prayer’, sung just before her murder, is at least twice too long. And the final scene – the climactic murder-suicide – is anguished to a grotesque degree.¹²⁴

Considering the lineage of operas for wind ensemble, it is evident that only *Three Penny Opera* had success. *Good Soldier Schweik* has been forgotten. *Bandanna* has received mixed reviews from critics and conductors.

Importance of *Blue Mountain*

Blue Mountain is the most recent opera written for wind ensemble. In seventy-one years (from 1928 to 1999) only three operas for wind instruments/ensembles have been composed, an average of thirty year intervals. It is unlikely that this is the last attempt to

¹²³ Joshua Rosenblum, “Hagen: Bandanna,” *Opera News*, Vol. 71, Issue 6 (December, 2006), 93.

¹²⁴ Kilpatrick, “Hagen: Bandanna,” *American Record Guide*, Vol. 70 Issue 2, (Mar/Apr 2007), 72-73.

increase and develop the genre. Dello Joio composed *Blue Mountain* only eight years following *Bandanna*. This is an affirmative consideration. It is the shortest period that has passed between operas written for wind ensemble and voices.

There are many common points among *Blue Mountain* and the previous operas for winds. As in the *Three Penny Opera*, *Blue Mountain* has a fresh sound. It could be considered a perfect balance between modern musical language and traditional lyricism, a common trait for the best operas in history.

As in *The Good Soldier Schweik*, *Blue Mountain* has tangible influences from other composers. For example, at the beginning of the second scene (m. 130) there are asymmetrical meters and accent changes, giving the music a strong Stravinsky feeling.¹²⁵ Later, in different moments of the opera, the sound of the ensemble, the rhythm of the main parts, and the musical style performed by the instruments remind one of other composers, for example, Bernstein (1918-1990) and Claude Michel Schonberg (1944).

Moreover, considering Jellinek's review, "Apart from being ingeniously crafted, the overall sound captures the plot's grotesqueries well (to cite an extreme example: there is a sextet in Act 2 in which a dog is an active participant),"¹²⁶ *Blue Mountain* has a wide variety of sounds effects produced by unconventional instrumental techniques. These various effects reinforce the dramatic impact of the text and amplify the descriptive power of music.

¹²⁵ Dr. Justin Dello Joio, interview by author, New York City, May 20-21, 2013, transcribed and included as Appendix A, p. 102 "When I was looking at the instrumentation for myself, I looked at Stravinsky's *Symphony for Wind Instruments*, where he avoids doubling and we can see clean colors."

¹²⁶ George Jellinek, "The Good Soldier Schweik," *The Opera Quarterly*, Volume 19, Number 1 (Winter 2003), 157-158.

Bandanna is the closest to *Blue Mountain* in terms of instrumentation. Hagen also used three violins in his opera but their role is confined to the mariachi band. Dello Joio used the solo violin as a musical element strongly connected to the characters. For instance, it describes tenderness and love emanating from Grieg when he sings of his daughter and/or Grainger. It depicts madness and hallucinations when Grieg hears the voice of his dead child.

Blue Mountain's libretto is ambiguous, especially during the finale. Nina and Grieg's last words create an uncertain ending, for it is not clear if Grieg's music will survive or not. From a musical point of view, the entire opera is convincing, fluent and coherent.

Nevertheless, the worst common point between *The Good Soldier Schweik*, *Bandanna*, and *Blue Mountain* is the cold welcome to the genre in the wind band world. *Three Penny Opera* achieved resounding success; however, *The Good Soldier Schweik* is rarely performed with the exception of a suite from the opera. *Bandanna* has been placed in the archives without further attention. Dello Joio's opera was premiered in Norway in 2007 and in the United States in 2013. Seven years have passed. In all likelihood, it is too early to consider *Blue Mountain* dismissed. It is a fair assessment to state that the wind band world remains unaware or disinterested in the opera.

Conclusion

This author believes that *Blue Mountain* deserves to be considered as a masterpiece in the wind band repertoire. It is a composition unique in its genre. From an instrumental point of view, *Blue Mountain* presents exceptional instrumentation. The

instrumentation is perfectly written. It takes full advantage of each instrument's sound qualities and technical possibilities giving the writing a strong idiomatic character.

The vocal parts are skillfully composed as documented by the professional singers who premiered *Blue Mountain*. The voices meet challenging moments. They are never out of range and are void of extremely virtuosic passages. In addition, the vocal parts are accompanied by careful non-imposing groupings of instruments that aid the singers with pitch recognition. The text and music are symbiotically and beautifully intertwined. The characters' feelings, emotions, and situations are well accompanied and described by the music.

Justin Dello Joio stated that his father Norman loved Verdi and Italian opera. This passion, certainly affected the musical growth of the young Dello Joio. Dello Joio's love for the Italian *bel canto* style in melody and lyricism is perfectly manifested in his supremely quintessential Italian-American composition, *Blue Mountain*.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEWS WITH DR. JUSTIN DELLO JOIO

New York City, May 20 and 21, 2013 at the Studio of Dr. Justin Dello Joio

Dr. Dello Joio, I thank you for the opportunity to discuss your opera *Blue Mountain*. As you know, there is no information on it. It is for this reason that I have requested this encounter with you to explore your opera. During the interviews, I will collect information, curiosity, explanations and thoughts on you and your composition that will be the main source of my dissertation.

How did you get the commission?

DJ: I got the commission from the Director of the Det Norske Blaseensemble, the group that commissioned it. The person from Norway who was the director of the ensemble, Gaute Solas, spent a semester visiting my orchestration class as a student. A year later he contacted me, asking for a commission. He explained what it was and what he wanted. At first, he sent me the play that he had seen. It was a play by Andrew Boyle, based on the final days of Grieg's life. He was interested in making a one act opera, chamber opera for his ensemble commissioning me to do it and have Boyle to make the libretto based on his play.

I read the play. I did not care for it very much, and I did not care for the idea of me writing a piece about a composer who was a great composer of Norway, because I did not feel any much of a connection to Grieg's music at personal level. Furthermore, I read the play and I did not see any potential way for me to write something that could not inspire me and anybody else listening to it. So, I thought about it and I said to him that this project could not work for me. In addition, Gaute told me about instrumentation of

his ensemble and I was concerned about it, because I thought that for a first opera I was not sure that it made sense for me to try to do it, just for winds also, because I had a project under negotiation at that time. It is an opera that is still hoping to be written, which is based on my own choosing. It is based on the House of the Spirits. My project with the New York opera was discarded for administration reasons; one person resigned and the other one was searching for something or someone else. So, I decided to write this opera, because I realized that they had funds and energy to commission and produce it. So, I accepted the commission, but with many conditions especially about the libretto and the instrumentation.

I had a lot to say about the libretto, when I read Boyle's first draft. So, I asked for the possibility to work on the libretto extensively. In addition, I ask the possibility to change the instrumentation of this piece, because I wanted to expand the percussion, add the celesta, piano, harp and also a solo violin. I felt that with those small editions, which were not going to be overly expensive or create too many difficulties in the budget for this, I would have opportunity to make many more textures than I was able to with the instrumentation just winds and brasses. I was concerned that it was going to be too similar and I could not have contrast and different kind of colors; and colors are very important for me. I felt that with those editions, I could have many more different combinations that would provide me with a lot of different choices. Gaute was very nice and gracious and he went along with my requests and I also asked for a bigger fee!

My problem with the libretto was that it was too long. I was thinking something shorter than fifty percent of it; over fifty percent was cut, because the person that wrote it, although he was a musicologist, somebody who knew Grieg and his life very well, basing

the entire story on real facts. All the events described actually did happen, according to Boyle's research. But, I did not feel that he had a very good sense of opera's libretto, because he was so worried and some of the lines were very strange and difficult to work with. Initially, Boyle asks me to send it in Norwegian and I said "no, I cannot do that because I don't speak it and I do not know how to do that. I have to set it in English and if you would like to translate it in some way, then you are welcome to do that, but I cannot write in a language I do not speak, because I do not how to do that, it is impossible." He agrees to that.

When they got the music, they realized that there was no way at that point they could translate it. Anything needs to be translated anyway, because it is rhythmically intricate and the complexity of the themes makes translation very difficult to be realized. The other problem that I had with Boyle's libretto was the numbers of ideas that he used. I thought that these ideas were unclear and did not speak well. I had hard work within two different occasions.

I started an opera many years ago with a very famous American novelist by the name of Johnny Gardner. He was someone who was highly regarded in this country. He wrote by that time eight to ten very well known works serious fictions. He also was a poet and he played French horn in an orchestra and he was really interested in opera and new opera. I had gone to him years before with an idea for an opera based on *The Holy Sinner* by Thomas Mann. He agreed to do it and he wrote after four years a scenario based on the original Thomas Mann's book. But the book that Mann wrote was not his original plot. It was based on a medieval poem, a big epic poem. We ended up finally agreeing to how to do it, but in the course of all of this, I had a lot of chances to learn

about talking to the writer and how to plan something, to take some preexisting material and start to figure out how to tell in the context of the opera. He gave me the chance to start to think in that way, because I am a composer and not a writer or author.

This experience was very valuable. He ended up writing a complete libretto for the piece. I received the prologue of the first act and in a week or two the rest of the piece. But, just two or three days after I got the first draft, Gardner had an accident and was killed on his motorcycle. He was a really interesting guy, well read and well versed in music. Arguments in our discussion about how to do this or that were extremely important and useful, because our minds and point of view were very different. He was always thinking of the characters and the words, I was thinking the opera.

