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Illuminating the Infelice: Defiance and Transcendence in the 19th Century Operatic Madwoman

Claire Biringer

Macalester College, cbiring1@macalester.edu

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ILLUMINATING THE *INFELICE*: DEFIANCE AND TRANSCENDENCE
IN THE 19TH CENTURY OPERATIC MADWOMAN

by
Claire Biringer

An Honors Project for the
Macalester College Music Department
Mark Mazullo, advisor
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: The Madwoman, Released from Restraints	1
Chapter 2: Lucia, Grasping at Freedom	20
Chapter 3: Elvira, Clinging to Hope	43
Chapter 4: Dinorah, Steering the Scene	60
Chapter 5: Lady Macbeth, Succumbing to Fate	76
Bibliography	98

1 • THE MADWOMAN, RELEASED FROM RESTRAINTS

It is the climax of the opera. The soprano has taken center stage. Surrounded by a chorus that stares unapologetically – repulsed, fascinated – she sings. She sings with the happiness of ignorance, the bliss of love; her voices flies, careens over the audience with boundless energy, each note quicker, higher, more animated than the last. A flute stays by every trill and run, a joyous companion, her true love. This is the hour of the madwoman: she breaks, she kills, she creates, she runs, she flies, she dies. Lucia as we know her will soon come to an end, but here she is suspended in time; her reality is our reality. But we are filled with pity; she did not choose madness, but was driven to it.

Another day, another song. Another opera, another madwoman. Elvira's white dress, her struggles, her flights, her bliss, her trills – everything reminds us of Lucia. Another woman lost in the horror of abandonment, she struggles between apathetic pleas for death and eager grasps at the joyous emotions of life. Instead of bliss, Elvira's trademark is indecision; her only true desire is her lost love, but somehow, she seems to have given up hope. The stares of onlookers pierce her delirium, bemoaning her existence, her sorry mind. "Oh, infelice!", they say. Oh, how unhappy she is! How unfortunate! Their prayers fall on deaf ears, and Elvira sinks deeper into herself.

The *opéra comique*! You have embodied the joy of this ridiculous show, eager for every entrance of the batty Dinorah, who is now playing with her shadow in a manner befitting a child. She teaches it to sing, she loses it, she tells it secrets! Her madness born from the loss of a man, Dinorah knows what she is expected to do. She knows she should trill, imagine him, talk to him – but he is replaced with someone who will never leave her side. The shadow talks back, sings, even dances with her, and Dinorah is happy. She is victorious, manipulative. She has control.

Lady Macbeth is sleepwalking; again we have been entranced and bewitched by the sheer power of a dramatic prima donna, but here we sit, awe-struck, as she crumbles before our eyes, unable to rid herself of a bloody spot or shake the guilt of murder. She sings, barely. She is alive, barely. Vulnerable, exhausted, and catatonic, she has retained her true love but lost her hope and control. Since she is empty, we focus on a musical gesture, a small sighing motif which encompasses all her pain. She has no more to do in this life than wait for fate to consume her.

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The manner in which musical madness functions within operatic standards is a pure reflection of how un-operatic madness is perceived as free, scattered, and unconfined in relation to social norms. Within the strict forms of nineteenth-century Italian opera, the mad scene poses an interesting frame within which to explore the composer's conveyances of the madwoman's ravings; how far can her madness be stretched, and do musical conventions enable or resist her? What standards are at stake, and what rules can be broken if we want to be true to the madwoman's character? Subjectivity in music, whether centered or not, is mirrored in the extent to which a character (or musical theme, acting as a protagonist) is grounded by its musical surroundings and conventions of the time. In opera, do these departures from rules, and the ravings they reflect, portray the madwoman as a decentered subject?

In the chapter "What Was Tonality?" in *Conventional Wisdom: The Content of Musical Form* (2001), Susan McClary discusses these issues, especially in reference to Alessandro Scarlatti's opera *Griselda*, premiered in 1721. The emergence of strict tonality and the unwavering form of the da capo aria, she argues, provided a rational but flexible way in which the singer could seem to challenge, but then accept the "underlying

reason” of convention, thus labeling her as centered (p. 73). Human emotions, such as Griselda’s horror in the discussed scene, can be presented in any manner of ways; tonal conventions allow emotions to be presented through music, via departures from normal tonal structures. Tonality, according to McClary (2001), allows the protagonist to embody both rage and tonal integrity simultaneously, to overcome doubts and use tonality not as a crutch or an outside conquering force, but as a safe place both to which she can retreat, and actively pursue (p. 79). Tonality in *Griselda* thus functions as a structure through which her firmly centered subjectivity can be portrayed. Though angered, she is still entirely in control of her perspective, emotions, and beliefs, and thus, through the keeping and careful application of tonality, Griselda is musically portrayed as a centered subject.

The advantages of tonal conventions can also be expanded in regards to formal operatic conventions, another structure through which the portrayal of subjectivity may be revealed. In the early nineteenth-century, tonality still firmly in place, one of the main ways in which composers of this era treated the mad scene was in terms of form to display the character’s state or mind and relative subjectivity; breaking down or even complete refusal of a standardized aria structure, as many madwomen tend to do, was therefore an indicator of the presence or extent of the protagonist’s madness. Because of the decidedly decentered nature of the madwoman’s consciousness, we expect her to act outside of normal musical structures; the deliberate flouting of form, common tonal progressions, and musical and libretto-based cues allow for the madwoman to be propelled into an alien world where no rational opera character had ever ventured.

Within the nineteenth-century Italian operatic tradition, the confines and set forms constructed by prolific composers (not least of whom was the highly successful

Gioachino Rossini) held true; departures from the expected forms of arias were rare, and needed to serve a hugely dramatic purpose in order for them to be acceptable. As has been described by many commentators, the most standardized set form for a solo performer in this era of opera is known as the double-aria structure, which employs four sections – the scena, the cantabile, the tempo di mezzo, and the cabaletta (Balthazar 2004). Transitions between these four sections are generally quite abrupt, encompassing several shifts in style; the cantabile, or the slow melodic movement following the introductory scena, typically begins with a change of both key and tempo. This movement usually explains the character's opinions and turbulent emotions about the situation at hand; melodic structures (aaba or aabc), coupled with customary tonal conventions, are the hallmarks of the cantabile. The arrival of another character or a dramatic twist in plot propels the scene into the tempo di mezzo (literally, “time in the middle”), where plot development changes the character's emotions or thoughts in some way; this section usually involves a combination of recitative style and lyrical singing, called *arioso*, to advance the situation in a faster-paced manner. The cabaletta is therefore a response to the new plot development; often up-tempo, the cabaletta uses the same transitional techniques as its slow counterpart – an obvious shift in key and tempo, and a new poetic stanza to match the quicker, melodic, and usually more virtuosic lines. Commonly used as a crowd-pleaser and a chance for performers to display their skills, the cabaletta is not typically crucial to character development; however, it is nonetheless important in early ottocento opera, adding contrast within the aria and allowing for the conveyance of a single strong emotion.

Because of the extent to which the double-aria structure was considered normal, the mad scene's departures from these forms as act an obvious representation for the

character's madness. Because she (mad scene singers are overwhelmingly female, although notable mad scenes were composed for the title characters of Handel's *Orlando* and Britten's *Peter Grimes*, among others) is either unable to recognize that she is expected to act within these confines, or consciously defying them, she is branded as insane – why else would she choose to sing outside of the norm? Within this degradation of overarching form, other types of deviance are apparent as well; librettists may use uneven rhyme schemes to subtly denote unease, and harmonic language, such as a strange modulation or an out-of-context chord, serves the same purpose. Above all, her madness is conveyed by flighty coloratura and excessive ornamentation commonly used by composers in order to denote a hysteric, unsound mind.

Disregarding departure from set forms, in many musical aspects the early madwomen are no more irregular than the women who simply suffer; the musical tricks of harmony and orchestration used to depict all of their emotions are identical in affect, and the only true differences in their respective scenes are their text and the manner in which they are staged. However, these indications are strong and inform both the performer's interpretation and the audience's perception, and, in conjunction with irregular large-scale forms, label one woman as mad, and the other as distressed. Madwomen have a unique affinity for hallucinations and quick attention changes, and an inability to recognize familiar faces; furthermore, they are often visually represented a certain way (e.g., dressed in white, barefoot, and unkempt), and the chorus tends to surround them, frame them, and observe their scenes with horror, adding to the "otherness" of their character. Adding these types of textual and visual cues draws unrivaled attention to the madwoman, and the strangeness of her visual representation is

imitated and wholly enhanced by her true vehicle for emotional portrayal – the destructed aria she sings.

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Catherine Clément's well-acclaimed book, *Opera, or the Undoing of Women* (trans. 1988), has been credited as one of the first to engage a critical feminist eye in terms of classic operas. Examining dozens of opera plots and heroines through a feminist lens, she dismantles each one, drawing the oft-quoted interpretation that the entire operatic genre is a “spectacle thought up to adore, and also to kill, the feminine character” (p. 6). The men and societies in these women's lives control, victimize, and viciously murder them – or, if they are permitted to live, the women are stripped of their happiness and identity. For Clément, the only ones who are allowed to soar are the hysterics, the madwomen, the ones who “leap into space” (p. 78). Clément briefly references hallmarks of the mad scene such as the display of the madwoman's body and hallucinatory voices, but she places great emphasis on the fact that, particularly in these scenes, the heroines experience “perfect happiness” (p. 89). Madwomen in Clément's mind are the ones who embrace happiness, who embody their memories and fly past their confines, in their delirium finding “the marriage that eludes them” (p. 91). In this perfect happiness, and in direct contrast to the multiple women who surrender to their fate, madwomen achieve freedom, joy, liberation.

One of the most prominent American musicologists to have been influenced by Clément, Susan McClary also pays particular attention to opera within a gendered discourse, furthering the question of liberation in the mind of the madwoman. McClary's preeminent work on gender and music, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (1991), addresses female mad scenes in a historical and literal context, and provides

examples of three mad scenes from as many centuries, one of which is the famous scene from Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Citing Michel Foucault's *Madness and Civilization* (1964), McClary (1991) briefly reviews the history of madness in early modern Europe, where, in the seventeenth century, the initial move towards separating the mentally unstable from their sane counterparts emerged, motivated in part by the modern state's "need to define and control behavior" (p. 83). However, the incarceration of mad people was not necessarily intended to keep them out of society; in fact, public display of these people was a common and popular form of entertainment into the nineteenth century. Governmental institutions of the state, continuing on their quest for control, used these exhibits to offer a firm definition of what was deviant, while the audience members reveled in the voyeuristic nature of the exhibit. It was the popularity of this sensation, McClary argues, that inspired multiple forms of art to depict madness as a spectacle (p. 84).

Referenced many times not only by McClary, but in much of the literature linking gender, madness, and music, Elaine Showalter's *The Female Malady* (1985) provides a comprehensive analysis of gender and madness. As cited in McClary (1991), Showalter demonstrates that the field of psychiatry in the nineteenth century diagnosed madness drastically differently in men and women; female insanity was attributed solely to excesses of sexual energy (see the etymology of "hysteria": "from the womb") (p. 84). This sexuality led the main proponents of the psychiatric field to perceive that all women were at great risk of mental breakdown, which led to a high amount of surveillance to attempt to circumvent any female insanity. The extreme prevalence of feminine madness greatly affected another facet of modern culture; public art sensationalized the representation of excessive sexuality in women and its supposed link to insanity, which

only further solidified the bond between femininity and madness. A prototypical example of the artistic depiction of madwomen is present in Tony Robert-Fleury's 1876 painting, *Pinel Freeing the Insane*; in the foreground is a beautiful woman, white dress falling off her shoulders – she stands seductively, yet does not direct her desire toward any of the multiple men staring at her. Visual art portraying madwomen from the nineteenth-century, as Robert-Fleury's work demonstrates, is wont to depict them as partially unclothed or naked; the indecency of this is enough to cue that she is not of sound mind. In her immodesty the madwoman is also blatantly observed; the outside observer of a painting further makes a spectacle of the insane, sexualized subject. However, as McClary (1991) states, the madwoman is also observed within the painting, often surrounded by men; this representation of male rationality controls her not only by objectifying her, but by clearly delineating the definitions of normalcy (p. 85).

In many forms of media aiming to represent the madwoman, she is portrayed as virtually silent; when she does speak, it is generally to enable the audience to gain some sort of privileged access to her interior (p. 85). The main benefit of a musical representation of the madwoman is that, for dramatic effect, she cannot be silent; the composer is obligated to write her music, her speech. And within this speech, we see the composer's conception of the madwoman; how her voice is ascribed, what she is allowed to say, how her inner psyche is portrayed, and to what extent he implies the type of freedom so prevalent in Clément's madwomen. McClary (1991) asserts that one of the foremost "risks" of portraying the madwoman in music is that, because music has the ability to affect people in ways that other arts forms cannot, one must construct a character to which the audience cannot identify, only appreciate; the danger is in the potency of the madwoman's spell, her enviable happiness, so strong that she may

convince an unsuspecting victim of the beauty of insanity (p. 86). A frame of normalcy surrounding her, such as other (male) characters singing more conventionally, is therefore extremely important so as to counteract the potential seduction of the musical madwoman; in turn, it is just as important for the madwoman to be framed as such, to give her the ability to recognize and subsequently break her confines.

Other feminist thinkers have focused on the subjective voice of the madwoman, discussing the extent to which she is silenced or enabled, and the freedom that may or may not be attained through her voice. The foremost scholar in this school of thought is Mary Ann Smart, who, in her article entitled “The Silencing of Lucia” (1992), opposes the idea that “all structures are male and repressive, and all freedom is female and positive”. Smart uses the scene from *Lucia di Lammermoor* to further comprehend the gender implications, analyzing Lucia’s character within a series of structures, such as plot and vocalization techniques (p. 120). Furthering McClary’s (1991) discussion of the madwoman’s potential freedom from confines, Smart (1992) questions whether or not the escape from these binds is possible – whether a feminine voice, even in her own alternate reality, can have truly have instances of unrestrained expression (p. 121). Smart discusses Lucia’s potential escape in terms of her musical resistance within a historical and literary context, discovering, as did McClary, the importance of music for the madwoman’s voice and agency, and opera’s unfortunate manipulation of an originally un-feminine scene. For example, Lucia’s original mental breakdown (from Walter Scott’s *The Bride of Lammermoor*) is founded in realism and almost animalistic, her “mad scene” consisting mostly of grunts and physical struggles; the operatic madness is “anestheticised”, overwhelmingly pretty, and not at all frightening (p. 124). However, in the source, the mad scene consists of just one line of text. Opera, striving for drama, therefore prioritizes

Lucia's madness, but ignores the ugly nature of it, twisting her snarls into soaring hallucinations. Opera not only gives Lucia a voice, but a beautifully grandiose scene. Despite the relative loyalty to sources or the depiction of madness as unpleasant or not, the mere presence of music gives characters another dimension through which to express themselves.

However, according to Smart (1992), within the context of opera music can also be said to be insignificant as an expressive outlet for madwomen; though in spoken drama, such as Ophelia in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, irrational behavior is often exemplified by her singing (bawdy songs typify Ophelia's insanity, and stay with her from the onset of her madness to her muddy death), operatic madwomen's scenes must be drastically differentiated from the preceding arias. Music's power of liberation is very clear in Ophelia's instance, but this power loses its meaning once the entire structure is musical; here, then, the music of the madwoman must set itself apart from the surroundings as much as Ophelia's songs are set apart from the spoken discourse. As early nineteenth-century opera operates within the very strict and formal Italian tradition, one must acknowledge the difficulty of escape (or a "leap into space", as Smart states, giving a nod to Clément). Lucia's confines are determined by the very nature of her formal and harmonic surroundings, thus severely limiting the possibility of a full liberation. (p. 125).

Smart also addresses visual representation as a potential restraint, as opera is as much a seen spectacle as an aural one, again alluding to Ophelia for comparison. In the early nineteenth-century, a portrayal of Hamlet's love by actress Harriet Smithson became extremely popular in Paris; her trademark was to play the mad scene dressed in white, with disheveled hair. Lucia (premiered 15 years after Smithson's performance) is supposed to be staged in this exact manner, no doubt borrowing from one of the most

famous portrayals of madness that many audience members would recognize. Furthermore, observation of the madwoman (by other leading roles or, often, a large chorus) is a common theme in these scenes; the other characters' attention towards the madwoman's physical presence (notably, not her audible one) frame her to such an extent that the audience has no choice but to fix their gaze on her as well. This overt observation serves to mark the madwoman as different, as outside of the social norms, as completely inhuman; thus, we have the ability to judge her more harshly and further distance ourselves from her, while still maintaining an intense curiosity. The madwoman as we perceive her is now effectively a complete "other", outside the realm of our understanding – all the spectators can do is look.

In her audible realm, the madwoman is generally represented as extravagant and raving, owing to several normative mad scene conventions; Smart (1992) identifies several of the techniques typically used to portray madness, such as excessive ornamentation, hallucinating another voice (typically a lover's), and orchestral quotations of previous themes (p. 137). *Fioratura* ornaments, if not completely improvised, create the illusion of extensive creativity; however, these cadenzas and ornamentations can only be interpreted as signs of madness if they are more frequent and elaborate than other ornamental points during the opera. Excessively decorated musical lines also serve to disguise the text; the madwoman stretches the syllables of language to such an extent that they are rendered unrecognizable, enabling her to escape the confines of linguistic signifiers. Moreover, all of the musical depictions of madwomen are examined within the context of formal degradation, though these departures do not necessarily have to be drastic to be recognizable or meaningful. For example, in Lucia's scene, the distinctions

between sections (most noticeably, the transition between *scena* and *cantabile*) are blurred, subtly but deliberately defying convention (p. 131).

Nineteenth-century women, confined by the society in which they lived and the men who attempted to control them, may have often yearned for freedom to think, to opine, to control. Using a feminist perspective to view the nineteenth-century madwoman, we see strong feminine attempts at defiance. Musically, the madwoman soars, ornamenting to her heart's content, continually surprising her audience. She sees not reality, not what society tells her to see, but her own version of true bliss; a wedding, a lover, a perfect world. These are small steps on the way to complete defiance; the madwoman rarely achieves a full refusal of convention or violently disregards masculine-defined standards. But moments, however fleeting, of defiance are the first steps in potential liberation, and with liberation, madwomen can achieve pure transcendence.

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Clément (1988) and McClary (1991) delved into the realms of opera and madness within a gendered discourse, exposing the potential liberation of the perfectly happy madwoman, while Smart (1992) explored the importance of voice and musical techniques and the extent to which they can aid or impede the madwoman on her quest for freedom. However, a different path leads us to the dramatic and theatrical aspects of opera, rather than purely focusing on the musical. Part musicological analysis and part critical and narrative theory, Carolyn Abbate's *Unsung Voices: Opera and Musical Narrative in the Nineteenth Century* (1991), proposes a dichotomy of music on the operatic stage, which is now labeled (in film, for example) as diegetic and non-diegetic. Abbate describes these two categories of music as the songs heard by the characters, and those which are not; the "unsung" voice refers to the latter, the song in the foreground of the operatic world which

is not perceived as “song”, per se, but rather everyday speech. As music in opera is the singular mode of communication, it is significant when a character acknowledges or comments on a song or a particular instrument; Abbate (1991) theorizes that these circumstances are generally narrative in nature. Seeking to describe the interplay between the self-conscious “narrative voice” and the surrounding music, she describes how the music in these situations can take on diverse meanings; for example, the orchestra can betray the singer’s thoughts during a narrative passage, thus defining the music as meaningful, yet separated from verbal text.

One operatic instance Abbate describes is taken from Meyerbeer’s *Robert le Diable* (1831), in which one of the characters, Rimbaud, sings a set-piece ballad, therefore establishing a performance within a performance. Acting as an audience, the chorus’s reactions bookend Rimbaud’s song; however, he and the chorus conclude the song together, breaking the frame. Furthermore, there is a disconnect of tenses; the text speaks of times past, but also acts as a prophecy of what is to come. Abbate (1991) states that “narrative song, then, may be seen as a locus of intrusion, at which myth writes itself into the continuity of the present, and ensures that the future either enacts the myth or struggles against it, being in either case determined by it” (p. 76). The relationship of narrative song to non-diegetic operatic singing, though not necessarily always used as an agent of philosophical allegory, is nonetheless highly significant in opera as a whole. As we are allowed to hear the music that the character hears, we are cast into their world as participants, rather than spectators; the function of narratives – music within music – is to offer an alternate or hidden perspective. As observers, the audience is separated out and dismissed from the inner workings of the operatic plot; however, as honorary members of

the cast, we have the advantages of both sides, able to view the protagonists not only objectively, but subjectively as well.

Abbate's concept of narrative music and its function as a window into operatic significance provides an interesting frame in which to place the nineteenth-century mad scene; though often the madwoman's song is described by onlookers as "moaning" (see Verdi's *Macbeth* and Bellini's *Elvira*), several scenes – most notably, and to be later discussed, Meyerbeer's *Dinorah*, following Ophelia's lead – offer a completely diegetic aria in which the entire intent is to communicate through song – and, thus, labels the madwoman as such through her refusal to communicate in conventional terms. Placement of the madwoman into this type of scene establishes a narrative voice in which the veils of singing for performance and plot purposes are disrupted, and her relative straying or adherence to conventions is for herself alone.

If Abbate's concept of narrative music allows a character to be self-conscious, to betray their operatic surroundings, and invite a different type of spectatorship, Gary Tomlinson's book *Metaphysical Song: An Essay on Opera* (1999) extends these musically philosophical resistances, and effectively puts into words the otherworldly realms into which Clément's madwomen so frequently leap. Tomlinson's discussion of Kantian philosophy in regards to the genre of operatic mad scenes focuses on the dualism of noumenal and phenomenal abstractions; their presence in these scenes serves to further the feeling of madness and the characters' melodrama. According to Kant, the definition of phenomena are the surface appearances and representations of entities, which humans perceive, experience, and describe; its counterpart, noumena, which are often referred to as "the thing in itself" or "thing per se", are the reality of these appearances. Presumably, every object has both a phenomenal and a noumenal aspect – a side that is seen, and a

hidden inner reality; however, we are wholly ignorant of the latter, as it is completely independent of human cognition and experience. Therefore, we experience and judge objects solely on our knowledge of how it appears in the phenomenal realm; attempting to review or even describe things as they truly are is beyond our capacity. Because of our cognitive mechanisms, our perceptions of the world are altered from the thing-in-itself to our phenomenal experience through a series of rules (called axioms or schemas); these rules interact with the noumenal reality to create the phenomenal world in which we live. Because we are unable to fully strip away these axioms, the noumenal world is consistently outside of our grasp.

The noumenon is present in operatic scenes on occasions when, according to Tomlinson (1999), “the music reveals a psyche that can be divided within and from itself in a way inconceivable with the Cartesian subject” (p. 93). Most evident in ottocento opera scenes of altered psychic states – e.g., sleepwalking or madness – noumenalistic tendencies offer an alternate representation of otherwise invisible elements of the protagonist’s soul and outside psychological forces. Therefore, these scenes evoke a kind of transcendence into the noumenal realm, as “the music functions... to reveal the presence of hidden dimensions of the psyche or to project these dimensions out as audible features of the external stage world” (p. 93). Tomlinson theorizes that, despite the fact that nineteenth-century madness is generally portrayed through internalizing behaviors (such as Walter Scott’s essentially silent Lucia), madness in the operatic world composes an as externalizing character, enabling her to mentally stretch towards external psychic forces, moving through the phenomenal realm and towards glimpses of the noumenal.

Tomlinson cites several ways in which this romanticized raving depiction of madness is conveyed, the first of which is a lengthy scena in which the natural operatic

pacing is paused, and the singer generally speaks of her past. Her mind and memory move on a separate plane from reality, and her past acts as her own truth within an individual psyche; the madwoman's remembrance is obsessive and escapist in nature. The orchestra generally acts as the *modus operandi* through which this remembrance is achieved; recollection of earlier themes perpetuates the singer's fixation on the past. Orchestral lines take the form of an other, either bringing to the surface a host of fragmented musical recollections that represent suppressed memories, or, more obviously, becoming a kind of character in itself, singing to the singer, becoming a voice from an otherworldly or noumenal realm. Furthermore, certain orchestration choices are often used for ethereal effect, most commonly solo or combinations of individual woodwinds, and coloratura acrobatics are often symbols of moving into an unearthly space. These vocal acrobatics denote a trancelike aura that is susceptible to noumenal forces via its breakdown in sanity; however, these coloratura ornaments could be alternately interpreted as a portrayal of the unpredictability and the flightiness that are common perceptions of hysteria (pp. 94-5).

Bryan Magee (2001), in his book *The Tristan Chord: Wagner and Philosophy*, extends Tomlinson's theory of noumenalism in mad scenes to opera in general, stating, "both music and stage action are expressions of something else, and of the same something else, the one of its inner nature and the other of its outer. Of these two there is not doubt as to which carries the greater weight" (p. 212). In all opera, the expression of this inner nature – the noumenal realm – is thus the ultimate essence of a scene (or, for that matter, of anything). The veils of music, staging, and representation act as both impediments and vehicles in terms of potential access to this transcendent realm. Applying the phenomenal/noumenal dichotomy to Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, Magee

(2001) presents another everyday dualism which we can use as an example to compare these two realms – day and night. Day is the phenomenal realm, where everything is clear, obvious, and solid in its foundational meaning. Night is the noumenal realm, where objects are mystical, different in reality than they are at first glance. In terms of the forbidden love of Wagner's famous opera, night is the realm in which the two are united, in both an obviously literal sense, and a metaphysical casting off of identity so as to merge as one. In the phenomenal realm, they are kept apart, but noumenally, not even physical boundaries can impede their desire to unite. Relating this model to mad scenes is hardly a stretch; madwomen, often abandoned by a lover to whom they have surrendered completely, feel Isolde's same longing to be joined not only physically, but through a dramatic unity of the soul. Glimpses of noumenalism may then be interpreted within this desire – the ultimate attempt to flee into another world in which she, the madwoman, can once again be with her absolute love.