I took the libretto that I had and I went to a very important play writer, my favorite in the world, Peter Shaffer. I wrote a letter to him and sent a copy of the libretto. We spoke for a while. He looked at the libretto that John Gardner wrote. Again, I learned so much from talking to Shafer, he knows more about opera than I do and there are not many people I can say that about when it comes to really knowing the literature. He is a huge opera fan. As a young man he worked in a music publishing house and he was friends with Benjamin Britten and so on. He offered me a play that he wrote to set, but I was involved in a big hit on Broadway, in the late sixties, called *The Royal Under the Sun*. It is about Pizarro and Incas. But, I did not want to set that libretto, because there were old men, no women in it and for me there was nothing interesting. Furthermore, I did not have the possibility to change anything. So I said no. Anyway, he improved the quality of the libretto a lot that Gardner wrote, turned it in something really twentieth century, much more meaningful. It is very moving. Everybody in the audience knows

what happens, but nobody in the play does. He makes it very interesting, showing how much clever he was. Shafer appreciated the libretto, but he said that it was too long, to realize the entire plot, all the stuff in *The Holy Sinner*, he said that we needed two nights, it is too big. I agreed with him. So we looked at the libretto and talked about it. The problem was that we had opposite opinions; I suggested something to him, and he did not like it at all. What was good for me was not good for him. What was clever for me, for him it was not. Finally, we stopped working on the project.

The reason that I bring out this story is, because I felt that for my next opera, I wanted write something that I care about. The opportunity that I had to talk and work with very intelligent, serious and able artists as Gardner and Shafer gave me the knowledge of the importance of the quality of the libretto, which became a priority for me.

Going back to *Blue Mountain*, when I met the subject, Grieg, my first thought was how I can write something that I care about. I realized that we were in front of an artist at the end of his life and he had many doubts about his music and life. That probably is the same for any artists and not just for this particular composer, when they arrive at that point of their life. This idea gave me a window and so I spoke to the librettist. I told him that I wanted use the word Silence and use it as metaphor in the piece, because Grieg is scared of his death and he is scared also for his music. That is the first thing that we have to have in this piece.

He answered that he wanted that the opera begins with somebody strangling Grieg and then we are supposed to figure out later that was the child who he never had. It was suppose to be a ghost. I said, no! You cannot start with somebody on the stage and a

woman strangling someone else, it does not make sense! Many ideas were not clear and create confusion. By the time we got through revisions, my time became short. I started writing the piece, by the time I got two thirds through and there was not time to continue our discussions, because Boyle and I were far away both from a physical point of view, he was in Norway and I was here, but especially for the idea of the libretto. So, I took the parts that I agreed with and I wrote the end of the libretto, because I thought that it was the weakest part.

In Boyle's finale, there was nothing there; just a little talk when Grieg sees the Blue Mountain. I thought that the end had to be something specific and important that he had to say about it. He did not have any idea, so I just wrote it. I wrote something that, when Grieg was there he feels reborn. It is like an idea that there is a place where he can go, in his mind or in reality, it does not matter, that gave him a sense of being powerful or be able to do what he wants to and feel everything that was in front of him. And he died shortly, a day or two later, because he left with Grainger and he died on the way. The little epilogue at the end of the opera, his wife sings and describes the last gesture that Grieg did, a bow.

So, you wrote the finale of the libretto?

DJ: Yes I wrote it and much of what is in there. Boyle wrote some very nice things. Particularly, I like the line where he wrote about Grieg's music that was like an alpine rose bloom. I thought that was beautiful, great. I thought that it captures something about Grieg.

When you wrote the ending, did you use some research about Grieg?

DJ: No, I did not have time. I wrote some lines that make sense to me. Also, Boyle wanted that Grieg was in love with Grainger, but I said no, I do not want that. It is a bad idea. There is no evidence for that first of all. Second of all, they told me that the King of Norway was coming to the opening performance. So, some American guy shows up and says that the most important composer of Norway was gay...No, it was unacceptable, it was a terrible idea! So, I thought that these two men were in love with music and the young man gave to the older one the sense that he will not die, because his music will live forever.

Is the libretto that Boyle wrote based on research?

DJ: Yes, he did great stuff. He is a musicologist and he did some of his own research about Grieg's illness, Grainger and so on, which he used writing the play.

How did Grainger come in the plot?

DJ: Grainger was a famous pianist and he was playing Grieg's piano concerto. He came to visit Grieg at the very last three days before he died. They were together and they went on the way to London, because Grainger was going to play Grieg's piano concerto in London. Boyle wanted to use the character of Grainger, and I thought that it was great ...because we needed a tenor! (*Dr. Dello Joio laughs!*). We already had three voices, but the tenor voice was missing. Grainger was a young man, and the tenor voice was just perfect for this character. I wanted to have Grainger, to play the concerto on the stage, but they could do it. They wanted to use the recording, because apparently historically he made the first track recordings of Grieg's piano concerto. In the production, we found the recording that Grainger made of Grieg's concerto. They play through the house and this creates the illusion of Grainger playing on the stage. It worked very well.

Are you saying that during the performance you used the original recording made by Grainger?

DJ: Yes! It is marked into the score with start the tape here... The conductor, Kenneth Jean, found the recording!

How did you choose the voices?

DJ: That was easy for me, because when I read the play, instantly I knew what I wanted. About Grieg, I just had the sense that he should be a bass, having a feeling about the character. I knew that Grainger should be a tenor, having a baritone for the doctor. It is a kind of personality, a kind of character; the voice and the character's voice go together somehow. And Grieg's wife is an old woman, so she cannot be a young soprano. So, I decided for a mezzo soprano. I was very lucky that the singers that premiered *Blue Mountain* were very good.

Did you have some model or inspiration about how to use the voices?

DJ: Yes. I looked at Verdi's *Don Carlo*. In this particular piece, there is a duet for two bass voices in the scene of the Great Inquisitor and Philip II: it is a very famous duet and it is one of my favorite of Verdi's works...I like Verdi very much. In this duet both the characters are bass and they have a range from low F to F two octaves above and that is the register that I used. I did also check Boris [Dr. Dello Joio means Boris Godunov by Modest Mussorgsky] because I wanted to see any further, but "F". In my piece I wrote an "E". I asked the guy in Norway that commissioned the opera if the bass singer had an "E", and he said yes, he has. "E" is a really low note, but Boris goes half step lower. But, the problem was to get sounds in that register and not just noise...,but the singer sang it very well!

...and the mezzo soprano why?...

DJ: ...because she is an older woman. And the character is serious and a little sad...they did not have child, so the color of it is important...Nina cannot have a brilliant voice.

We can say that you followed a traditional way of appointing the voice to the characters...

DJ: Exactly! It is very traditional...because I have a lot of respect and I love Italian opera, and I also love the German opera, which is much more difficult in some way... It is not so gracious for the voices. I looked at a lot of Strauss and some of that is extremely demanding, but he did not have a big role for the bass that I knew, that is why I look at Verdi. My vocal writing is simpler than my instrumental writing. I did not try to make difficult vocal parts. It is more steps wise and does not have huge leaps. My vocal writing is more lyrical.

Your opera is modern, but it is not, permit me to say...crazy.

DJ: No, you are right. My music is a kind of mixture of very traditional and also modern things. It keeps elements which respond to me, myself...because melody is very important to me. There are some operas now for example, John Adams, particularly *Nixon in China*, where the words just go along and the music goes along. It goes in a way that sometimes I think that they don't say anything. Music does not change; it is not affected by what is said. It is like two separate streams, there are words that are going on and on with the conversation and the music... It does not make very much sense to me. Maybe I am too traditional, but I like when the words affect the music and they work and stay together.

Which of Grieg's pieces did you quote in Blue Mountain?

DJ: I used one of Grieg's *Lyric Pieces for Piano*, his *Violin Sonata*, a couple of spots of the *Piano Concerto* and at the very end from *Peer Gynt*.

You wrote this opera for a wind ensemble, but it was unusual for you...

DJ: I never wrote for a wind ensemble. This is the only work that I wrote for this kind of ensemble so far.

What about that?

DJ: No one asked me to write. I am hoping to get an opportunity after I am done with the work that I am working on right now. I would like to, it is a lot of fun.

Your wind ensemble does not have a standard set. Can you explain this?

DJ: First of all, my ensemble is much smaller; it is only thirty-three instruments. One thing that I do not like about wind ensemble music is that sometimes there are so many doubling, which make the ensemble's color a sort of grey...and I do not like this kind of writing. When I was looking at the instrumentation for myself, I looked at Stravinsky's *Symphony for Wind Instruments*, where he avoids doubling and we can see clean colors. And I did look at a Persichetti's piece, *Divertimento for Band*, which is another good example of clean instrumentation.

Actually, I remember that my father asked me to help him. He was writing a piece called *Air Power*, which was an orchestral suite taken from television program, and he was making a version of this piece for band. He asked me if I liked to make this arrangement and I did it...and I gave it to him. But he changed it and he made it how he liked (*we laugh!*)...mine was a little different!

Speaking about the instrumentation, why did you not use the trumpets in B flat, the baritone sax, etc...do you have some special reason for that?

DJ: The main reason is because that is what they had. I did not ask for extra wind instruments. I was more concerned about the Harp, Piano, Celesta and percussion, so I had other timbre to work with. In their wind ensemble that was essentially what they had. I just asked for the C trumpets. I also used some wind instruments that are not so common in the wind ensemble such as the Alto flute, A clarinet, and I also used the contra bass clarinet. I also asked for a large number of percussion and the solo violin.

Why did you want a solo violin?

DJ: It is really amazing what the sound of a solo violin can offer in terms of colors! I wanted to have the possibility to create a combination using the solo violin with the wind instruments and also with the percussion. It is really interesting. I thought that I was treating it pretty much as a chamber group and not as a “regular” wind ensemble. I thought that the sound of the violin helped me a lot in texture; thinking about some particular moments in the piece, where the sound of the violin helps so much, because it is so warm...you cannot have it with wind instruments.

I was looking to do exactly what I did or what I did not like about some of the older band music. Newer band music has changed. I think that it is much more interesting. There are more contemporary composers who are not just wind ensemble composers, they are writing for this media. Some of the older music I did not care for it, because as I said, there is too much doubling and I do not like it. I think that the sound is grey, heavy and aggressive...I do not like.

You said that your music is a mixture between modern and traditional music. How do you define the musical language that you used in Blue Mountain?

DJ: When I said that, I am not saying that there is a part of my music in B flat and another part that it is like Penderecki, I do not mean that. I mean that the music that I write has elements from both, in the sense of lyricism and melodic writing are a big part of my musical language; but so is texture, using sound colors to communicate a feeling or an emotional idea through color. I did not try to find a language; I just tried to incorporate a couple of places where Grieg's music could be inserted without inserting it just as a pasticcio or quotation. I did not want that. I wanted my music, but I thought that if I treated it like a counterpoint, I knew that I could use this line or that line of Grieg's music, which became part of the fabric. And whenever Grieg speaks of his music there is something there.

I write music that most of the time has a tonal center, which changes and moves from one area to another and the way those centers are created is the way that it is been done since the beginning of the twentieth century music collapse of tonality. Different composers found different ways to give you the sense of stability of key. Basically, all music except for the German Twelve Tone and the atonal music that Schonberg was writing, tends to be centric music. In the music of Bartok, Stravinsky, Britten, however you have tonal centers, but they are moving. I am very harmonically based in the way I hear and in the way I write. I do not enjoy music that has no sense of tonal centers, particularly in prolonged structures of music.

The harmonic language, in the language of this music that I wrote is as idiomatic as possible. Whatever I am writing, in this case basically for wind ensemble, I try to take

full advantage of the players and their virtuosity, using instruments in the best way, exploring their potential and characteristics. That is part of the way I think as a composer and I believe that it influences my thinking compositionally because I try to make music that can only be done on those instruments. You can see that in the first page of the score of *Blue Mountain*. The instruments make sounds and colors. There is no way to replicate that in any other kind of instrumentation.

In the musical ideas in the opera, there are a couple of basic motifs. One of the most important was the first thing that you hear, Grieg sings the minor second and ninth and if you look at the score you will see minor ninth everywhere. This interval is constantly used for harmonic purposes, sometimes just linear, sometimes with themes attached to its ideas.

The way that I tend to write is motivic, having motivic elements in my music. There are a number of them throughout the piece. I wanted to start with very turbulent music and I knew that I wanted end up with something kind ethereal, so the very last part of the piece, the Epilogue, has a texture very light and calm, like I said, ethereal. The idea was to get from the beginning to there, but still bring back the night, which I do. Grieg sings off stage the word Silence, which is the first word that you hear at the beginning of the opera.

About the influence, it is funny, because some people really prefer Italian opera and some others prefer German, but I actually love both for different reasons. When I am talking about German, I mean Wagner and Strauss, and when I am thinking of the Italian opera, I am talking about Verdi and Puccini, not so much twentieth century, but the end of nineteenth beginning of the twentieth century. I love the idea keeping the voice really

supported and really showing off, but I also like the idea having a lot of orchestral material and a lot of developmental ideas in the musical fabric and not just simpler accompaniment. For this reason, I can say that in my music you can find musical elements which are typical of the German and Italian style. And I love them equally! They are just very different in their approaches.

My father was entirely involved with Italian music and opera and he intensively dislikes German music. But I like both, I have great pleasure listening Strauss and Wagner. I think that their music is fantastic!

And what about the form of the Blue Mountain?

DJ: That is easy. The piece is one act and the music is thoroughly composed. There are motives, and common ideas, but music follows what the text says and describes.

Do you remember how you started to write music?

DJ: I had not finished the libretto, so I started with the music in the introduction of the piece, and I started making certain kinds of textural sketches for kinds of things that I wanted to have. When I got the actual libretto, I just looked through all the things. I tried to figure where I wanted to put the emphasis...it was a process. The libretto was not in a very solid completed form. It was be very much realized as we were going, because as I got something that I would find that it was not working for me, for some reason. It was something that was not very fluent, I changed it. I had in my mind specific things that I wanted, specific points, texture in the text that I thought was important, the idea of what *Blue Mountain* was what Grainger meant to him, the relationship with Grieg and the wife, who only comes out during the little aria that she has singing about “you have your

music...” This comes out when Grieg wants to adopt Grainger. Apparently, this was true. I also knew that I didn't want to use his music to refer to his music. I wanted to take small fragments of pieces that I like. I had a recording of some of his piano music, so I used something from his Lyric Pieces. I got a call of different scores. I got all these Violin Sonata, kinds of things that I thought I could use. I knew his piano concerto, the only piece that I was familiar with. I did not have much relationship to Grieg's music. Of Romantic composers, there are many others whose music is much closer to me...I could name many of them, but Grieg was not...and I knew *Peer Gynt*, which is a fantastic piece!

You had a strong connection with two musical giants who became corner stone for the wind band music: your father Norman, and your teacher Vincent Persichetti. Can you describe your relationship with them?

DJ: It is interesting that neither Norman nor Vincent were thinking of themselves as band composers at all, really. In my father's case, he wrote chamber music, orchestral music, and then he wrote an opera which is a Tribute to San Francisco in the early 60's. His dream was to be an opera composer. He wrote an opera called "The Trial at Rouen" about John Allark and he wrote this opera for the San Francisco Opera House. He did not succeed at all; it was not a successful work for him. And at that point he thought he needed to change his directions, and he started seeing openings in terms of being able to write music for wind ensembles, where he continued to write what he wanted, but at the same time, he could make good music. I think that part of his interest in wind band was practical, it was another way. He does not have a lot of literature for band, if you compare the number of orchestral and choral compositions.

Persichetti, on the other hand, he had nine symphonies, concertos, all kinds of orchestral music. He enjoyed the idea of band music; he just looked at them as any other ensemble. It is an interesting approach to the composing process. I do not think that he thought to be a band music composer. He was not interested in writing opera. He did write a chamber opera, that I actually saw, but it was the first and the last one.

Your father wrote a lot of choral music.

DJ: Yes. He wrote a lot of choral music and songs. I think that part of it was his ability to write for choir, which was a very practical media for him. His sound was very good and people liked it. So, he received many commissions from choirs.

Do you think that these people affected the musical growth of Justin Dello Joio?

DJ: Yes, sure! At Juilliard, I studied with Persichetti for the most of the time, but I also studied one year with David Diamond and a semester with Roger Sessions. It was a great faculty at Juilliard in those days, Sessions, Diamond, Persichetti, there were a lot of fine and esteemed American composers.

My father and I, we had some common ground in our taste of music; basically, I enjoy and love the music that he loved, but I loved, also, all the music that he hated! So, by the end, we arrived at very different musical points. I think that his influences are very obvious, in the sense that I try to have melody and lyricism in my music, but I have other things as well. His music is pretty much primarily just about lyrical writing.

But Persichetti was different.

DJ: Persichetti was very different. The thing about Persichetti that made him so marvelous is that he was a great, great teacher, a great musician, probably the best musician that I ever met, from a practical point of view and of course, a fantastic man. He

could hear a very complex twentieth century orchestral piece, and then sit down and start to play it at the piano without the score. He had the most remarkable ear I have ever encountered. He had great practical kind of facility; he could read the score, getting a very clear sense in his heavy thoughts of what was going on, what the sound was like... That made him a great teacher, plus his personality. He had many students during the thirty years at Juilliard, everyone from Steve Reich, Phil Glass,... so many composers had the chance to work with him. And without any exception, everybody that studied with him absolutely loved him, because he was a fantastic teacher. He did not try to impose his own taste or his own ideas. He tried to help his students do what they want to do, and do it better. That was great! His influence on me in terms as a teacher was important. I have many students, and I try to do similarly what he did, which is read music, hear very carefully with fresh ear and I do not generally try to push them in the directions that are close to me. I just help them to do what they are trying to do. I think that his influence was very much in that way.

Musically, as I said, he did not try to impose himself in a stylistic sense. His book *Twentieth-Century Harmony: Creative Aspects and Practice*, is a marvelous book and it became interestingly far more used in the world now, than it was in own life time. I had students who came to me, for example, from the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, Finland, who use Persichetti's book for composition. This is amazing because it was not even used at Juilliard, except for his classes. I think that book, which is well known text, has become increasingly important and it had, and still has, influence today. It does not try to tell you what to do, it just gives you ideas and ways to think, when you are using a non-functional harmony. How you can organize your thinking, so there is not purely layer on

intuition, but you can use a more intellectual way. So, I think his influence on me was as a teacher, more than his own music, although he wrote wonderful music.

Going back to Blue Mountain, until now, this opera has not been well known. What do you think about this?

DJ: I had some bad luck with it. The piece was given to the New York City Opera, and they loved it. The Director of Programming, Edvard Ghiem, who is now the Director of Programming at New York Philharmonic, wanted to program it. I have gone over there to meet with him, because I have a friend who is a conductor, who is the music director and principal conductor of the New York City Opera, his name is George Mehen. I sent *Blue Mountain* over there, because I wanted to talk about the commission *The House of Spirits*. They were not in the position to do any kind of commission, but they were interested in *Blue Mountain*. And they asked me if I was interested in making a version for large orchestra. They wanted to do it and I considered doing that. The idea was to program *Blue Mountain* in the 2010 season.

In the meantime, the new Artistic Director, Mortier, who was coming from Paris Opera, had cancelled the first season completely. They did nothing; they cut the orchestra on salary. After the first season, it was over! Ironically, after he turned the place upside down, he quit! He said that he wanted to have an opera budget of sixty-million dollars, and they only have just thirty, thirty-five million to work with. He said he could not work under those conditions. After that, everything was changed. During the course of that time, my project and their plans for doing *Blue Mountain* basically went away.