The difference of interpretation on the question of liberation as discussed by Abbate (1991), Tomlinson (1999), and Magee (2001) in comparison to musicologists working within a feminist discourse can be seen as a question of earthly defiance, and the extent to which that defiance enables a true escape. Within a critical context, arising from the feminist perspective, these theories push the subject of the madwoman's liberation and otherworldliness further into philosophical realms. By ascribing noumenalism to musical techniques, finding meaning in narrative arias, and deepening the philosophical aspects of the operatic character, this group of musicologists move past the question of the madwoman's defiance, and ask whether she achieves something further: transcendence. A madwoman's movement to a noumenal realm, however brief or frivolous the musical aspect that takes her there, is a liberating victory of another sense:

though she may not have defied the repressive society or musical confines of her surroundings, she has defied the phenomenal realm and drifted into an enviable escape. Her rejection of structured conventions enables us to describe just how she defies the phenomenal – but it is not until she transcends that we fully understand why: the allure of noumenal reality, where love and unity are achieved.

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The following chapters introduce and discuss four scenes, taken from Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Bellini's *I Puritani*, Meyerbeer's *Dinorah*, and Verdi's *Macbeth*. I place particular focus on harmonic and melodic language in the context of operatic conventions typical of the nineteenth-century, as well as an emphasis on form. The presence of other characters, and the composer's relative attention to the presence of recalled themes, imagined voices, extensive coloratura, and other common signifiers of female madness are also discussed in their function in furthering the representation of madness. Furthermore, I also engage with the thinkers whose ideas are summarized above, particularly Tomlinson's concepts of noumenalism, to determine whether each madwoman has truly achieved her goal of liberation or transcendence.

The themes of defiance and transcendence are not mutually inclusive or predictive of each other; often, the madwoman can reject the phenomenal world, but still be bound by social operatic conventions, or vice versa. Furthermore, a madwoman's encounter with the noumenal is not automatically a positive or liberating experience. Though some of the following madwomen enter into and joyously explore these otherworldly realms, some happen upon this alternate space through the orchestral music, but are unable to control it, rejoice in its fleeting rebellion, or even be aware of it. It is the combination formed by the defiance of operatic norms, her sense of control, and the interaction with

the noumenal realm that constitutes the madwoman's ultimate definition, and what launches her into explosive liberation or swirling defeat.

2 • LUCIA, GRASPING AT FREEDOM

Gaetano Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* includes one of the most frequently referenced and analyzed mad scenes of the nineteenth century. This scene stands as the prototype to which all others are compared, though it is neither the first fully realized scene of this nature, nor, arguably, the most poignant. *Lucia*, which premiered in Naples in 1835, tells the story of a Scottish Romeo and Juliet; feuding families and forbidden love advance the plot. The opera's climax includes a sequence of horrific events – the murder of Lucia's husband Arturo by her own hands, her appalling insanity and subsequent death, and her lover's suicide, which concludes the opera. In her Act III mad scene, Lucia emerges from her bedroom into the midst of a crowded party celebrating her marriage; wearing a white nightgown stained with her murdered husband's blood, she imagines her marriage to her true love, Edgardo. One of the reasons this scene may be so prized in musicological and feminist writings is the extent to which Donizetti employs the characteristic mad scene techniques, such as recalling past themes, other voices, and wild coloratura, the combination of which allows labels the scene as a prototype within mad scene analysis. Lucia's resistance to operatic convention in terms of form and key, to the chorus of onlookers, and to the patriarchal society which, until this point, has been entirely controlling her actions and songs, furthers the extent to which we can view her as a potentially victorious heroine.

Lucia's entrance, to the tune of a morbid fanfare in C minor, is accompanied by specific stage directions, denoting that "Lucia è in succinta e bianca veste; ha le chiome scarmigliate ed il volto coperto da uno squallore di morte. E delirante." ("Lucia is in a scanty, white dress; has her hair disheveled and her face is covered with the squalor of death. Is delirious."), a nod to Harriet Smithson's Ophelia. Lucia is sexualized in her

clothing – to further link madness and sexual inhibition, perpetuate stereotypes, or to add more interest to the scene – and put on display, and the chorus turns their gaze to her: “Oh giusto cielo! Par dalla tomba uscita!” / “Oh fair heavens! Seems from out of the tomb!”. A melodic flute line precedes Lucia’s scattered, fragmented vocal line – “Il dolce suono mi colpi di sua voce!” (“The sweet sound of his voice struck me”); the flute is cast as Edgardo’s voice, and not for the last time. However, rather than it acting as another speaking human voice, the flute in this case is simply representative – Lucia is hearing the melody of her lover’s voice, its poignancy, its ability to strike her heart (Ex. 2.1).

Though the importance of the flute throughout this scene is undeniable, it is notable that the Donizetti’s original instrumentation called for a glass harmonica in its place. As discussed by Heather Hadlock (2000), women in amateur music settings were the most common players of this instrument (invented in its most modern form by Benjamin Franklin in the 1760s) during the nineteenth-century. Hadlock argues that its light, resonant, otherworldly sound was often associated with femininity and the female voice, and that often, it was even seen as a physical extension of the player herself (p. 511). However, the young female musician’s susceptibility to the power of music – its passion, volume, and vigor – was a common concern in the eighteenth and nineteenth-century. The glass harmonica, with its small body of repertoire, none of which was physically taxing or overly passionate, was therefore seen an appropriate instrument for young women (p. 510). The original scoring of an off-stage glass harmonica to accompany Lucia is thus seen as a representation of femininity, the perils of seduction, and women’s vulnerability to mental breakdowns; as music and madness are both alluring and enhance vulnerability in their own ways, the glass harmonica as her instrumental partner solidifies these ideas of her mental state.

Par dal - la tom - ba u - sei - ta!
as from the grave a - ris - en.

Par dal - la tom - ba u - sei - ta!
as from the grave a - ris - en.

Par dal - la tom - ba u - sei - ta!
as from the grave a - ris - en.

Fl. *p* Cl. sustain. Strings pizz.

Lucy.
Il dol - ce suo - no mi col - pì di sua vo - ce! Ah! quel - la
I hear the breathing of his voice low and ten - der, That voice re -

Cor. Fag. and Cor.

vo - ce m'è qui nel cor di - sce - - sa! Ed - gar - do! io ti son
soundeth with - in my heart for ev - - er. Oh Edgar, why were we

Strings.

Ex. 2.1: Chorus introduction, flute melody, Lucia's entrance

Image: <http://japanese.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/0/0e/IMSLP73180-PMLP51145-Donizetti - Lucia ItalianVS.pdf>

Also representative of Lucia's alienation within a normal society (pairing her with such an unusual sound versus a more conventional instrumentation), the glass harmonica

enables her to cross into another realm, and is representative of her sensitivity to otherworldly voices, such as the imagined Edgardo.

A quick shift occurs as Lucia urgently starts talking to her love (“Edgardo! Io ti son resa...”); her repeated words and melodic fragments show us a kind of insane raving, fittingly ending with a short, coda-like series of runs. However, this short introduction, which depicts Lucia as scattered and overly hysterical, is accompanied by a strikingly stable orchestra – their last phrase is in a modulating period form (consisting of an antecedent and a consequent phrase, each four bars), with a two-bar coda. Harmonies and orchestration are similarly unremarkable as well, smooth arpeggiated triads moving from the realm of C minor to E-flat major.

As Figure 1 illustrates, the entire scena is extended and bounces from one tempo to the next, mimicking Lucia’s scattered state of mind with each transformation. Several markings of “recitativo” (after her recitative has already started), the first in Lucia’s part, and five bars following in the orchestra, denotes that she is not at all attuned to her surroundings – she can barely follow her fellow musicians, and they cannot keep up with her. Lucia feels a sense of foreboding (“Un gelo mi serpeggia nel sen!” / “A chill creeps into my breast!”), and therefore begins her trembling recitative with that emotion. The orchestra’s arrival on a tremolo A-flat major chord at the marked Recitativo imitates this feeling, and then makes way for her to sing a few quick lines of explosive coloratura to her beloved (“Presso la fonte meco t’assidi” / “By the fountain sit with me for a while”) (Ex. 2.2).

fi - bra! va - cil - la! i! piè! - Pres - so la fon - te me - co t'as - si - dial -
trembling, my senses fail! Come to the foun - tain, there let us rest to -

quan - to, sì, pres - so la fon - te me - co t'as - si - di!
geth - er, Yes, yes, by the fountain thou'lt rest be - side me.

Ex. 2.2: A-flat tremolo, Lucia's ornamentation

Image: <http://japanese.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/0/0e/IMSLP73180-PMLP51145-Donizetti - Lucia ItalianVS.pdf>

The first distinctively marked tempo change occurs at the *Allegretto*, which coincides with the first remembered theme; the flute recalls the melody from Lucia and Edgardo's Act I love duet, "Verrano la sull' aure...", as the strings provide a waltz-like pizzicato accompaniment in A-flat major. However, this is quickly interrupted – Lucia's foreboding was true, as the tempo turns to a harsh *Allegro vivace* and she screams "Ohime! Sorge il tremendo fantasma..." ("Alas! The tremendous phantom arises...") (Ex. 2.3). This is an allusion to – or, perhaps, a continuation of – the slow movement of Lucia's Act I cavatina, "Regnava nel silenzio", in which she relays her encounter with a

Fig. 1: Gaetano Donizetti, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Act III, ii

Lucia – Scena ed Aria, “Il dolce suono... Spargi d’amaro pianto”

Double-aria structure, formally strict cantabile and cabaletta movements; extensive scena, tempo di mezzo, codas, and cadenzas

Section		Key	Length	Description
Scena				
Andante	a	C minor	5 bars	Coro, “Oh giusto cielo!”
	b	C minor	11 bars	Flute melody; Lucia, “Il dolce suono...”
	c	C minor – E-flat major	9 bars	aa’ + coda; “Edgardo!”
	d	C minor – A-flat major	15 bars	Flute melody; Lucia recit, “Un gelo miserpeggia...”
Allegretto		A-flat major	9 bars	Flute recalls love duet, strings pizzicato
Allegro vivace		E-flat major	33 bars	“Ohime! Sorge il tremendo...” free recit
				Orchestra tremolos
		B-flat major	4 bars	“Qui ricovriamo, Edgardo...”
Larghetto				Cadenza-like material, no orchestra
		B-flat major	10 bars	Wedding imagery; ascending staccato flute
Andante				“Sparsa e di rose!”
		B-flat major	14 bars	Wedding imagery; wedding hymn in strings
Allegro		G major	7 bars	“Ah! L’inno suona di nozze!”
Maestoso		G major – E-flat major	2 bars	Coloratura free recit; “Oh gioia che si sente...”
Cantabile – Larghetto				
	a	E-flat major	11 bars	Regal dotted rhythms, full orchestra
				Orchestra starts cantabile; flute melody, aa’
	a’	E-flat major	8 bars	Lucia keeps recit-style; “Ardon gl’incensi...”
				Lucia joins orchestra melody, aa’
	b	E-flat minor – B-flat major	9 bars	“Alfin son tua...”
				Coro, “Ambi in si crudo stato!”
	a’	E-flat major	12 bars + cadenza	Lucia coloratura superimposed; “Ogni piacer...”
				Ornamented original melody; “Del ciel clemente...”

Tempo di Mezzo

Allegro	C-flat major – D-flat major F major	24 bars
Meno Allegro mosso	B-flat major – F major	10 bars
A	G-flat major	24 bars
B	B-flat major / tonally mobile	28 bars
Transition	D°7 outline	6 bars

Cabaletta – Moderato

Introduction A	E-flat major E-flat major	15 bars
a		8 bars
a'		7 bars
b	G-flat major	6 + 5 bars
c	E-flat major	7 bars
coda		12 bars
B	E-flat major	12 bars
Transition	G7 – E-flat major E-flat major	3 bars
A		
a		8 bars

Cadenza – trills, flute echoing, love duet recall

Raimondo, “S’avanza Enrico!”
Fast trills in orchestra
Free material – Raimondo/Enrico/Coro/Lucia
Lucia, “Non mi guardar...”

Lucia, “Ma, ognor, ognor...” aa’ba
Joined by Enrico/Raimondo in b section
Lucia, “Chi mi nomasti?”
Coro interruptions, “Infelice! Ah, pieta...”
Orchestra building, tremolos
Lucia, “Ah, no, non fuggir, Edgardo!”
Long held notes, descending
Doubled by violin and viola

Orchestral aa’ – stacatto melody in woodwinds

“Spargi d’amaro pianto...”, string pizzicato
“Mentre lassu nel cielo...”
“Al giunger...” b section
Trilled codetta, “Ah, si!”
“Fia bello il ciel...”
“Per me...” “chromatic runs, triplet emphasis
Enrico, “Giorni d’amaro pianto...”
Raimondo and Coro, “Piu raffrenare il pianto...”
aa’bc, four-bar phrases
Lucia, “Ah!”, chromatic descent

“Spargi d’amaro pianto...”, string pizzicato

a'		7 bars	"Mentre lassu nel cielo..."
b	G-flat major	6 + 5 bars	"Al giunger..." b section Trilled codetta, "Ah, si!"
c		7 bars	"Fia bello il ciel..."
coda		12 bars	"Per me..." chromatic runs, triplet emphasis
Coda – Piu allegro			
a	E-flat major	13 bars	Lucia, "Ah, ch'io spiri..." Enrico "Ah! Vita d'amaro..." Raimondo and Coro, "Ah! Piu raffrenare..." Full orchestra, triplet focus
a'	E-flat major	12 bars	Repetition
b	E-flat major	8 + 6 bars	Lucia, "Appresso a te." Enrico, "Si, si, a me." Raimondo and coro, "No, no, non e." Same orchestral texture 6-bar IV-V-I formula
coda	E-flat major	12 bars	Orchestral conclusion

silent phantom – a woman who met her death by the fountain, stabbed because of her love for an unsuitable man. The similarities to Lucia's own love story are obvious; this is an allegory and meant as a certain kind of foreshadowing.