I also took it to the Opera House in Oslo and, for reasons that I did not completely understand, they did not want to do it. The person who originally was planning to do it with

the wind ensemble, in Oslo, is now the head of the Oslo Opera. I sent it over there, considering that all the singers are from the Oslo Opera, but I have no idea why he turned it down. Maybe he is not interested in it, which is a really pity, because the subject I think is excellent for them. When the recording first came out, they were played in Oslo and some of the singers wrote to me, saying that people were impressed, they really loved the piece. And the reviews of the recording over there were excellent. So, I do not know why they did not perform it.

I sent the score to Francesca Zambello, who is a very famous opera Director. She said that it was not interesting for her at that time. I think that also my publisher sent it over to San Francisco, but I have not heard anything from them. I am hoping that after what they are doing right now, they insert *Blue Mountain* in their programs. So, no major companies performed the piece and the only way that anyone knows it is the recording. It was very fortunate for me that they recorded the opera. I went to the third performance of the opera in Oslo, and there were microphones all over the place and TV cameras. I did not know that they had the plan to make a recording. They recorded with thirty-six tracks; it is a very good recording! You can hear everything clearly. The lucky thing also was that they only recorded the final performance, only that one, not the others. So, there was no way to edit it. It is a live performance. Fortunately, it was well played and nothing went wrong.

The piece was not staged because they did not have funds and time to do it. They performed it in a concert version with the singers on the front, with a minimum amount of acting and so forth...Probably, *Blue Mountain* will be performed at the University of Connecticut in November; it is scheduled for that time.

It is a difficult piece for a university ensemble.

DJ: I think so. This is the first time that an American university tries to do it.

Are you going there?

DJ: Maybe...but probably I am going to see the rehearsal to check how things are going.

About the rehearsals, did you attend the rehearsals scheduled before the premiere?

DJ: In this piece there are a lot of fortunate things and a lot of unfortunate things. One of the things that was very good was that the director of the ensemble had scheduled four weeks of rehearsals with the orchestra. Six days in a row to work on it, this is fantastic! By the time we got to the performance everything was in good shape. I was there for the whole time and at every rehearsal!

What kind of problems did the ensemble have in preparing the piece?

DJ: They had not encountered anything like this before. If you look at the score, there is an aleatoric notation and they were not familiar with it. In addition, sometimes the individual parts are tricky. Another issue was the coordination between the ensemble and the singers. But, with my music, I find that generally it comes out sounding natural, it sounds a lot simpler of what it really is. When you actually look at it, it is really complicated, so when you first try to sort fluency, it takes some times before people begin to understand and make sense of what is happening, because there is a lot of stuff going on.

I think that I was very lucky to have the conductor that I had, Kenneth Jean. He is a fantastic musician and a marvelous conductor. He got incredible results from the

ensemble in very short while. They understood perfectly how to play the piece. I give all credit to him, I really do.

Did you also prepare a piano score?

DJ: I was asked to, but I did not feel that it could be helpful, because so many things are not playable at the piano. I finished my score and I sent it to the publisher. They put my music on the computer... I do not have one, I do not write music on the computer. I'll show you my manuscript.

The way you write music is just marvelous, it is better than a printed version! Thanks for sharing this! How long did it take you to finish Blue Mountain?

DJ: About one year in writing music. Longer thinking the libretto, all the discussions on it, etc.

If you have to stage Blue Mountain, what suggestions you could make?

DJ: Early on, when I first went to Oslo to talk to them about it, they had a director because initially they planned to stage it. Some of the ideas that he had were really great. I thought they were wonderful. I think that any good director, when he gets his hands on it, he comes up with ideas. I think that it is a special job like a conductor and it is beyond the scope of the composer, especially if the composer is not particularly involved in the opera world.

I think it is pretty open ended. There are a lot of ways that you can do it. For example, when they were talking about having Grainger's first appearance on the stage, they wanted him to come up from the floor, having wet clothes. They asked for music for one minute and a half, because they wanted show the map with the boat from London to Oslo, with Grainger coming. But I did not want change the tone of music very much with

Grainger's arrival. From the beginning, with Grieg's illness, doubts and tears, I created a kind of dark musical situation. When Grainger appeared, I made big changes. Music becomes bright, a lighter kind of music, because of the character. I wanted to underline the good influence that this young guy had on the old man, who considered Grainger like a son.

You did not quote any of Grainger's work. What do you think about Grainger and his music?

DJ: I do not know. I never heard his music. I know that he wrote a lot of band music. That's all. I have been surrounded by so much music, that I did not have the chance to hear his music. There is a strange coincidence. I teach at New York University and in the 1940's he was the chair of music department of this university.

Do you have any suggestions for conductors who want perform your opera?

DJ: I think that this piece is very complicated. There are many difficult technical passages, many changes of meter that could create big problems. The aleatoric parts are also difficult, if you want create something musical and not just noise. I think that one of the biggest problems for the conductor is to keep all together!

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW WITH DR. KENNETH JEAN

October 2013

What do you think about the libretto?

KJ: In its original form, the libretto was really unusable as lyrics. It is one thing to be able to write a scenario that is suitable to be turned into an opera, but quite another to understand the difference between words that are to be spoken versus words that are to be sung. So by necessity, Mr. Dello Joio had to re-write most of the libretto himself. As such, I think he did an exemplary job.

What do you think of the orchestration?

KJ: Because *Blue Mountain* was commissioned by a wind ensemble, there was no possibility of including the usual complement of stringed instruments. However, I think the orchestration is so extraordinary that not only do I not miss the timbre of a string section; I find it hard to imagine the music WITH strings.

What do you like and what you don't like in the score?

KJ: I like that there is great originality in this piece and yet it employs no method that did not exist before. It is extraordinarily difficult now to write any music that is tonal and yet not sounds like something borrowed from the past. It is also difficult to be interesting without being outrageous. I only wish that circumstances allowed for *Blue Mountain* to be much longer.

Which kind of difficulties did you have studying and conducting the score?

KJ: As a piece, *Blue Mountain* is very much through-composed and as such it is a lot to learn and remember without the usual “sign-posts.” Also, the harmonies are very dense and thick at times and this also requires a lot of time to “sink-in.”

Do you think that the balance between voices and instruments is good?

KJ: It is extremely good. This is extraordinary when you consider that the singers are competing against a full band rather than an orchestra.

Which general impression did you get of this opera?

KJ: That it is still possible to write lyrically for the voice. And perhaps too Freudian a view of Grieg's conduct is overly critical. Sometimes: “A cigar is only a cigar.”

Did you conduct something similar in your career?

KJ: No, not even close.

Do you have suggestions for a conductor that has to conduct this opera?

KJ: Actually, no ... except that he/she should make sure they understand and can explain the various aleatory techniques that are employed. Players who are used to performing contemporary music should not have any problems with this, but players who have never seen this sort of practice will need to have everything made clear and perhaps even demonstrated, to succeed a good result and not just confusion.

Do you have other ideas, suggestions, etc.?

KJ: No, except to wish you good luck on your dissertation.

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW WITH MR. NJAL SPARBO (Edvard Grieg)

November 2013

What do you think about the libretto?

NS: I think the composer made many alterations to the libretto in order to improve it, but he should have been given a better libretto to start off with. Grieg wrote many letters, and the author should have based his libretto on Grieg's own style - his perspectives on life, and interesting comments about culture, society and humanistic themes.

What do you think of your character?

NS: Grieg was very troubled in this opera, sick and dying. In real life he was used to having a poor health, and even if he had many things to complain about, he had a great sense of humor and witty remarks. With a better libretto, we could have displayed more of his character and his engagement in the European culture and politics.

What do you like and what you don't like of your vocal parts?

NS: The vocal parts are great to sing. Justin is a brilliant composer, and obviously knows the voice well. The orchestration gave room for many vocal colors and beautiful lines, as well as sublime timing and complex rhythmical structures. He used the whole range of the voice, and I really looked forward to the performances.

Which kind of difficulties did you have studying and singing your part?

NS: The score was full of mistakes and sometimes quite unreadable. When we eventually started working with the orchestra, I had to relearn many of the harmonic

structures. This was time consuming, and eventually I started working with Justin's handwritten score.

Do you think that the balance between voices and instruments is good?

NS: Yes, most of the time, and it was brilliantly written for the orchestra as well.

Which general impression did you get of this opera?

NS: If we had staged it, we could have told the audience a number of parallel stories, and in addition, lifted the level of abstraction to increase the amount of associations.

Did you sing something similar in your career?

NS: Yes, I sing a lot of contemporary music. It is extremely important for everybody involved in a production - and for the audience - to spend time and energy investigating and experiencing new artistic expressions. In this case it, was a very rewarding happening.

Do you have other ideas, suggestions, etc.?

NS: Good luck with your dissertation!

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW WITH MRS. MARIANNE ANDERSEN (Nina Grieg)

December 2013

What do you think about the libretto?

MA: The libretto is made out of an imagination of Edvard Grieg's last days in Bergen. He is with his wife Nina, with his doctor Rossing and the great pianist Percy Grainger, the latter whom Grieg thought very highly of. Grieg is also painfully remembering their daughter, Alexandra, who died very young. This gives a pain and reflection to the libretto which again colors the music. The conversation in the libretto includes drama and lovingness, but is quite simple and easy to understand. This I find effective. The words go well with the music.

What do you think of your character?

MA: Nina Grieg is a strong character but with soft and loving sides. The composer writes her lovingness in beautiful vocal lines. The stronger and firmer side to her character is written with the pitch moving more quickly from low to high, sometimes with a more spoken sound. This sets her character very well.

What do you like and what you don't like of your vocal parts?

MA: I loved singing the role of Nina Grieg. It goes both high and low in pitch which is a great treat for a mezzo-soprano who loves using the whole register of the voice. The composer writes very well for the voice and there were no particular difficulties that I can remember. Good vocal lines. I particularly enjoyed the love-aria to her husband in scene 5, it is very touching.

Which kind of difficulties did you have studying and singing your part?

MA: Being quite used to sing newly written music, I did find learning *Blue Mountain* a great joy. The orchestra is always helping with the pitch and there is never a struggle to find the note, which is often the case in modern music. The composer knows the singers capability, the range and sound of a mezzo, and uses this to the full. I had a very good learning process as I found it exciting and loved singing it.

Do you think that the balance between voices and instruments is good?

MA: The balance between the orchestra and voice was good, but there is always a challenge to keep the orchestra down in dynamics when the voices are on and not to drown them completely. To sing with a brass/wind band is of course an extra challenge, and requires a good conductor to keep the band down in places. I suppose it is merely impossible not to overplay the singers at some stage, but on the whole I found it worked very well.

Which general impression did you get of this opera?

MA: I find *Blue Mountain* a very exciting chamber opera. It contains a lot of drama, has great rhythms, some beautiful lyrical parts, and some very soft and fragile parts. I find it refreshing and very atmospheric. A great place is when he includes the famous A minor piano concerto, as Percy Grainger is such a big part of the opera, and perhaps the most famous piece of music that Edvard Grieg wrote. The mountains surrounding Bergen is well depicted in the opera, as well as the fjord. It would have been great to set it on stage.

Did you sing something similar in your career?

MA: I cannot recall to have been singing anything similar in my career, as it is with brass and wind instruments only. It was great fun and it really works!

Other ideas, suggestions, etc...

MA: I regard Justin Dello Joio very highly as a composer. A true artist and a lovely man to work with!

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW WITH MR. NILS HARALD SOEDAL (Percy Grainger)

November 2013

What do you think about the libretto?

NS: You have to remember that we didn't stage this piece. We only did a concert version. But still, I think the libretto would have worked as an opera-libretto when it comes to the narratives and the dramaturgy.

What do you think of your character?

NS: It was a clear outlined character, credible and authentic.

What do you like and what you don't like of your vocal parts?

NS: The vocal parts were quite challenging, but not out of reach in any ways.

Which kind of difficulties did you have studying and singing your part?

NS: I wouldn't say I found it difficult to learn these parts. The music and the libretto fluctuate in an organic way.

Do you think that the balance between voices and instruments is good?

NS: I think so, but again, we did this in concert set, with microphones. It is therefore hard to say how this would have worked acoustically on a stage.

Which general impression did you get of this opera?

NS: It was a lot of fun working with it, and the response from the audience was good, and *that* is not always the fact when it comes to new written music.

Did you sing something similar in your career?

NS: I have done a lot of contemporary music in my career, so my frame of references should be in a good shape.

Do you have other ideas, suggestions, etc.?

NS: I liked the romantic dimension in the music, a feature which is often lost in new music due to the fact that the modernistic paradigm is much too often *too* academic in its approach to the music for theater.

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW WITH DR. ANDREW BOYLE

June 2013

What did you think of Grieg as a man and as an artist when you wrote your play?

AB: I admire Grieg enormously. Although small of stature, he is a huge personality; he had great wit and philosophical insight, a generously humanist outlook on life. His letters are just fabulous to read: a wonderful human being jumps out at you from the pages.

Grieg was scared of his death and the death of his music. Where did you find this information?

AB: Before answering your question about where I found the information, let me first just consider what you write here, that Grieg "was scared of his death." I don't think he was. He was prone to sickness all his life, and learned to live daily with the prospect of death catching up with him at any moment. In 1899 he jokingly wrote in a letter: "I'm happy to die if I have to, but I'd much rather not." And in another letter from 1906 (near the end of his life) he writes: "As long as you live, the motto has to be: Keep your head high and strive onwards, always onwards, towards the end - or to something more!"

What he was afraid of, towards the end of his life, was: **madness**. My source for this information is the diary he kept the two last years of his life. Here are links to them in the Bergen archive - but unfortunately only in Norwegian:

<http://bergenbibliotek.no/digitale-samlinger/grieg/grieg-samlingen-griegiana>

Grieg's medical condition was treated with drugs (opiates in particular) that gave him terrible nightmares and hallucinations. He was terrified that he was going to spend the last years of his life as a madman.

He was scared of the death of his music. There are various letters where he expresses that he feared that it would come about - that his music only belonged to his own time, and that it would have nothing to say to those that came after. As you know, Edvard and Nina Grieg lost 2 children: their daughter died when she was 1 year old, and the shock seems to have caused Nina to miscarry a second child. After that they couldn't have children. So the music became their "offspring." Therefore it was such a great lift, right at the end of his life, for Grieg to discover a young man - not Norwegian, but Australian! - who was passionately interested in carrying Grieg's music out to a new generation. Grieg felt for Grainger fatherly feelings.

Is it true that the mountain was a place that Grieg loved?

AB: Grieg loved the Norwegian mountains more than anything else, apart from his music. Bergen was too cold and damp for his health in the winter; so he travelled abroad during those months. But with every spring, he felt a great longing to return to Norway and to hike in the mountains.

Rossing/Grønvold/the doctor.

AB: Yes, the figure of the doctor has been fashioned almost entirely from my imagination. There are certain facts that I have adhered to. Klaus Hanssen was a close friend. And he did rather over-medicate Grieg. As he is not a very positive figure in the play, and so much a figure of my own creation, I thought it unfair to give him the name of a real person.

APPENDIX G

INTERVIEW WITH DR. JEFFREY RENSHAW

December 2013

What do you think about the libretto?

JR: The libretto is fine. It tells the story very well. Like most operas, it would benefit from a staged performance more than a concert presentation.

What do you think of the orchestration?

JR: The orchestration is what first attracted me to the work. It is very fresh and effective. The more we rehearsed the more the colors emerged!

What do you like and what you don't like in the score?

JR: The score layout was a bit small. I would have liked the voices placed in the middle of the page.

This opera is not tonal. How did you approach and analyze it from the harmonic point of view (tonal centers)?

JR: I don't think that an in depth harmonic analysis is necessary in this work. It's more about pacing and emotion.

Which kind of difficulties did you have studying and conducting the score?

JR: It takes a little work to translate the score to sound but it really isn't anything unusual.

Do you think that the balance between voices and instruments is good?

JR: Balance is not a problem if you have good singers. We used wireless microphones but only needed them to enhance big sections. For singers, balance is all about the consonants.

What do you think of vocal parts?

JR: The bass is demanding because of range. When the singers understood the meters they were fine.

Which general impression did you get of this opera?

JR: I would perform it again. We all agreed that it would make a great tour program.

Did you conduct something similar in your career?

JR: Yes, many works.

Do you have suggestions for a conductor that have to conduct this opera?

JR: In rehearsal be as clear as possible. In performance, concentrate on pacing!

Do you have other ideas, suggestions, etc.?

JR: This is a work that all conductors would benefit from studying and performing.

APPENDIX H

ORIGINAL AND FINAL LIBRETTO COMPARED

Original Version by Andrew Boyle

Final Version by Justin Dello Joio

Scene 1*Grieg enters.*

GRIEG

Silence! I fear you.
 Silence behind. Scares me to death.
 Silence ahead. Death that scares me.
 I am on an island of madness and music.
 Ahead is only darkness.

One wrong step and I drown in a vast sea
 of silence,
 that washes away my life, my struggle.
 Behind me - my child's death, the hush of
 her absent years.

Shh!

No, stop! Don't listen!

Shh! There again!

A tiny voice, a baby's cry
 Come closer, I can hear you.
 Come closer, let me hold you.
 Each hour of each day I have listened for
 your voice
 for over my music there hangs a spell
 a hollow echo to every note I write
 and only your voice could break the spell.
 She's gone again.

My God, this awful night will finish me!
 There you are! I hear you!
 I know you are frightened, I am
 frightened too.

Scene 1*Grieg, alone*

GRIEG

O silence, I fear you
 O silence, you deafen me
 Silence behind scares me to death
 Silence ahead...
 Death, that scares me.

I am on an island of madness and music.
 Ahead is only darkness.
 One wrong step and I'll drown
 in a vast sea of silence.
 Silence, the Silence that washes away my
 life,
 my struggle, my life.

Oh, this darkness
 My child, so far behind me,
 my child's death...
 The hush of her absent years...
 My child's death...

No. No. Stop! *Shh*Listen...*Shh*...

There again...her tiny voice...
 my baby's cry.

Come closer, I can hear you.

Come closer, let me hold you.

Every hour of each day I have listened
 for her voice.

Over my music there hangs a spell,
 a hollow echo to every note I write,

Come closer, I can hold you, my child,
I can hold you until the night is over -and
tomorrow Grainger will be coming.

and only your voice could break the spell.
She is gone again.

Silence.

Her voice again...I thought I heard it.

I fear you.

I'm fright'ned.

There, no, no, there.

I can hold you, I'm fright'ned...

Oh silence...

Scene 2

Rossing enters

ROSSING

Breathe slowly!

GRIEG *agitated*

Where is she?

ROSSING *calling Nina that is coming*

Nina!

GRIEG

My child!

ROSSING

There's no child here.

GRIEG

Rossing, this morphine of yours...

if it gets any worse,

I will lose my mind.

I'm tense because of Grainger's visit...

but I was sure it was day by now.

Nina enters during the previous line

I'm frightened of the silence.

I can hold you!

*Rossing enters. He supports Grieg to a
chair.*

ROSSING

Breathe slowly!

GRIEG

Where is she?

ROSSING

Nina's coming.

GRIEG

My child!

ROSSING

There's no child here.