Allegretto. Fl. and Cl.

Allegro vivace. Ohi-mè! sor-ge! tre-men-do fan-
Ah me! Look where the spec-tre a-

Tymp.

Wood and Brass.

tas-ma e ne se-pa-ra! Ohi-
ris-es! Stand-ing be-tween us! A-

Ex 2.3: Flute recalls love duet, Lucia's hallucination of the phantom

Image: <http://japanese.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/0/0e/IMSLP73180-PMLP51145-Donizetti - Lucia ItalianVS.pdf>

Her fright in response to yet another encounter with the phantom suggests a cognizance of the similarities between them; Lucia runs away to escape the phantom's grasp, as well

as to escape her own fate. Dragging Edgardo with her, to keep him safe with her, together they take refuge at the foot of an altar, and happen upon their own wedding. The violins take on a rendition of the wedding hymn played in Lucia's actual marriage in the Act II finale, and her happiness propels her vocal line into runs and ornamentation, as the wedding theme is taken into several different instruments and transposed a third higher, elevating her joy (Ex. 2.4).

The musical score for Ex. 2.4 is in 6/8 time, marked 'Andante'. It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with 'Ah! Hark!' and continues with 'l'in-no suo - na di 'tis the hymn for our'. The piano accompaniment is marked 'pp' and features a string pizzicato pattern. The score is written for violin and piano.

Ex. 2.4: Wedding hymn in violins

Image: <http://japanese.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/0/0e/IMSLP73180-PMLP51145-Donizetti - Lucia ItalianVS.pdf>

The true cantabile, “Ardon gl’incensi...” begins at this point with a strong E-flat downbeat, characterized by the typical early nineteenth-century string pizzicatos at a tempo change, Larghetto, in a slow 6/8. However, the transition from scena to cantabile, strongly delineated in the conventional formal opera framework, is ambiguous here – the orchestra begins, but curiously, Lucia does not follow. Continuing on in her recitative-like fashion, she continues joyfully describing her surroundings (“Splendon le sacre faci ... Ecco il ministro!” / “Shining are the holy torches... Here is the minister!”), while the orchestra plays a full two phrases underneath her. Only when the ceremony in her mind has ended does she join the accompaniment (“Alfin son tua...” / “At last I am yours...”)

195

Maestoso.

ce! den! Ar-don g'in -
den! The burning

Larghetto.

cen - si - ta - pers, Splendon le sa - cre fa - ci, splendon in -
Round us, the guests as - sembled, waiting, I

Flauti.

p

tor - no! Ec-co il mi - nistro! Por - gi - mi la destra! Oh
see them, the priest is ready! "With this ring I wed thee" Oh

Cl.

a piacere *a tempo*

lie - to - gior - no! oh lie - to! Al - fin son tu - a,
day of rap - ture, eh rap - ture! At last I'm thine, love,

colla parte *a tempo*

al - fin sei mi - o, a me ti do - na, a
at last thou'rt mine, love, Heav'n smiles up - on us, And

Fag. and Cl.

14047

Ex. 2.5: Beginning of the cantabile in orchestra; Lucia joins melody at "Al fin son tua..."

Image: <http://japanese.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/0/0e/TMSLP73180-PMLP51145-Donizetti - Lucia ItalianVS.pdf>

(Ex. 2.5). One might say that the vagueness of transition could be explained by Lucia's complete inability to recognize her surroundings and follow the shift from *scena* to *cantabile*, which could be potentially interpreted as a symptom of her madness. However, Smart (1992) construes Lucia's hesitance as a deliberate resistance to musical convention, attempting to move past the confining musical and social norms that are demanded from her; in short, a grasp at freedom. Out of step with her entire musical surroundings, Lucia momentarily is liberated from formal confines, until finally, passively, joining the *cantabile* melody.

Lucia's peaceful melodic line, quick runs in the second phrase, and her happiness in her madness cannot possibly be appropriate; the chorus begs for the Lord to take pity on Lucia ("Ambi in si crudo stato!"), and attempts to pull her down to their world of E-flat minor. Her "crude state", in a sane and normal context, demands a minor key, demands pity, demands a melancholy line. Lucia floats above them, joyful in her B-flat major, decorating and ornamenting to her heart's content, singing of the pleasures she and Edgardo will share. A return to the original *cantabile* melody marks this as a shockingly normative *aa'ba'* form, not at all a departure from conventional phrase forms in this period, but suddenly Lucia launches into the *coloratura* stratosphere in perfect trilled harmony with the flute, before embarking on her famous extensive *cadenza*.

Donizetti's original notation for this *cadenza* is only an outline of a dominant seventh arpeggiation, meant to serve as an musical suggestion for the singer's improvisation; however, the standard composed *cadenza* performed today was most likely the work of Nellie Melba's teacher, Mathilde Marchese, in order to showcase the

technical advancement and the lightness of her student's voice. Thus, the cadenza, which Melba premiered in 1889, propelled the opera back into popularity and customary repertoire, as the audience appreciated the flirtation between Lucia and her imagined lover, the hysterical coloratura, and the extensive virtuosity of the performance (Pugliese, 2004). Though acknowledging that the discrepancy between the history of performance as opposed to the musical score – autonomous art versus a script which performers ascribe meaning to – is an extensive and complicated issue, there is a marked and important difference between performance practice and the composed music in Lucia's cadenza. Donizetti was clearly not planning on using these techniques to depict madness, though we often ascribe these ideas (e.g. extensive coloratura, the flute as an alternate voice) to him. Therefore, the essence of this madness, which could be said to be inherent in the cadenza, is not fixed in composition. Rather, interpretation takes this cadenza to another level; though it was indeed composed, the fact that the original composer was not the one to do it raises questions of authenticity in terms of intent. However, Melba and Marchese's cadenza was deemed so effective that it is now used now in common performance, using echoes of the Act I love duet, coy conversations with a solo flute, and joyful exact harmonies at the third to characterize this cadenza as one of excess; in this interpretation, Lucia's madness has momentarily freed her from life's misery, and allows her to soar.

Unceremoniously interrupted by the arrival of Lucia's brother, her scene moves to the tempo di mezzo, which is far less a continuation of her mad scene than a conversation between two of the most influential men in her life (the brother, Enrico, and the chaplain, Raimondo). Passing in and out of lucidity, Lucia defiantly states "Ah! Vittima fui d'un crudel fratello" ("Ah! Victim of a cruel brother"), a blame-laden passing remark before

continuing in her imagination of Edgardo. She begs for forgiveness (presumably, for her murder of Arturo), before moving back into her delirious imagination, imploring the imagined Edgardo to stay with her (“Ah! No, non fuggir, Edgardo”). The chorus prays on her behalf (“Infelice! Ah, pieta, Signor!”), in a swirling melee of diminished tremolos; Lucia pulls away from the chorus and the controlling male figures, and in one last attempt at keeping her beloved by her side, sings her imploring line in a sweet, slow descending line, outlining the vii°7 of the cabaletta’s tonic.

There is no ambiguity in the beginning of the cabaletta; undeniably a continuation of Lucia’s last melodic line, this orchestral introduction of this movement encompasses a bright, staccato, woodwind-heavy waltz iterated in aa’ form, the melody of which Lucia imitates. The seeming disjointed nature of the libretto and the music to which it is set is conspicuous, however, as we realize the meaning of the text:

Spargi d'amaro pianto	Sprinkle with bitter tears
il mio terrestre velo,	My earthly veil,
mentre lassu nel cielo	While in heaven
io preghero per te.	I will pray for you.
Al giunger tuo soltanto	To join with you only
fia bello il ciel per me!	May be beautiful heaven to me!

McClary (1991) argues that though the text and the situational madness may call for a more distressing setting, Donizetti’s cabaletta, musically joyful and formally normal at first glance, makes for an astonishing juxtaposition of morbid words and glittery vocals. The wrongness of this rational, normal, and predictable music with heavy ornamentation, in tandem with depressing words and especially in conjunction with the previous movement, is horrifically apparent. However, rather than this being another way in which Lucia is unaware of her surroundings, the fact that she is paying attention to the music

underneath her and observing the expected melodic and formal structures (versus the staggered beginnings of the cantabile and fragmented melodic lines) suggests that she actually may be more in tune with her environment, her emotions, and her words. As such, the lucid nature of this movement paints a frightening picture – a woman who, perceived as of unsound mind, nevertheless is more than cognizant of her desire for death.

The image shows a musical score for Lucia's entrance in the cabaletta. It consists of three systems of music. The first system is labeled 'Lucy.' and features a vocal line with the lyrics 'Spar - gi d'a - ma - ro pian - to il mio ter - re - stre ve - - -' and 'Cast on my grave a flow - er, But let there be no weep - - -'. The piano accompaniment includes 'Strines' and 'Cl.'. The second system continues the vocal line with 'lo, men - tre las - sù nel cie - - lo io pre - ghe - rò, pre - ghe - ing, When 'neath the turf I'm sleep - - ing, Let not an eye, not an'. The piano accompaniment includes 'Fl.' and 'Cor and Fag.'. The third system is marked 'rall. e portando la voce' and features the vocal line 'rò per te. Al giunger tu - o sol - tan - - to' and 'eye grow dim, For 'mid the fields of a - - zure'. The piano accompaniment includes 'Fl and Cl.'. The page number '47' is visible at the bottom left of the third system.

Ex. 2.6: Lucia's entrance in the cabaletta; G-flat modulation at "Al giunger tuo..."

Image: <http://japanese.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/0/0e/IMSLP73180-PMLP51145-Donizetti - Lucia ItalianVS.pdf>

Formally, the first section of the cabaletta follows strict phrasing structures (in aa'bc form) within the larger sections; Lucia sings her first two phrases, firmly in E-flat

major, but then employs a sudden pivot to G-flat major, the chromatic submediant (Ex. 2.6). McClary (1991) describes this modulation as creating “a sudden, dramatic shift into what is perceived as an alien region: a realm of fantasy, illusion, nostalgia, unreason, or the sublime.” (p. 93). Employing a temporary key change to depict an otherworldly territory is not particularly uncommon or original in early Romantic opera; however, the technique was nevertheless often used because of its undeniable effectiveness. If Donizetti was not using it for its alien nature, it was still valuable in labeling the situation as outside of sane norms; this kind of modulation is generally not used in standard practice unless portraying extreme drama.

Triplets characterize the coda of Lucia’s section; as she launches up an octave from a trill into an explosive B-flat (“per me”), the woodwinds and brass have insistent triplets, superimposed on the strings’ clear duples. This creates an unsettling three-against-two rhythmic disparity, as if Lucia has gained the woodwinds as allies – she mimics their rhythmic ideas as she descends chromatically, and participates in a brief call-and-response moment with the flute and clarinet. Interestingly, the orchestration calls for the violin to double her lines after her first chromatic descent; Lucia’s joy and seeming liberation is tempting to many, and the violin’s change in allegiance could be perceived as the unsuspecting innocent, enchanted and taken over by her spell (Ex. 2.7). Taken in a historical context, where the madwoman is seen as something to observe but not to engage with, to avoid possible seduction and contagion of madness, the orchestra acts as a portrayal of society, and what happens to those who get too close.

The image shows a musical score for the Coda of the A section of a cabaletta. It consists of three systems of staves. The first system has a vocal line with lyrics: "si, ah / yes, ah / si, per / yes, I / me, wait, / Fl. Ob. Cl." and a piano accompaniment. The second system continues the vocal line with lyrics: "si, / per / I / me, wait," and the piano accompaniment. The third system has lyrics: "per / me, wait / per for" and the piano accompaniment. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, duples, and dynamic markings like *p* and *opp.*. The number 14047 is printed at the bottom left of the score.

Ex. 2.7: Coda of A section of cabaletta; triplets vs. duples, Lucia's influence

Image: <http://japanese.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/0/0e/IMSLP73180-PMLP51145-Donizetti - Lucia ItalianVS.pdf>

Enrico and Raimondo's interruption, propelling the cabaletta into the second section, takes the bright E-flat major sound that Lucia has established as her own, and transforms it into a lyric line, with harmonies at the third, punctuated by chorus (Ex. 2.8). Also set in an aa'bc format, the harmonic material of this section – changing from a vacillating I-V motion in E-flat major to the same in C minor – and the long, melodic lines set this apart from Lucia's sparkly ornamentations.