GRIEG

This morphine of yours!
If it gets any worse I will lose my mind -
Nina enters. She goes to Grieg and holds his hand, tries to quit him.
I'm tense because of Grainger's visit.
I was sure it was day by now.

NINA

It's not midnight yet.

ROSSING

A little more morphine will help you over the worst.
Rossing turns to leave. Nina goes after him.

NINA

[Aside to Rossing] Was it her again?

ROSSING

It's just the side-effects.

NINA

No more morphine tonight.
Each time he wakes he sees this dreadful apparition.
I will stay with him –

ROSSING

You need some rest.

NINA

Then you must tell him about Grainger.

ROSSING

He'll not take it well –
Rossingre turns to Grieg.

NINA

No, it's not midnight yet!

ROSSING

A little more morphine will help you over the worst

NINA to Grieg

Is it here again?

ROSSING

It's just the side effect.

GRIEG

My child...

NINA concerned

No more morphine tonight.
Each time he wakes,
he sees this dreadful apparition.
I'll stay with him.

ROSSING

You need some rest.

NINA

Doctor, then you must tell him about Grainger.

ROSSING

He'll not take it well
Grieg...my dear Grieg...
I sent Grainger a telegram some time ago.
Yes, I put this visit off...

GRIEG interrupting angrily

What? How dare you!
Without consulting me?

I sent Grainger a telegram some days ago
and put his visit off.

GRIEG
Without consulting me?
You wouldn't dare!

ROSSING
I'm sorry –

GRIEG
How long before he comes?

ROSSING
Breathe slowly!
I'll give you something to sleep on,
we can talk again tomorrow.

NINA
There's another storm blowing in tonight
tomorrow the weather will be fine.
There are things we must see to,
the legacy is ready to sign.

ROSSING
To leave your estate to young musicians:
It's a noble thought –
"The Edvard Grieg Legacy".

GRIEG
I can't put my name to a testament
until Grainger has been and left.

NINA
Grainger?! Why should Grainger change
a thing?

ROSSING
I'm sorry.

GRIEG
So, how long until he comes...
How long???

ROSSING
Slowly, slowly...breathe slowly...
I'll give you something to sleep on.
We can talk again ...tomorrow.

NINA
There's another storm blowing in
tonight.
You'll see...tomorrow...
The weather will be fine.
There are things we must see to.
The legacy is ready to sign.

ROSSING *pompous*
To give your estate to young musicians.
It is a noble thought.
Yes, yes...the Edvard Grieg legacy...

GRIEG
I can't put my name to a testament!
Not until Grainger has been and left.

NINA *angrily*
Grainger?
Why should Grainger change a thing?
We have worked two years on that
testament.

GRIEG
Maybe I would like to choose
who inherits me.
A legacy throws assets to the wind.

We have worked two years on that testament.

GRIEG

Maybe I would like to choose who inherits me.
A legacy will throw my assets to the wind.

NINA

If this is difficult for you, how hard is it for me?
Though we both are childless you've had the comfort of your music.

I can't go on like this, Edvard,
I'm exhausted.

How many times have we lived through a night we thought would be your last?
I've been bent too often from black to white,
now I'm near to breaking.
I can't find the faith I need to hope for a miracle.
I'm exhausted now.
I just want to see you find some peace.

GRIEG

If there is any peace for me, Grainger will bring it. How long before he comes?

ROSSING

I have planned every detail of your treatment. A visit now is not realistic.

GRIEG

I have a tour of England to prepare with him.

NINA *to Grieg*
Edvard...

GRIEG *to no one*

Grainger.
How long before he comes?

NINA

Oh, how many times have I lived through the night I thought would be your last?

ROSSING

Morphine, a little more morphine.
You need more morphine.
It will help you get over the night.

GRIEG

My pain...

NINA

My love...

GRIEG *to Rossing*

Your medicine...

NINA

...my Edvard...

GRIEG

...is killing me.

ROSSING

Grieg, you must rest.

GRIEG

It's killing me, not the pain.

ROSSING

He needs more morphine.

ROSSING

No, you must rest. Put your faith in me,
if not in me, in modern science.
The dark days are gone, no one has to
suffer –

GRIEG

Your medicine kills the pain
but is also killing me.
Is that a little detail in your treatment,
too?

Grieg exits.

ROSSING

He needs more morphine
to get him through the night.

NINA

I'll give it to him.

ROSSING

I'll be outside.
Nina exits

Scene 2

Rossing outside. Grainger enters. He

GRIEG

If there's any peace for me,
Grainger will bring it.

NINA

I want you to find some peace.
Oh, my Edvard

TRIO

ROSSING: you must rest

GRIEG: When will he come?

ROSSING: not now!

GRIEG: but I have a tour with Grainger, a
tour to England

ROSSING *to Nina*: He must not suffer

GRIEG: Rossing I must go...

ROSSING: he needs...

GRIEG: ...with Grainger

ROSSING: ...not suffer

GRIEG: so when? Yes, when, when will
he come?

NINA: my Edvard, my Edvard, my dear
love.

ROSSING: he must not suffer

GRIEG: Grainger, when will he come?

INTERLUDE

*Stage visual – map tracking Grainger's
boat trip from England to Bergen,
Norway.*

Scene 3

ROSSING

Who are you, and what do you think
you're doing?

*carries a jacket and a towel over his arm
and has a rucksack.*

*He throws everything down on the ground
except the towel and dries his hair.*

ROSSING

Who are you? What do you think you're
doing?!

GRAINGER

Had a swim in the fjord.

ROSSING

Do you know where you are?!
The private home of Edvard Grieg.

GRAINGER

To be quite honest, I heard that rumor –
And to stay quite honest: I'm expected
here –

ROSSING

You can trust me to know who comes and
goes here. Please leave.

GRAINGER

You seem the sort who'd be good at that:
Keeping an eye on other people's
business.
I'm expected – but not just yet.
Got a lift a few days early with a steamer
out of London
if I helped in the boiler room.

ROSSING

You seem the sort who'd be good at that:
Shoveling coal for your betters.

GRAINGER

GRAINGER *nonchalant*

Had a swim in the fjord, quite nice

ROSSING *irritated*

Do you know where you are?
The private home of Edvard Grieg.

GRAINGER

Oh, really?
To be quite honest, heard that rumor,
and to stay quite honest
I'm expected here.

ROSSING

You can trust me to know who comes
and goes here. Please leave.

GRAINGER

You seem the sort who'd be good at that,
Keeping an eye on other people's
business.
I'm expected...but not just yet,
Got a lift a few days early on a steamer
Out of London,
if I worked (laughs) in the boiler room.

ROSSING

You seem the sort who'd be good at that,
Shoveling coal for your betters.

GRAINGER

You'll be Rossing...I guessed it right.
Grieg wrote to me about a "Doc" with a
Pompous bedside manner.
Grainger! Percy.
Play the piano
Got to practice the Concerto with the
Old man himself,
then off to England
on a whirlwind tour.

You'd be Rossing? I guessed it right!
 Grieg wrote to me about you.
 He said he had a doc with a pompous
 bedside manner
Grainger offers his hand.
 Grainger. Percy. Play the piano.
 Got to practice the concerto with the old
 man himself, then we're off to England
 on a whirlwind tour.

Rossing shakes Grainger's hand coldly.

ROSSING

Things here are not as they were –
Distant thunder.

GRAINGER

Woah! Storm brewing up!
 I'm off in doors –give the old man a
 shock.
Nina enters.

ROSSING

Stop! Wait a moment.
 Grieg's emphysema is much worse,
 he won't live more than a week or two.
Nina recoils at this news.

GRAINGER

If that were true, he would hardly have
 invited me! There's Nina!

NINA

Percy?! Are you here?!
*Grainger goes to greet her. Nina is
 perplexed.*

ROSSING

He left early. Before the telegram arrived.

NINA

This is quite a surprise –Edvard will be

ROSSING

Things here are not as they were.
 Grieg's emphysema is much worse
 he won't live more than a week.
 A week or two.

GRAINGER

If that were true, he hardly would have
 invited me.

NINA

Percy? Are you here?

ROSSING *ironic*

Nina, he left early...
 before the telegram arrived.

NINA

Oh, what a surprise!
 Edvard will be delighted.

ROSSING *to Grainger*

If you can be quit and not disturb
 Grieg, then you're welcome to stay
 overnight.

If he wakes refresh'd tomorrow
 you can meet him. Then, you can leave!
turns his back to Grainger

delighted.

ROSSING

If you can be quiet and not disturb Grieg then you are welcome to stay overnight; if he wakes refreshed, you can meet him tomorrow but then you must leave for home.

NINA

That's settled then. Go in! Go in!
You'll catch your death out here.
I'll follow in a moment.
Grainger collects his things and exits.
Is it true?
Has it come down to that?
Only a week or two?

ROSSING

I'm sorry, I didn't see you there.
I think it's time for us to think ahead.
A whole nation will ask of me and you how this man's life ended.
The Dark Time lies behind us.
No one has to suffer, every pain can be stilled.
In a white bed, a white room
he can put aside the struggle with dignity.
I have thought it through in detail,
everything that needs to be done.

NINA

If it's true, you must help me be strong.
He seems to want to fight on and on.

ROSSING

I have thought it through in detail,
everything that needs to be done.

NINA

That's settled, then.
Go in, go in.
I'll follow in a moment.
to Rossing
Is it true? Only a week...
Is it true, he just has a week or two?

ROSSING

I'm sorry I didn't see you there.
It is time for us to think ahead,
the whole nation will ask of me
false, as an afterthought
and you!
How this man's life ended,
all the "Dark Time" lies behind us.
No one has to suffer,
every pain can be stilled.

NINA

You must help me be strong

ROSSING

All pain can be stilled

NINA

Grieg wants to fight on and on,
with every last breath.

ROSSING

Nina, Grieg's fading,
he can't live for long.
Not long...