Più mosso.
Lucy.
 me.
 him.
Henry.
 Gior - ni d'a - ma - ro pian - to
 Oh grief be - yond all mea - sure,
Bide-the-Bent.
 Più raf - fre - na - rejl pian - to
 Short were thy days of plea - sure,
TENOR.
BASS.
 Più raf - fre - na - rejl
 Short were thy days of
Più mosso.

Ex. 2.8: B section of cabaletta, Enrico/Raimondo's interruption, chorus follows

Image: <http://japanese.imsip.info/files/imglnks/usimg/0/0e/IMSLP73180-PMLP51145-Donizetti - Lucia ItalianVS.pdf>

Interestingly, the triplet figures persist, this time in the strings – Lucia's influence is still present, though the other characters are not rhythmically affected. Lucia takes control of the situation, employing a chromatic descent reminiscent of her previous triplets, effectively shutting out the other characters and leading back into her original melody ("Spargi d'amaro pianto"). This reiteration is generally ornamented almost beyond recognition, the performers using the room for interpretation to further the perceptions of flightiness and madness.

This section, which consists of a perfect imitation of the A section seen earlier (in aa'bc form), is disrupted suddenly by the observing characters, initiating an extended

coda. Here again we see a discrepancy between the text and the music to which it is set; the men and chorus's music, though in the minor mode and descending in contour, feels more like a bombardment of brass-heavy sound and a race to the finish rather than a lament (which is the nature of Enrico's text, "Ah! Vita d'amaro pianto serba il rimorso a te, accanto a te!" / "Ah, life's bitter tears of remorse for you, next to you!", punctuated by Raimondo and the Chorus's line, "Ah! Più raffrenare il pianto no, no, possibile non e!" / "Ah! It is not possible to restrain the tears, no!"). Again Lucia, who has been in perfect homophonic and harmonic tandem with the other characters, momentarily breaks free of the chorus, provides a brief solo chromatic ascent, and directs the chorus to a bombastic cadence, strikingly ordinary in its IV-V-I progression (Ex. 2.9).

The presence of quick transitions and interruptions from section to section denote a certain kind of power struggle among the characters. Lucia, carefree and elated, refuses to let her happiness be controlled and either disrupts or straight-out defies the rhythmic and melodic attributes of the other characters' music. However, Enrico, Raimondo, and the chorus, fearing her frightening influence, rarely allow her fully to finish her line, treading on Lucia's musical heels (versus allowing the orchestra to provide an introduction to either her or their music) to counteract her manipulation. Though the observers' vocal lines are never explicitly affected by Lucia's madness, the orchestra's submission to her music presents the seduction as a distinct possibility. This struggle and distinction between lines also creates a framing effect, placing Lucia's excessive ornamentation and unorthodox harmonies within an overwhelmingly "normal" context, thus labeling her as a madwoman and exacerbating the extent to which she is seen as one.

Clement's (1988) interpretation of mad scenes is that of freedom and liberation for the madwoman; furthermore, the scenes act as a mechanism for perfect happiness through the ultimate defiance of male and musical constructs. However, Smart (1992) resists this analysis in regards to Lucia's scene, refuting the idea that Lucia could be a girl who leaps into space; Smart states that this argument "assumes that there is a space for Lucia to leap into, that her musical excesses exist in a void" (p. 124). Restrictions on her excesses are undeniably in play – despite her extreme ornamentation and "freeing" vocalises, Smart argues, Lucia is still singing within the highly restricted formal and harmonic limitations. This, coupled with the restraints of patriarchy and social authority throughout the entire production, cast Lucia as unable to break away; though madness helps her escape the horrors of her waking life, true liberation and defiance is only present through true empowerment. Though Lucia's relative female empowerment is notable within the context of early nineteenth-century operatic standards, her use of madness as escapism is read as more of an exasperated resignation, rather than a feminist victory.

Whether liberated or still operating under multiple constraints, Lucia's scene is overloaded in terms of noumenal forces as discussed by Tomlinson (1999); the main hallmarks of otherworldly aspects, recalled past themes and imagined voices, are not only present, but function as tenets of the scene. Lucia utilizes a lengthy scena to hysterically switch between recalling her love duet and imagining Edgardo beside her, and constructing a complete hallucinatory scenario as the two of them are separated by the phantom, but then reunited by the altar and married. Though these events are not taken explicitly from her past, the fragmented themes act as representations of it, but almost to the point where she could be daydreaming – the wedding hymn, for example, which was

heard in her real wedding in the previous act, is almost lucidly recalled in terms of her ideal marriage. She is well-aware that this hymn is, in reality, reserved for weddings and that the love duet is only for Edgardo; this conscious manifestation of very real connections could be interpreted as noumenal in that it exposes certain aspects of Lucia's psyche (and lets the audience know that this music is happening in her head, not in the diegetic realm of the operatic stage), but it also acts as a simultaneous query into the extent of her madness.

The "other voice" that is so often employed in operatic mad scenes is virtually the defining factor of Lucia's madness; her extensive cadenza, and, within it, the famous duet with the flute, is often interpreted as a conversation with her imagined lover. Though she never states in this section that Edgardo is definitively the other voice, her previous envisioning of him is enough of a suggestion. Employing a flute as the imagined voice is in keeping with Tomlinson's argument of having a woodwind to initiate a more ethereal effect, and Donizetti's original orchestration of having a glass harmonica, associated at the time with femininity and otherworldliness, would have taken the scene to another realm entirely. The nature of their exchange – essentially singing to each other, the flute revealing parts of Lucia's mind that even she was not aware of – paints the flute as a "true voice from an internal noumenal realm" (p. 95). Their virtuosic coloratura conversation and her externalizing madness from an internal space drives Lucia into an alternate trancelike territory associated with madwomen – the transcendent, ignorant ecstasy.

3 • ELVIRA, CLINGING TO HOPE

Vincenzo Bellini's interpretation of the mad heroine manifests itself in Elvira of *I Puritani*. Believing herself abandoned by her love, Arturo, after he enables the escape of a suspected spy (who, in actuality, is the widow of the executed King Charles I), Elvira promptly loses her reason for much of the opera. Her discovery of Arturo's supposed betrayal marks the end of Act I, the Chorus and her uncle Giorgio bemoan her loss of sanity in the opening of Act II, and she enters for her mad scene not long after. The stage directions – "Esca Elvira scapigliata. Il volte, il guardo ed ogni passo ed atto di Elvira palesano la sua pazzia." / "Enter Elvira, disheveled. Her looks and actions reveal her madness." – brand this as not only an homage to the popularity of Harriet Smithson's popular portrayal of Ophelia at this time, but also as a precursor to Lucia's famous scene, which premiered eight months later (Smart, 1992). Elvira's character is frequently staged as yet another barefoot, white-clad madwoman, wandering the hallways at night; her music betrays her desires – either her lost love must return, or she will wait for death to claim her.

Though acting beyond the confines of logical thought, Elvira nonetheless ascribes to operatic conventions, singing within a standard double-aria construct. She enters during a brief *scena*, during which she sings "O, rendetemi la speme, o lasciatemi morir" ("Oh, give me back my hope, or let me die!" – Ex. 3.1). In the moment, the audience may sense this as nothing more than a declamatory scene-setting introduction; however, after a quick interruption by Riccardo (Elvira's former betrothed, who still loves her) and Giorgio, she launches into the formal cantabile, and the final two lines of the second stanza are identical to her initial entrance. As the first "O rendetemi" was presented as an introductory statement, it is now presented as a conclusion, owing to a brief moment of

cadenza-like material and its immediate shift into Riccardo and Giorgio's response.

Elvira drifts from place to place, repetitively singing her lament, in hopes that her voice will lure Arturo back; she just happened to wander into her introductory scena while concluding the last phrase of her lament (Smart, 2000a). In this way, Elvira is removed, apathetic, and disconnected – caught within herself, with no regards to the people or events around her.

The musical score is for the introduction to the scene. It is in E-flat major (three flats) and 3/4 time, marked *ANDANTINO*. The vocal line is for Elvira, and the piano accompaniment is marked *pp* (pianissimo). The lyrics are: (di dentro) O ren-de-temi la spe-me..... o la - _scia-te, lascia-temi mo-rir.... O ren-.

Ex. 3.1: *O rendetemi la speme, introduction to scene*

Image: [http://erato.uvt.nl/files/imglnks/usimg/6/6c/IMSLP111962-PMLP60620-Bellini -
_I_puritani_vocal_score.pdf](http://erato.uvt.nl/files/imglnks/usimg/6/6c/IMSLP111962-PMLP60620-Bellini_-_I_puritani_vocal_score.pdf)

Her first stanza, set in a formal structure of aa' (soon to be complemented by an additional bcc' in the second stanza), tells her story – the love felt, and the love lost:

Qui la voce sua soave
mi chiamava...
e poi sparì.

Here his voice gentle
called me...
and then disappeared.

Qui giurava esser fedele,
 qui il giurava,
 e poi crudele
 mi fuggi!

Here he swore to be faithful
 here he swore,
 and then cruelly
 left me!

The other characters sense her palpable grief and adoration for Arturo, as Elvira realizes that she will never again be in his arms and longs for death in the “O rendetemi” conclusion. Riccardo and Giorgio, throughout the entire scene, are onlookers and interrupters, ascribing their own thoughts and prayers to the situation, much like the chorus, Enrico, and Raimondo relative to Lucia. Here, they cry “Quanto amor e mai raccolto in quel volto, in quel dolor!” (“How much love ever gathered in her face, her grief!”), bemoaning Elvira’s state of mind. She draws nearer to Giorgio during the men’s declaration, and meekly asks him “Chi sei tu?” (“Who are you?”), solidifying, if there were any doubt, her lack of reason. However, after several repetitious “Non mi ravvisi?”, she recognizes him, and then immediately asks of Arturo and demands explanation of his absence – “Parla! Parla!”.

Though we are still in the cantabile section of Elvira’s double-aria structure, there is a sudden change, as illustrated in Figure 2; the time changes to an Allegro 6/8, and the key is no longer E-flat major, but B-flat. A shift in this nature while remaining in the cantabile movement is shocking in early ottocento opera, and, like Lucia’s lengthy scena, reflects Elvira’s uncommonly flightly and unstable mind. The orchestra takes over melodic material – a quick, dance-like structure with strong downbeats (Ex. 3.2), remaining consistent under Elvira’s line, which is broken in imagined ecstasy.

Fig. 2: Vincenzo Bellini, *I Puritani*, II

Elvira – Aria with Chorus, “O rendetemi la speme ... Qui la voce... Vien diletto”

Standard double-aria structure with repetition within movements; italicized text indicates identical “O rendetemi” lines.

Section		Key	Length	Beginning Text
Scena – Andante				
Elvira enters	<i>a</i>	E-flat major	<i>4 bars</i>	<i>Elvira, “O rendetemi”</i>
	<i>a’</i>		<i>4 bars</i>	<i>Elvira, “O rendetemi”</i>
	<i>b</i>		5-6 bars	Giorgio/Riccardo, “Esso qui vien...”
Cantabile – Andante				
A		E-flat major		
Slow melody	<i>a</i>	C minor	4 bars	Elvira, “Qui la voce...”
	<i>a’</i>		8 bars	“Qui giurava esser...”
	<i>b</i>		8 bars	“Ah! mai piu...”
	<i>c</i>		<i>4 bars</i>	<i>“Ah rendetemi...”</i>
	<i>c’</i>		<i>4 bars</i>	<i>“O rendetemi...”</i>
	<i>d</i>	F major	7 bars	Riccardo/Giorgio, “Quanto amor...”
	<i>e</i>		10 bars	Elvira/Giorgio, “Chi sei tu?”
B				
Allegro giusto	<i>a</i>	B-flat major	8 bars	Elvira, “Ah! tu sorridi...”
Imagines wedding	<i>b</i>	G minor	8 bars	“A Imene...”
	<i>c</i>		12 bars	“Ognun s’appresta...”
	<i>a’</i>		7 bars	“Tu pur meco...”
C				
Largo assai	<i>a</i>	B-flat minor	8 bars	Elvira, “Egli piange!”
Aside	<i>b</i>		2 bars	Riccardo/Giorgio, “Or chi il pianto...”

A'				
Tempo 1	a	E-flat major	4 bars	Elvira, "M'odi, e dimmi..."
Comforting Riccardo	a'		4 bars	Riccardo, "Gli occhi..."
	b	C minor	8 bars	Elvira, "Ah! se piangi..."
	c		5-6 bars	Giorgio "Deh t'acqueta..."
	d		4 bars	Elvira, "Ah toglitemi..."
	d'		4 bars	Elvira, "Ah toglitemi..."
	e		6 bars	Riccardo/Giorgio, "Si, fa mia la..."
Tempo di mezzo				
Allegro moderato	Orchestral introduction		6 bars	Dotted brass, quick tied violin melody
Imagines Arturo	a		6 bars	Riccardo/Giorgio, "Torno il riso..."
	b		10 bars	Elvira, "Non temer..."
	b'		6 bars	Elvira, "Ogni duolo..."
	c		10 bars	Riccardo, "Qual bell' alma..."
				Giorgio, "Ella in pene abbandonata..."
				Elvira, "Non temer..."
Cabaletta - Allegro moderato				
A				
Quick dotted melody	Orchestral introduction		15 bars	Transitional (E-flat to A-flat) slow horn chorale; Anticipatory cabaletta melody in strings/woodwinds
	a		4 bars	Elvira, "Vien diletto..."
	a'		6 bars	"Finche spunti..."
	b		4 bars	"Deh t'affretta..."
	a''		4 bars	"Essa piange..."
	Coda		6-7 bars	"Vien..." – runs and held A°7
B				
R/G in thirds	a		4 bars	Riccardo/Giorgio, "Possa tu, bell' infelice..."
	a		4 bars	Riccardo/Giorgio, "Possa un giorno nel diletto..."
	b		8 bars	Riccardo/Giorgio, "Obbliare il tuo dolor..."