NINA

Now you must help me be strong.
For he'll fight while there's breath left in
him.

ROSSING

He's fading quickly. And Nina –
this is not a house where a young man
would thrive.
Nina exits.
I have planned every detail of his
treatment and Grainger is not in that plan.
Rossing exits.

Scene 3

*Later the same night. Occasional thunder.
There is a table and a chair. On the table
is a phonograph.
Grainger stands listening intently with his
ear to the horn of the phonograph, while
he cranks the handle. Now and then he
sings along. He has a hat pulled far down
on his head. Grieg enters from the
opposite side.*

GRIEG

Stop there! Not another step.
Yes, I hear the song, it means the edge is
close.
It's pulling us in.
It draws us to the edge of madness.

*The music stops. Grieg is startled by the
sudden and inexplicable break in the
music and retreats some steps.
Grainger repositions the machine.*

GRIEG

No, no! Don't cry, my child.
I can sing for you as well –

INTERLUDE

*Grainger at an old fashioned photograph,
hat pulled low on his head, playing his
new recording of the Piano Concerto –
the actual Grainger recording as Grieg
enters and sees him, but does not
recognize him.*

Scene 4

GRIEG to no one
I hear it!
Silence,
the silence is drawing me to madness.
My music, is it strong enough?
Strong enough to stand the test of time?
But who is playing?
Is it Death himself who's playing?

*Grieg approaches. Grainger removes his
hat*

The music starts again.

Can you hear it? The music –
Music that is strong enough to stand the
test of death.

Suddenly he catches sight of Grainger.

But is it Death himself who is playing?
*A frightened Grieg goes hesitantly
towards Grainger. Grieg lifts gingerly the
brim of the hat, then tears the hat
resolutely off.*

GRIEG

I'll be damned if you're a phantom!

GRAINGER

I'll be damned if that was a welcome!
*The two mens' amazement dissolves and
they embrace warmly in laughter.*

GRIEG

What are you doing here?!

GRAINGER

[ironic] Why is everyone so pleased to
see me?!

GRIEG

But Rossing sent a telegram –

GRAINGER

I left ahead of schedule.

GRIEG

Rossing is faithful to the latest science,
according to which I should be dead;
he's treating me now for stubbornness.

GRAINGER

Are you well enough?

GRIEG

I'll be damned if you are a phantom.

GRAINGER

I'll be damned if that is a welcome!
laughter, they embrace

GRIEG

What are you doing here?
Rossing sent you a telegram...

GRAINGER *breaking in*

...come ahead of schedule.

Are you well?

Can we practice for the England tour?

GRIEG

Can you play my music like the last year
in London? I dreamt I heard it.

Can we practice for the England tour?

GRIEG

If you play my music as last year in
London –
I dreamt that I heard it here just now?

*Grainger turns with enthusiasm to the
phonograph.*

GRAINGER

Isn't it a wonder? Listen to this!
*Grainger starts a wax cylinder. Grieg sits
down.*

GRIEG

There it is again. Just as in London.
Is the music I wrote so good?
Grainger keeps cranking the phonograph.

They said of me:

A man of his time! An artist of his
people!

This man is our greatness and our
richness.

What did I see?

A thing of fashion, a curiosity
that will soon be gone,
a music that will die and disappear with
me.

An alpine rose that clings to the slope
but will soon be gone,
a music that will wither in October wind.

GRAINGER

How can you say that?

GRIEG

The weaker my health,
the stronger my doubt
that made me ever more sure:
My music would die along with me.

They said of me,

he's an artist of the people, this man,
this man is our greatness.

My greatness?

But what,

but what do I hear?

What do I hear?

A music that will die
and soon disappear?

An alpine rose that clings to a slope,
so soon gone?

Music that withers in the October wind?

GRAINGER

How can you say that?

GRIEG

The weaker my health,
the stronger my doubt.

I'm so afraid.

I fear my music will die with me.

There are ghosts who say this every day.

GRAINGER

Ghosts?

GRIEG

My own private phantoms.
Don't worry, it's only the morphine.

And there are ghosts here at home
that say the same every day!

It brings on visions.

GRAINGER

[Alarmed] Ghosts here?

GRIEG

[Reassuring] My own private phantoms,
children of morphine,
they slip out of my mind when I'm not
looking.

GRAINGER

What visions?

Don't look so worried –we are alone big
family!

GRIEG

Do you know that Nina and I,
we lost our child, she died...
only one year old, my child.

*Grieg's attempt to be humorous hasn't
reassured Grainger.*

It's just the pills. They bring on
hallucinations.

GRAINGER

Of what?

GRAINGER

I'm sorry.

GRIEG

Well, one more than others –

You have lived a lifetime of illness,
but your music is like an alpine rose;
it blooms against all odds,
its beauty in defiance,
your music sings.

Did you know that I and Nina lost a
child?

A daughter –she was only one year old –

It sings for all who hear.

GRAINGER

I'm sorry. I didn't know –

*Grieg sees that Grainger is
uncomfortable and picks up a wax
cylinder.*

GRIEG

This I'd like to hear! Let me try –

*Grainger lets Grieg take over the
phonograph. Grainger is disturbed by
what he has heard and struggles to find
words for what he wants to stay.*

GRAINGER

My father left us when I was little
 while my mother was strict enough for
 two – or more.
 She forced me to the piano, an unwilling
 boy in a godforsaken corner of Australia.
 Then I stumble over music of Grieg,
 written nowhere near conservatory halls.
 Near a glacier perhaps, or some exotic
 place, was the man who wrote this music.

You broke free from a lifetime of illness
 broke loose from the silence around you.
 Yes, an alpine rose in meager soil,
 but to bloom against the stiffest odds!
 Beauty in defiance –
*Grieg is moved by the young man's faith
 in him. He decides to reveal to him
 something personal and secret.*

GRIEG
 Before we met in London,
 I was yesterday's news –
 I had overstayed my welcome.
 I felt cold and dead.
 You play my music
 as if nobody alive
 has ever heard anything
 so bold and fresh.
 [Aside] If I had the strength –

GRAINGER
 What?
 "If you had the strength –" ?

GRIEG
 I'd like to see the mountains one last
 time.

GRAINGER
 Why not? You'd manage that, with help

GRIEG
 You play my music like no one else.
 Before, it felt cold and dead,
 but you make it sound so bold, so fresh,
 if only I had the strength.

GRAINGER
 The strength?
 The strength for what?

GRIEG
 I'd like to see the mountains.
 I'd like to see the mountains
 one more time.

GRAINGER
 Why not? You can manage that with
 help from me.
 How far is it?

GRIEG
 The nearest mountain is the Blue Peak.
 From there you can see all Bergen.

GRAINGER

from me.
Must we travel far?

GRIEG
The nearest mountain is The Blue Peak,
from there you can see all of Bergen.

GRAINGER
We'd make it, not a doubt!
I could carry you!

GRIEG
With my doctor at your heels
with an extra big syringe?!
*Grainger sneaks behind Grieg. Then
suddenly grabs Grieg by the arms and
lifts him up onto his back like a sack.*

Put me down!
I'm the mad one in this house!
*Grainger carries Grieg on tours around
the table.*

GRAINGER
To the mountains!
And from every tuft of grass there comes
a melody – composed by Edvard Grieg.
And we climb and we climb –we are
climbing, right?

GRIEG
A steep ascent from the Fløyen plateau
Here we are at the top, you can put me
down!
*Grainger lowers Grieg onto a chair.
Grieg is short of breath, but they both
laugh. Grainger pretends to scout the
horizon.*

We'd make it, not a doubt.
To the mountains
we climb and climb,
from every blade of grass there comes
a melody by Grieg.
How splendid, what a view!
What do see there?

GRAINGER

What's this I see?

A shepherd girl,

a spring rose, newly sprung!

Hoi-a! Hoi-a!

GRIEG

Shh! Shh!

GRAINGER

[A little weaker] Here! Hoi-a, here.

What a wonderful view. Tell me what you see.

GRIEG

I wish I could. Let's talk of something else.

GRAINGER

But if you could –

GRIEG

The one place where the fear I have seems too foolish to be of concern.

On a summit I am a pilgrim from here I can laugh at my doubt.

Rossing enters.

ROSSING

[To Grieg] What in God's name has he done with you?!

GRAINGER

Training for a trip to The Blue Peak.

ROSSING

It's at least two years since Grieg was strong enough for that.

Grainger starts to help Grieg up. But

GRIEG

From this place

I can laugh at my doubts,

from here my fears disappear.

Here, I'm a pilgrim

and from here...

ROSSING *enters interrupts angrily*

What in God's name have you done to him?

GRAINGER

Just training for a trip to the Blue Peak.

GRIEG *loud coughs, weakly*

No, I'm alright.

ROSSING

There, see what've done.

I'll fetch some medicine.

Grieg has an attack of breathlessness and can't continue.

As I was saying!

I'll fetch some water and medicine.

Rossing exits

GRAINGER

I enjoyed the trip.

GRIEG

Let's do it again sometime.

On the summit I am also a pilgrim.

From here I can laugh at my doubt.

Scene 4

A garden chair and a small garden table.

Grieg is sitting, enjoying the summer's day. Nina enters. She has a document with her.

NINA

We're nearly ready. Why have you changed your clothes?

GRIEG

A boat trip and picnic –I'd like to come!

NINA

Rossing will never agree to that, he says you're too tired from practice with Grainger.

Let him arrange for a room at the clinic where you can rest in his care.

GRIEG

Grainger has given me new hope.

NINA

[Tries to stay calm] Let's talk about it later.

GRIEG

INTERLUDE

Scene 5

GRIEG

Where are you going?

NINA

A boat trip, and on such a day.

I'm nearly ready to go.

GRIEG

Yes, it's a fine day.

I would like to come with you

NINA

No, Rossing would never agree.

You're too tired.

Let him arrange for a room in his clinic.

There you can rest in his care.

GRIEG

Yes, but Grainger has given me *searching for it* new hope.

Nina, I've been thinking,

Let's adopt him.

Let's adopt him as a son...

NINA

What, what do you mean?

GRIEG

...adopt him.

Life without our child was so hard,

Nina, I've been thinking –
Can we adopt Grainger?

NINA
Now the morphine is talking.

GRIEG
Adopt him as our son?
To face life childless: that was one thing.
To face death childless –

NINA
[Suddenly angry] Enough!
Grieg is dumbfounded. He has been so enveloped in his own thoughts, he sees her now almost for the first time. She recovers her composure.
Which part should I play, tell me and I'll play it. Explain the text, and I'll learn it off by heart.
I've been trying to play: Faithful life companion, strong and sure, reliable and safe.
But what should I do now, when "reliable and sure" seems cynical and cold and the lines I knew by heart, have no meaning?
How many times have we lived through a night we thought would be your last?
In hotel rooms in Copenhagen, behind the stage in Paris, a new collapse and crisis, a string of nights that nearly took you from me.
Then morning comes, pain eases, despair loosens its grip.
I've been bent too often from black to white, now I'm near to breaking.
The role of Mother? I got bad reviews.

but to face death without a child...

NINA *interrupting angrily*
Enough! What are you thinking?
If this is difficult for you, think of me,
how hard it is for we...both of us, are childless now.
You had the joy of your music.
Your struggles have always been mine.
How many times I've lived through the night that I thought might be your last.
You are my life, my joy.
But many times I have lived through a night, a night I thought would be your last.

The role as your Muse? For this season
 only another has been given that part.
 Which leaves only minor parts -
 Don't even think of asking!
 Is there another left for me?

*Grieg is deeply moved and somewhat
 ashamed. He looks into her eyes and
 caresses her.*

GRIEG

Without you I can't struggle on.
 Without my fight, I have nothing
She smiles and returns his affection.

NINA

I'll ask Rossing about the boat trip.
 But no more talk of this adoption idea.
 Haven't you seen it yet?
 Everything of value Grainger needed
 from you
 you gave him a long time ago.
 And look –what do you think his mother
 would say?
She kisses him on the forehead.
 I brought along the legacy,
 you promised to read it through again –
 She gives him the document.
Rossing enters, carrying oars.

ROSSING

[To Nina] There you are. Are you
 ready?
 Nina takes Rossing's arm and leads him
 to one side.

NINA

He wants to come with us on the picnic.

ROSSING

He's a dying man. It would be absurd.

And everything you need from him
 you already have,
 so please, please,
 don't ask me this.
 How hard is for me
 we both are childless,
 but you had the joy of your music,
 your music, your joy.

NINA

Would it be so bad, if the end came there,
on the fjord, among friends?
Would it be so much better at the clinic?

ROSSING

A whole nation will ask of me and you
how this man's life ended.
Rossing goes to Grieg.
[To Grieg] It's a fine summer's day, try
to rest all you can.
*Rossing exits. Nina stands for a minute,
torn between staying and going.*
Grainger enters.

to Grainger
Percy, read this document.
Look after him.

Nina exits

GRIEG

Percy, let me hear this document

GRAINGER *reading from the document*

"The Edvard Grieg Foundation will
only be used in development
and production of music in Bergen."

NINA

Look after him, Percy.

*Nina exits. Grieg gives the testament
document to Grainger.*

Bravo Grieg!

GRIEG

Let me hear it.

GRAINGER

"The remainder of my possessions to be
sold and with the net sum accruing there
will be established a charitable
foundation, The Edward Grieg
Foundation, the interest from which is to
be used in the development and
promotion of music in Bergen, as
described -"

GRIEG

Bring a telescope and brandy!
I'll show you the Blue Peak!

GRIEG

[To himself] "Everything of value he
needed from you;
you gave him a long time ago."

Grieg gets up. Percy, order us a carriage.

Let me show you The Blue Peak.
Bring the brandy and the telescope.

*Grieg exits. Grainger is dumbfounded,
exits after Grieg.*

Scene 5

*As previous scene. The table has been
cleared. Rossing enters. He is tired and
content and sits down to relax in the
chair. Nina enters. She is distraught; in
her hand is a letter.*

ROSSING

I can't find them anywhere—
they may have gone for a walk.

*Nina stands and scrutinizes him, unsure
how to tell him of the letter. He senses her
silence.*

Are you all right?
Nina indicates the letter.

NINA

They've gone off on a hike.
To The Blue Peak!

ROSSING

It's a joke. Not possible.
The man is dying.
*Nina offers the letter to Rossing. But he
doesn't take it.*

NINA

We'll drive after and meet them.

Maybe he needs help.

ROSSING

Grieg I can help when his war is over,
but not against his will. And on a naked
mountain.

Nina begins to smile and laugh a little.

NINA

And I never thought he'd even leave the
house again!

He should have come with us on the fjord
today– I should have been with him to the
mountain –

Nina turns resolutely to leave.

I must help Grieg on the mountain in any
way I can

ROSSING

I'll come with you to town –

I have patients at the clinic who know
how much I can help.

*Nina is not listening to him. She is in her
own thoughts.*

NINA

... and tomorrow I'll write and book the
rooms for his concert tour in England.

ROSSING

A journey he won't survive –

*Nina stops and looks at Rossing as if she
doesn't understand him anymore. Then
she smiles again and exits. .*

*Rossing takes the letter and reads it. Then
he rolls it into a ball and throws it onto
the table. Rossing exits.*

Scene 6

INTERLUDE

Arrival at the summit of the Blue Peak

Scene 6

GRIEG

This is the place where my fears seem
foolish, from here, I'm a pilgrim.

I laugh at my doubt.

You gave me the strength I need to

A cairn. Grieg sits exhausted with his back to the cairn. Grainger looks through a telescope.

climb this mountain.

GRIEG

The one place where the fear I have seems too foolish to be of concern.
On a summit I am a pilgrim
from here I can laugh at my doubt.
We should have had a musician.
For big occasions always bring a fiddler.

GRAINGER

Is it so important an event?
Well, I'll do what I can.
Grainger sings a fiddle tune and dances some steps.

Before I heard you play,
I felt cold and dead.

GRIEG

Do the old or the young love life the most? The young have most faith,
unclouded by life's end.
But first when you understand how short it is, can you love it -as old people do.
Grainger sits down beside Grieg.
Before we met in London, I was yesterday's news – I had overstayed my welcome. I felt cold and dead.
You play my music as if nobody alive has ever heard anything so bold and fresh.
The wave of blood that warmed my life is known to every father who loves his child.

You play my music like no one else.

GRAINGER

We love those who master the art of making life strong in our heart.

GRAINGER

Yes, and in London soon they will hear your music played again.

GRIEG

We love those who master the art

GRIEG

From this place I laugh at my doubt,

of making life strong in our heart.
Grainger gets up and dances again.

GRAINGER

In England they will soon hear the music
 that broke loose from silence.
The music becomes quieter.

GRIEG

I will follow you as soon as I can.

GRAINGER

I enjoyed the trip.

GRIEG

Let's do it again sometime.
Rossing enters.

ROSSING

Here you can rest. It will all be fine.
Nina enters.

NINA

We were on our way to the boat.
 It was all that kept him going
 the concert tour in England.
 Since Grainger left for London
 he has practiced every moment he could.

GRIEG

I will follow you as soon as I can.

GRAINGER

I enjoyed the trip.

GRIEG

Let's do it again sometime.

ROSSING

from here my fears disappears.
 Here, I'm a pilgrim,
 and from here I feel reborn.

*With the word "reborn" Grieg and
 Grainger disappear from view.*

NINA

We were all on the way to the boat
 for the concert tour in London.
 That hope is what
 kept him alive

ROSSING

He almost boarded a steamer,
 but it was not to be.

A close call, you almost boarded the steamer. On the North Sea - well I hadn't planned for that! I have sent a telegram to London, he knows your plans have been changed.

GRIEG

I don't want a painful night.

ROSSING

I'll give you something to sleep on.
That was a close call, a close call.

GRIEG

Be careful, nothing too strong.
I want to follow as soon as I can.

ROSSING

I have sent a telegram to London
he knows your plans have been changed.
The North Sea!
I hadn't planned for that.

GRAINGER

I enjoyed the trip.

GRIEG

Let's do it again sometime.
Rossing doesn't answer. He stands for a while then exits.

Come closer, I can hear you,
so lovely you are singing.
It's a miracle that you were born at all
and look at my daughter now!
young and beautiful as Norway.
Close closer and hold me now.
Fade on Grieg. Music stops.

NINA

That night...
I knew his life was at the end.
He fell to sleep,
but suddenly, he sat up.
He made a bow.
There was no doubt.
He bowed as an artist
to his audience.

NINA

(*) Grieg fell quickly to sleep,
and later that night I knew his life was
near its end.

Just then something strange happened,
which I'll never be able to forget.
Grieg sat up in bed –it was almost
ceremonial –

Music starts again.

-he made a deep and respectful bow.

There is not the shadow of a doubt about
it he bowed as an artist to his audience.

Then he sank quietly back and lay still.

The years and years of struggle –
his performance was at an end.

Fade on Nina.

*Light up again on the cairn. Grainger is
sitting beside Grieg and operates the
phonograph. Fade.*

END

And then...and then...and then...
Still.

From off stage

GRIEG

Silence, oh silence.

(*) The description of Grieg's death
given by Nina is partly taken from the
account given by nurse Clara Sofie
Jensen, who watched over Grieg the last
two days of his life.

"Blue Mountain" by Justin Dello Joio, Libretto by Andrew Boyle,
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