A

Exact repetition	Orchestral introduction	12-13 bars	Horn choral and cabaletta melody
	a	4 bars	Elvira, "Vien diletto..."
	a'	6 bars	"Finche spunti..."
	b	4 bars	"Deh t'affretta..."
	a''	4 bars	"Essa piange..."
	Coda	6-7 bars	"Vien..."
Coda			
Virtuosic fast lines	a	4 bars	"All' amor..."
	a'	7 bars	"All' amor..." + chromatic runs
	b	3-4 bars	Elvira, "Ah riedi..."
			Riccardo/Giorgio, "Si, stende notte..."
	c	3 bars	Elvira, "Arturo, ah riedi..."
			Riccardo/Giorgio, "Or notte stende..."
	c'	6 bars	Elvira, "Arturo, ah riedi..."
			Riccardo/Giorgio, "Or notte stende..."
	Orchestral conclusion	14 bars	

In keeping with other mad scenes of the era (e.g., Lucia, Anna Bolena,), she imagines her wedding – the dance, the preparations, the party. She asks, “Tu pur meco danzerai?” (“You will dance with me?”), with the stage direction “to Giorgio” – however, it is unclear whether she is speaking directly to him, or to her imagined Arturo. This flighty imitation of Elvira’s shaky mind is fleeting; she abruptly halts directly following her vibrant “Vieni a nozze!” She has seen Riccardo, in tears, and speaks to Giorgio, following the sudden return to a slower 4/4 time and the key of A-flat in the orchestra (Ex. 3.3).

EL

27 ALLEGRO GIUSTO

Ah! tu sor - ri-di...

e asciughi il pian - to! a I.

Ex 3.2: Dance-like orchestra, Elvira’s broken melodic line

Image: [http://erato.uvt.nl/files/imglnks/usimg/6/6c/IMSLP111962-PMLP60620-Bellini -
_I_puritani_vocal_score.pdf](http://erato.uvt.nl/files/imglnks/usimg/6/6c/IMSLP111962-PMLP60620-Bellini_-_I_puritani_vocal_score.pdf)

The image shows a musical score for a scene from Bellini's opera 'I puritani'. It features three staves: a vocal line for Elvira (ELV.), a vocal line for Riccardo (RIC.), and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is A-flat major (three flats) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked 'LARGO'. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'fp' (fortissimo), 'fpp' (fortissimissimo), and 'morendo' (fading). The lyrics are in Italian, with some parts in parentheses indicating they are sung 'sotto voce' (under the voice). The score is numbered 29.

Ex. 3.3: Abrupt return to morose A-flat, 4/4, Largo

Image: [http://erato.uvt.nl/files/imglnks/using/6/6c/IMSLP111962-PMLP60620-Bellini - I puritani vocal score .pdf](http://erato.uvt.nl/files/imglnks/using/6/6c/IMSLP111962-PMLP60620-Bellini_-_I_puritani_vocal_score.pdf)

These swift changes mark Elvira as almost child-like; easily distracted and fully emotional in all areas, she forgets her previous joy and commits herself fully to determining the cause of Riccardo's tears. "Egli piange, forse amo!" ("He is crying... for love!"), she realizes. She sees the parallels of his pain to her own situation – "Amo!" she says with a start. Elvira has been through this before – if, indeed, Riccardo is weeping for love, she can relate. As the orchestra returns to the original accompaniment to the first aa'bcc section, Elvira attempts to calm Riccardo, adding some dark irony with her line "Ah! Se pangi ancor, tu sai che un cor fido nell' amor.. sempre vive nel dolor!" ("If you cry still, you know that a heart faithful in love always lives in pain"). As she herself is living in the pain of abandonment, so is Riccardo living in pain of seeing the one he loves in anguish and madness. The return to the previous orchestral accompaniment and the imitation of it in Riccardo's melody may be used to further exacerbate the resemblance of their two stories. Elvira believes to have lost her lover to another woman; Riccardo has lost his beloved to another man, and now again to insanity.

EL
RIC. Ma - il... Ma - il...
GIOR Clemen-te il ciel ti fi - a, l'ingra-to o-blia, ah
- let-ta, tregua al duol dal cielo aspet-ta. Clemen-te il ciel ti fi - a, l'ingra-to o-blia, ah
EL mai... ah mai più ti ri-ve-drò! Ah to-glie - tèmi la vi - ta..... o ren-
R sil!
G sil!
pp

Ex. 3.4: Prolongation of the returning “O rendetemi” line

Image: [http://erato.uvt.nl/files/imglnks/usimg/6/6c/IMSLP111962-PMLP60620-Bellini -
_I_puritani_vocal_score.pdf](http://erato.uvt.nl/files/imglnks/usimg/6/6c/IMSLP111962-PMLP60620-Bellini_-_I_puritani_vocal_score.pdf)

At this point in the original iteration of this aa'bcc section, Elvira launched straight into her pleas of “O rendetemi...”. However, here, it is almost as if Giorgio and Riccardo are hoping to prolong the inevitable – after her poignant advice to Riccardo, Giorgio interrupts Elvira with a distraught descending chromatic line – “Deh t’acqueta, o mia diletta, tregua al duol dal cielo aspetta” (“Calm yourself, my love, respite from your grief awaits you in heaven”). Riccardo joins him for a final attempt at quieting Elvira

(“Clemente il ciel...”), but she will not be stopped. “Mai!” (“Never!”), she sighs, until bursting out in brief cadenza-like grief (Ex. 3.4), and returning, as ever, to the original line (“Mai piu ti revedro! Ah toglietemi la vita... O rendetemi il mio amor” / “Never again will I see you! Ah, take my life... or give me back my love”). The men have a concluding line, an oddly emotionless and methodical melody consisting of straight eighth notes in harmony at the third, the text of which reiterates the heartbreaking nature of her grief. The striking normalcy of this line may be a kind of experimentation in contrast; placing Giorgio and Riccardo firmly within the realm of the natural and normal world of conventional homophonic melody provides a solid return to sanity following Elvira’s outburst and persistent wishes for death. Musically, this placement also allows for a strong conclusion of the cantabile and an opportunity for a new start in the next section.

The tempo di mezzo, characterized by a dotted introduction scored for brass, coupled with a smiling, slurred violin gesture (Ex. 3.5), provides brief but welcome relief; Elvira starts laughing, and imagines herself with Arturo. “Non temer del padre mio” (“Fear not my father”), she tells him – “Si, felice io ti faro!” (“Yes, I will make you happy!”). At this point, many composers (as Donizetti did with Lucia) would have employed the technique of including the lover’s imagined voice in some aural manifestation; however, Arturo, whether in instrumental incarnation or via an imagined conversation, remains ominously absent. Only here is it telling that the two on-looking men have different text in their responses; as Riccardo still views Arturo as his rival, and jealousy is surely an ever-present emotion, he allows himself one last self-pitying line (“Qual bell’ alma inamorata un rival togliera a me!” / “What a beautiful soul in love with my rival, taken from me!”).

33 *ALL.^o MODERATO.* (Elvira si volge in atto furente verso Riccardo e Giorgio. Dopo un poco ella sor-
-ride e atteggiava il volto alla maniera de' pazzi)

Ex. 3.5: *Tempo di mezzo* introduction: horn figure and strings melody

Image: [http://erato.uvt.nl/files/imglnks/usimg/6/6c/IMSLP111962-PMLP60620-Bellini -
_I_puritani_vocal_score_.pdf](http://erato.uvt.nl/files/imglnks/usimg/6/6c/IMSLP111962-PMLP60620-Bellini_-_I_puritani_vocal_score_.pdf)

French horns provide an ominous timbre but seamless transition to the impending cabaletta; though slightly out of character (connecting in sound neither to the string-centered *tempo di mezzo*, nor the woodwind-heavy movement to come), this set-up provides an important harmonic shift, as the key changes to A-flat major. From the beginning of the cabaletta, Elvira's child-like playfulness is restored; a simple, quick, dotted melody (Ex. 3.6) in aaba form ("Vien diletto...") with a short virtuosic coda makes up the majority of the cabaletta. She describes a vignette of herself and Arturo together in the moonlight, and once again begs for his return.

Viendi let to, è in ciel la

F *FF* *sf* *pp* *pp più lento*

con abbandono

lu na: tutto ta ce intorno, intor no: finchè spunti in cielo il giorno, vien.....

..... vien,..... ti posa, vien ti po sa sul mio cor! Deh! taf.

Opp.

Ex. 3.6: Cabaletta aa melody, “Vien diletto”

Image: [http://erato.uvt.nl/files/imglnks/usimg/6/6c/IMSLP111962-PMLP60620-Bellini -
I puritani vocal score .pdf](http://erato.uvt.nl/files/imglnks/usimg/6/6c/IMSLP111962-PMLP60620-Bellini_-_I_puritani_vocal_score.pdf)

Musically, the only hint of her despair and longing presents itself during the short coda, where, after three increasingly higher descending lines, she jumps to a jarring G-flat, the seventh in an a fully diminished seventh chord build on A (Ex. 3.7). Though this is nothing more than a passing chromatic harmony, serving as a secondary chord to the ii, the durational emphasis (exacerbated by the word choice, “amor”) provides a window into Elvira’s character; though she needs Arturo to return, the G-flat simultaneously acts

as a signifier of her doubt, as well as an adamant dismissal of the creeping thoughts in her mind, saying her love will not come back.

184

EL

al - l'a - mo - re, al - l'a -

- mor, ah vie - ni, vien..... al l'a -

cres.

f

ff

Ex. 3.7: Virtuoso coda with A fully diminished seventh chord

Image: [http://erato.uvt.nl/files/imglnks/usimg/6/6c/IMSLP111962-PMLP60620-Bellini - I puritani vocal score .pdf](http://erato.uvt.nl/files/imglnks/usimg/6/6c/IMSLP111962-PMLP60620-Bellini_-_I_puritani_vocal_score.pdf)

Resignation, however, is the precise emotion of Riccardo and Giorgio – rather than helping, their fear of Elvira’s insanity simply causes them to bemoan it and pray for her relief (“Possa tu, bell’ infelice... Possa un giorno nel diletto, obbliar il tuo dolor!” / “May you, lovely unhappy one... may you one day in delight, forget your pain!”). They watch, they pray, they fear for the *infelice*; yet offering any relief other than the promise of heaven is something they will not attempt to do. In this sense, the strength of character belongs purely to Elvira, the one who has fallen; though out of her senses, she is unfaltering in her imagination, beliefs, and desires. Elvira again asserts this stanza in identical form as before, with a long overly ornamental final coda, fraught with more

pleas for Arturo to return to her. Underneath Elvira's melody in the coda, Giorgio and Riccardo are singing *sotto voce*, again praying for her to find refuge from the dark horror of her madness. As the scene draws to a close, all three characters' lines suddenly line up, both as a standard early ottocento final statement, and as a subliminal hint that Elvira may not be all gone quite yet; she can still return to the land of the sane.

Bellini's portrayal of Elvira the madwoman is overtly transparent; he depends mostly on sudden orchestral changes as a reflection of her quick, inconsistent mind, and the typical coloratura vocal lines to label her as hysterically flighty, both of which occur in Lucia's scene in similar manifestations. Further obvious clues to her insanity, if not overly intellectual, are found in the libretto. Carlo Pepoli, *I Puritani*'s librettist, made sure to include several archetypal madwoman characteristics. Quick subject changes, lack of facial recognition, imagining her wedding, doling out absent-minded advice, acting childish, cyclical obsessive focus on one main theme, and, of course, imagining her love by her side – all these traits are characteristic of female mad scenes, and are very much the product of two men ascribing what they imagine happens in the mind of a young woman scorned. Interestingly, as described in Weisstein's (1979) review of novels as libretto sources, the source from which this particular opera takes its plot, Walter Scott's *Old Mortality*, has only a brief mention that the main character, Edith, became “emotionally distraught” through a completely different scenario (p. 312). This egregious exacerbation of character for the sake of tragedy, while a typical tactic in dramatic writing that is again reminiscent of Lucia, begs the question of the original intent; throughout this scene, one could argue that Elvira is nothing but “distraught” – the madness, as it were, could simply be a misinterpreted semi-hysterical depression.

Smart (2000a) interprets these clichéd behaviors as signs that Elvira has taken refuge in her insanity; completely within herself, she sings constantly, obsessively, wandering. Furthermore, unlike Lucia, Elvira is completely aware of the fact that Arturo is no longer in her life – she describes her beloved’s voice as in the past tense (“*Qui la voce sua soave mi chiamava, e poi spari*”), and never hears anything from him (imagined or real), but addresses him nonetheless (p. 62). Though she seems to imagine him (such as in the tempo di mezzo, “*Non temer del padre mio...*”), the lack of an imagined voice in reply indicates that hoping for his return, according to Elvira, is futile. There is a unique sense of cognizance in her character, which again argues for the likelihood of her return to sanity; she is safe in her madness, but it provides no escape from her misery.

Discussing the occurrence of themes from earlier scenes in the opera and any potential other voices – whether imagined by Elvira herself, or a prominent signifier in the orchestra – may serve to place Elvira into the context of Gary Tomlinson’s (1999) argument for the presence of noumenalism in operatic mad scenes. However, strangely, recollections of themes are absent – Bellini’s choice to exclude past themes and instead to compose all new music throughout the aria, paints Elvira as not only one who knows her love will not return (somewhat ironically, as Arturo does indeed come back to her, and she regains her reason), but also one who is not dwelling on their relationship as it once was. She does not remember the happiness, but instead is focused on the way his betrayal affects her presently. Each contented reminiscence employs a poetic reversal (e.g., “*Qui la voce sua soave mi chiamava, e poi spari*” / “Here his voice gentle called me, and then disappeared”), always returning to his cruelty. Despite this, she is constantly fixated on his well-being (“*E Arturo? E l’amore? Parla! Parla!*”) and the promise of a wedding she never attained. Elvira, instead of being bound by her past, is bound by her fidelity – she

tells Riccardo, “... un cor fido nell’ amor sempre vive nel dolor!” (“...a heart faithful in love always lives in pain!”). As such, her music is not a reflection of her past, but rather of circular present motion.

Orchestral reflection of this concept is present in the aa’bcc’ section of the cantabile; ever-present dreamy arpeggiated triplets do not allow her any kind of efficacy, or the ability make any distinctive changes in her music, save the abrupt shifts that the orchestra mandates. Together with the textbook repetition of the A section of the cabaletta, the introductory “O rendentemi”, presented again in its rightful conclusive placement, its recurrence throughout the scene, and even its similarity to the musical language of the first aa’ lines of the same stanza, illustrates Elvira as spinning her wheels; she is waiting, stalling, stuck. But unlike her fellow madwomen, she does not look back.

If past themes and musical signifiers are notably absent, so too are the noumenalistic otherworldly voices; Elvira’s scene is purely on the surface. Giorgio and Riccardo’s musical lines are the sole counterparts to her laments; consistent with her mindset in the present versus the past, Arturo – whether presented as an abstraction, heard voice, or instrument – is nowhere to be seen. Deliriously, she displays her whole self, her depression and hope, in such an unashamed and deliberate manner that there is no need for a noumenon – a presence or object unable to be sensed – which could potentially endanger and betray her. Elvira has already been deceived; she has nothing more to lose. Despite this, she is still held in the confines of operatic conventions. While some madwomen have the ability to control their surroundings, manipulating every aspect she can, Elvira exhibits no such agency. Subtly at times, and violently in others, the music has complete control; the orchestra makes a quick switch and she is forced to follow, and the two men often ascribe their perceptions of her feelings, rather than letting

her speak. Clément (1988) describes Elvira, with her fireworks and wild coloratura lines, as one who “passes rashly into the magical order of her desires.” However, this is not enough; Elvira’s so-called magical desires are for Arturo to return to her, rather than anything more profound or progressive. She has taken refuge in her insanity, indeed, but also in the comfort of the strictly prescribed operatic structure. She is not yet allowed – or not ready – to leap into space.

4 • DINORAH, STEERING THE SCENE

Giacomo Meyerbeer, the main creator and proponent of grand opera, ventured into the realm of French *opéra comique* on several occasions. His last opera of this genre premiered under the name *Le Pardon di Ploermel* at the *Opéra-Comique* in 1859 and, two months later, was translated into Italian for the London premiere, as *Dinorah* (all subsequent libretto references are taken from this edition). *Dinorah* spins a pastoral tale of a woman who was abandoned at the altar and subsequently lost her sanity, and has been wandering the countryside for the past year, waiting for her love, Hoël, to return to her. Though her “mad scenes” are in fact more prevalent throughout the work than those where she is restored to her normal state, one of the most famous arias, prized by sopranos for its extensive coloratura ornamentation, is known as the “Shadow Song”, and occurs in the second of three acts. Imagining her shadow as another character, Dinorah speaks to it, alternating between extensive coloratura and deep lonely depressions – however, she does so with such agency that it is unequivocally obvious that she has complete control.

Dinorah’s aria takes on the form of a rough rondo – introductory recitative, followed by an ABACA form, with a coda and cadenza material to conclude. As this is a French opera within the *opéra comique* style, this rondo form is not out of place, as it would be in Romantic Italian opera, but rather an extension of the ritornello and verse alternation from the da capo aria of the Baroque and Classical era. Dinorah’s insanity is portrayed mainly by the text and precise stage directions, and less by musical oddities; abrupt switches from section to section may portray a certain kind of hysterics, but that being said, her musical personality denotes a certain consciousness of her ability to control her surroundings. Throughout the scene, she imagines – or, rather, truly believes

– that her shadow is another person, and treats it as such; she speaks to it, sings to it, admonishes it, and misses it when it is taken from her by the vanishing moonlight.

Dinorah and the orchestra split the role of the shadow; she sings its part herself, and occasionally the orchestra will take on a responsive “other” voice as representation of her imagination. However, it is notable that this entire scene is narrative, to use Abbate’s term, in that Dinorah is entirely conscious of her – and the shadow’s – singing as explicit song, as opposed to speech. That this work is placed within an *opéra comique* context, in which speech occurs in between scenes to further the plot, adds another dimension to the narrative quality, making it all the more obvious the absurdity of her singing.

Dinorah seems to have a controlling role in this scene – neither her madness, her shadow, nor the orchestra has power over what she wants to sing. Her words inform the music to come (“Venuta qui tu sei per imparar da me quell che cantare e che danzar tu dei alle mie nozze con Hoël domain?” / “You are coming here to learn what to sing and how to dance at my wedding to Hoël tomorrow?”). Dinorah has a plan for the playtime with her new friend, and nothing will impede it. This childlike naivety works well with her state of mind; she wants to teach her shadow to dance, and the orchestra kindly obliges, which cues to the audience that this is non-diegetic music that is purely in her head. She creates a quick waltz with a legerdemain-type melody (Ex. 4.1), complete with fast chromatic lines and grace notes, and sings what will become the refrain, which is in the form of two period of eight bars each, and an freer, more extended 24 bars, in which she alternates dancing with and talking to her shadow, and gets carried away pleading with it to stay with her and answer her.



Ex. 4.1: Refrain melody

Image: http://conquest.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/f/f8/IMSLP30174-PMLP36956-Dinorah_Act_II.pdf

As illustrated in Figure 3, this entire section uses regular four-bar phrases until the extension; as she winds down and pleads for the shadow to stay, the phrases are extended longer, broken up, and almost desperate until she realizes that she has its attention again and proceeds to the next section, where she will teach it to sing (using a simple commanding transition with a spoken “Ascolta!” / “Listen!”).

The subsequent back-and-forth of Dinorah’s coloratura runs and passing of the singing torch to her friend clearly splits the characters into two separate entities, although Dinorah is singing both lines. The stage directions (“Dirige il suo canto all’ombra” / “Directs song to shadow” and “Crede udir la voce dell’ombra” / “Believes to hear the shadow’s voice”) are adamant about which line is which, the shadow’s being more timid

Fig. 3: Giacomo Meyerbeer, *Dinorah*, II

Dinorah – Scena ed Aria, “Ahime! Che notte oscura!... Ombra leggiera”

Rondo style (ABACA + Coda) aria, modified refrains

Section		Key	Length	Characteristics and/or Beginning Text
Scena – Allegro		Tonally mobile	19 bars	“Ahime! Che notte oscura!” Leads into D \flat major via G-B-C-A-A \flat motion
Aria – Allegro ben moderato				
A	a	D \flat major	22 bars	Orchestra - aaab
Main refrain	a	D \flat major	17 bars	Dinorah – aaab
Allegro	b	B \flat major - E \flat - A \flat	24 bars	“Ombra leggiera...” Dinorah – aabbcc “Ad ogni aurora...”
B	c	A \flat major	20 bars	Dinorah and Shadow
Singing lesson	d	Tonally mobile	5 bars	Back and forth “Ah!” 4 four-bar phrases + four-bar coda
Animato	e	A \flat major - D \flat major	6 bars	Dinorah and Shadow Two-beat “Ah!”, back and forth Dinorah, short cadenza-like material Lead key back to D \flat major

A Refrain Allegro	a	D \flat major	17 bars	Dinorah – aaab “Ombra leggiera...”
C Andante/Tempo 1	f	A major	21 bars	Dinorah – aabc + coda “Non sai tu...”
	g	Tonally mobile Key signature F major	17 bars	Dinorah – broken melody “Ma gia tu t’ascondi!” Dinorah/Clarinet conversation
	h	F major - A \flat major	8 bars	Dinorah – “Ah ritorna!” Transition back to D \flat major area
A Refrain Allegro	a	D \flat major	17 bars	Dinorah – aaab “Ombra leggiera...”
	b	D \flat major	15 bars	Dinorah – aab (4+4+6) “La la la ...” b, orchestral plays dance, she trills
Coda Allegro con spirito	i	D \flat major	28 bars	aabcd (4+4+4+8+8)– Orchestra, Dinorah, runs, clarinet conversation, runs
	j	D \flat major	Cadenza + 4	Dinorah cadenza Orchestra coda melody to end

She ends each demonstration with a courteous “a te!” and eagerly responds to each tentative answer with an encouraging “va ben.” This playful show-and-tell continues as the shadow becomes more assertive, and Dinorah, pleased with her role as singing teacher, decides to go back to dancing, and leads the music back to the refrain. She does this consciously and independently of the orchestra; during the transition back, her vocal line descends chromatically, leading into the F that starts the following melodic material. During the previous four measures, the orchestra has been completely silent, as if waiting for her direction; her control over the situation extends to the point where she, free in her madness, is completely in charge (Ex. 4.3). Her decision to sing the refrain again is met without question or restraint, and after her first three pick-up notes, the accompaniment follows.

The musical score for Ex. 4.3 is written for voice and piano. It is in 3/8 time and consists of two systems. The first system shows a vocal line (D) and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has a chromatic descent leading into a new melodic phrase. The piano accompaniment is marked *f a piacere* and is mostly silent. The second system is marked *1° TEMPO. delec* and shows the vocal line singing "Ombra leg - gie - ra, non te n'an - dar, non t'invo - lar, no, no," with the piano accompaniment following. The tempo is marked *rall. poco a poco* at the beginning of the first system.

Ex. 4.3: Transition to refrain

Image: http://conquest.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/f/f8/IMSLP30174-PMLP36956-Dinorah_Act_II.pdf

Her refrain is expectedly identical to the first time it was sung, except for the abrupt fact that she cuts it short; sixteen bars is the extent of this section, enough to cover dwelling on the enharmonic D-flat/C-sharp (the tonic and the third scale degree in the respective keys), incorporating a rocking half-step motion on the raised second scale degree (B-sharp) in the new key. As the key settles into a perfectly triadic and solid A major, Dinorah, per the specific stage directions, kneels to talk to her shadow about her lost love, Hoël. It is thus apparent to the viewers that the premature finish of her previous section is because her mind is not invested in it any longer; unable to dance while she is dwelling on such things, the music reflects her new train of thought.

Non sai tu ch'Hoël m'ama?	Do you not know that I love Hoël?
Che all'altar mi chiama	That at the altar I called
Dee legar l'amor il mio al suo cor!	God tying my love to his heart!
Il sai tu?	Do you know?

This section is more an interruption that happens to fall into the format of a rondo than a component of a cohesive whole; the pensive, lyrical melodic content and different key realm provides musical contrast, while the text goes in another direction entirely. An aabc and coda make up the vocal content of this section; all phrases maintain normalcy in their length of four bars each, and the harmony is perfectly diatonic within the key.

Dinorah is thrown into hysterics as a cloud passes over the moon, obstructing the shadow from view. Though she obviously believes that she and Hoël are still lovers (given the text of the last stanza), the drastic way in which she responds to the shadow's disappearance implies that perhaps in the back of her mind, there is the knowledge that Hoël has left her. The abandonment and pain of her past relationship renders her

incapable of rational thought and she jumps to the worst possible conclusion, frantically demanding “Ma già tu t’ascondi! Perchè vuoi partir? Ah, dimmi, rispondi! Perchè vuoi partir? Perchè, perchè vuoi partir?” (“But you already hide! Why do you depart? Ah, tell me, answer! Why do you depart? Why, why do you depart?”). Her fixation on the insistent “why” is most likely directed toward both her counterparts – her shadow, as well as her other half Hoël. Abandoned suddenly by both with no explanation, she is searching for answers, and she projects her confrontational feelings towards Hoël onto the shadow. The orchestra imitates and intensifies her anger as well; the key signature changes to D minor, but the music is tonally ambiguous, using dominant and diminished seventh chords on a tremolo as she challenges the now empty space in front of her (Ex. 4.4).



Ex. 4.4: Dinorah's abandonment

Image: http://conquest.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/f/f8/IMSLP30174-PMLP36956-Dinorah_Act_II.pdf

As she sings her last “partir”, the orchestra cadences on A major, which is picked up by the oboe on a lamenting line that vaguely outlines the signature of D minor. She copies this lament, and they share a mournful call and response (“Qui sola, soletta, nel bujo son gia! A tornar t’affretta, deh vien!” / “Here all alone I am in the dark! Hasten to

return, ah come!”). The compositional choice of having a woodwind “sing” alongside the female protagonist during a mad scene is far from unusual, but the placement here is somewhat puzzling. Giving the shadow a voice has already been done in this particular scene, both as a flute in response to Dinorah’s “Buon di!” and as her own voice during the singing lesson, while the flutes provided the light accompaniment. The change in instrumentation denotes perhaps that this voice is not the shadow specifically, but perhaps another figment of her overactive imagination, which may prove that Dinorah is completely in her own head, as she is singing with a disembodied voice while she is self-described as “all alone.” Alternatively, as the shadow has been used as a character throughout this scene, the oboe voice could be representational of the character who is not able to be seen by Dinorah, yet is still attached to her – thus drawing more parallels between the shadow and Hoël. This also presents the first time that Dinorah seems lost in her madness since the beginning recitative, and it clearly shows in her music - though until now she has been confident and in control, now she is the one doing the responding, latching on to whatever semblance of melody she can find, as if she has lost the ability to create one herself (Ex. 4.5).

As a ray of moonlight makes the shadow reappear, Dinorah rejoices – her crying sighing motifs of “deh vien!” lead by half-step to a high A, as the orchestra moves to the relative key for a strong, joyous F major arrival (“Ah! Ritorna!”). In a form-based musical sense, the next eight bars are purely transitional; a repetition of “Ah! Ritorna!” is superimposed on another strong chord, this time an A-flat.

The image displays a musical score for a vocal and piano ensemble. The top system features a vocal line in treble clef and a piano accompaniment in bass clef. The vocal line has the lyrics "perchè vuoi partir? perchè, perchè vuoi par-tir?.....". The piano accompaniment includes a prominent bass line with a forte (f) dynamic marking. The bottom system continues the vocal and piano parts. The vocal line has the lyrics "Qui so-la, so-let-ta... nel bu-jo son già!". The piano accompaniment includes a forte (f) dynamic marking and a bass line with a forte (f) dynamic marking. The score is written in Italian and includes a tempo/mood instruction "(con voce triste)".

Ex. 4.5: Call and response with clarinet

Image: http://conquest.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/f/f8/IMSLP30174-PMLP36956-Dinorah_Act_II.pdf

As she playfully scolds the shadow (“ingrata, così vuoi fuggir, vuoi partir?”), she descends in a scalar fashion that ends on a G-flat, to complete the A-flat dominant seventh chord underneath. This leads in seamlessly to the refrain, which strikes back up in its original key of, as expected, D-flat major. All is forgiven and, it seems, forgotten; despite the momentary abandonment, Dinorah immediately takes back her dance partner. The refrain is once again extended; the first basic sixteen bars are as before, but an additional sixteen bars follow, with similar yet relatively new material. A brief tonicization to G-flat major takes over for the first eight measures, as Dinorah sings her way through quick runs on nonsense syllables, and we see a free, childlike woman who takes unadulterated joy in the simplest things, such as dancing. An orchestral repetition of

the original refrain melody (a half-step higher, in D major) begins the second eight measures, while Dinorah is happy to trill to her heart's content and again assume complete control as her pitches subtly guide the orchestra back to the original key (Ex. 4.6)

The musical score is divided into three systems. The first system features a vocal line (Dinorah) with the lyrics "ah! ah!" and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes the instruction "Oppure." and the word "dolce". The second system continues the vocal line with the lyrics "re-sta, re-sta con" and the piano accompaniment. The third system includes the instruction "(danze coll'ombra) ALL^o CON SPIRITO. (♩. = 66)" and the vocal line with the lyrics "me!". The piano part in the third system is marked with a forte "F" dynamic.

Ex. 4.6: Main melody in orchestra, transition back to D-flat major, and the coda theme

Image: http://conquest.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/f/f8/IMSLP30174-PMLP36956-Dinorah_Act_II.pdf

Her joy continues into a quick coda; the meter turns to 6/8 time, and the waltz-like lilt of the previous music takes on a frantic and overbearing quality. The orchestra plays a new four-bar melody, filled with quick articulated notes, chromatic sequencing, and brief descending runs; Dinorah imitates this, adding on five bars of extensive runs that keep in character by also incorporating the sequencing. The call and response with a woodwind returns, this time the clarinet; however, this conversation shows a reverse in her mindset from when the oboe was the other voice. Before, the instrument was taking on the controlling role, and naively, she imitated it exactly.



Ex. 4.7: Clarinet conversation in the coda

Image: http://conquest.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/f/f8/IMSLP30174-PMLP36956-Dinorah_Act_II.pdf

Now, she has the upper hand; though the clarinet is the first to play this quick arpeggiated triplet figure, she adjusts the last pitch on the second iteration, which the clarinet is forced to repeat (Ex. 4.7). Chromatic runs, *fioritura* fireworks, and another brief competition with the clarinet lead up to a free cadenza, which is highly ornamented and generally plays opposite the flute. With Dinorah's held high D-flat and a fortissimo reiteration of the coda's theme in the orchestra, the scene comes crashing to an end.

Dinorah's story runs contrary to the usual prima donna who falls prey to mental instability. Unlike Lucia's inevitable breakdown caused by an unfortunate love story rife with pressure-filled male expectation, or Lady Macbeth's catatonic guilt, both of whom have their mad scene towards the end of their respective operas, Dinorah starts the opera in this state of mind. Back-story has been set: Hoël has already left her at the altar, and Dinorah, accompanied by her pet goat and still in her wedding dress, has been roaming the countryside on the outskirts of her village of Ploërmel for a full year. One of Meyerbeer's few forays into the world of *opéra comique*, *Dinorah*'s plot is oftentimes dismissed as silly and trivial, the music a pure extension of this frivolity, filled with ornaments and unsubstantial material. However, at this point in nineteenth-century opera, concepts and abstractions were in vogue, and Meyerbeer was undoubtedly affected. 1859, the year of the premiere of *Dinorah*, was the final year of composition for Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*; though the drama was not to be performed for another five years, the idea of philosophical opera was definitely in the air. Though none would argue *Dinorah* as overly philosophical, Meyerbeer's heroine steps out of the normal composer-ascribed puppet role, and instead presents herself as an unabashedly self-conscious operatic prima donna through pure sarcastic defiance.

In order to determine whether Dinorah is infused with otherworldliness, and the extent to which she defies stereotypes embraced by other ottocento operatic heroines, one must discuss musical reminiscence and the character of the shadow. Drawing from Tomlinson's (1999) concept of Kantian noumenalism, based on the presence of a transcendental subject finding a voice and the obsessive nature of the madwoman's fragmented mind, addresses a certain manipulation of the audience based on the character's tendency to bring them into the subliminal psyche and erase all concept of plot and representation in the given moment. One of the most defining characteristics of the prototypical madwoman lost in noumenal forces is the presence of past melodies, which cues to the audience that she is ignorant of the present and chooses her own reality (i.e., mentally retreats to a place where she was happy); however, in *Dinorah*, there are no previous melodies off of which to base remembered material. In this subtle rejection of mad scenes customs, Dinorah denies the audience any concept of her previous happiness; in fact, we have only a naïve assumption that her relationship with Hoël was, in fact, fulfilling and content. None of the material is reminiscent in its appearance, but as far as the audience is aware, every tune that Dinorah sings could be a surfacing memory of her lost love.

Coupled with this notable absence of previous melodies is the abundant and obvious voice that is another hallmark of the Tomlinson's operatic noumenalism; the shadow's presence works simultaneously as a stereotypical sign of madness (e.g., seeing things that aren't there; or, rather, imagining that one can communicate with inhuman objects) and an "other" that is present only in her mind. However, the definition of a noumenon is something that is unable to be perceived by any of the senses; the fact that Dinorah can see this other, as it is an actual object, defeats the purpose of discussing its

noumenalist characteristics and thus propels the shadow into the realm of a fully formed character, one capable of hurt and play. Unlike the heard voice in Lucia's scene, which is imagined, profound, and sentimental, Dinorah's greets her, toys with her, and has the ability to learn how to sing. The childlike alternation between Dinorah's unhappiness and her ignorant bliss is on display throughout the entirety of the opera – the shadow therefore does not have the opportunity to betray her psyche and unfold repressed memories as voices in other operatic scenes are wont to do. She unabashedly lays out her subconscious without help, taking control and manipulating the music so strongly as to render the shadow's role as an "other" completely moot except for as a surface-level companion. Meyerbeer develops a heroine who thus makes a mockery of the entire stereotyped mad scene, turning all the factors on their head and forcing the audience to rethink and criticize their own expectations. Here, musical conventions enable Dinorah; she comically, ridiculously, and obviously forces every thought, feeling, and depth onto the surface. Rather than have meaning ascribed to her by way of an underlying psychic force of the orchestra or defiant lyricism that denotes unnatural realms, she is the one who ascribes the meaning.

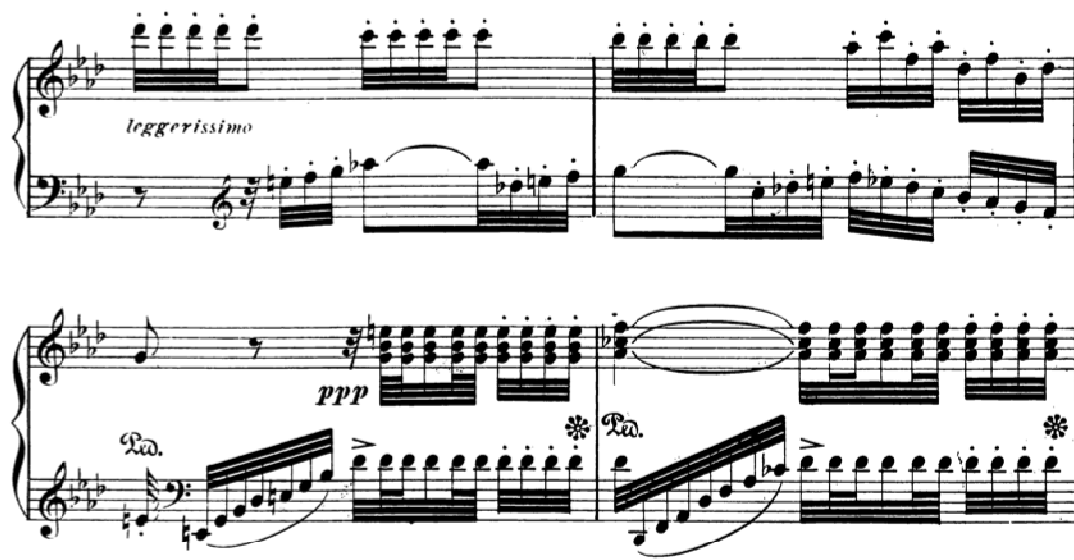
5 • LADY, SUCCUMBING TO FATE

Giuseppe Verdi's first venture into a setting of Shakespearean drama, *Macbeth*, employs dynamic use of the interconnection of music and theater. His crowning achievement and one of the most memorable moments in the work occurs with Lady Macbeth's sleepwalking scene, the text of which was already famed by Shakespeare's "Out, damned spot!" soliloquy. Verdi's "Una macchia" attempts to capture the same guilt-ridden realism, depicting the leading lady as a force whose energy has been ongoing from the beginning, and only shows signs of breaking in her most vulnerable state of sleep. Thematic and motivic materials accompany a form quite unlike any other mad scenes of this era as she relives the aftermath of the king's murder. Instead of a typical hysterical soprano scene, such as the wild ornamentation of Lucia, or Elvira's quick shifts in attention, Lady Macbeth (affectionately referred to as simply "Lady" by Verdi and his librettist, Francesco Piave) turns inward, exposing depths of her psyche through departures from not only standard ottocento aria forms, but also mad scene conventions.

Lady Macbeth possesses such domineering boundary-transgressing characteristics that her entire being embodies a striking reversal of typical roles of ottocento opera. The antithesis of the passively victimized soprano, Verdi's Lady Macbeth is described in his own writings as a "demonio dominatore" ("dominating demon"), and "ugly and malignant" (Budden, 1973). Thus, it follows that her mad scene should be radically different from the pretty, glittery standards set by Lucia; Lady, a malevolent and controlling prima donna, would be best portrayed as mad by relinquishing this power. The act of placing Lady within an exceedingly vulnerable state (sleepwalking, with its potential for outside manipulation and observation without the sleeper's permission or

even awareness), while obviously not Verdi's own idea, is taken advantage of in order to effectively portray her breakdown.

The scena leading up to Lady Macbeth's *Gran Scena del Sonnambulismo* begins with an eight-bar introduction, a sneaky, high, atmospheric phrase that culminates in a clarinet ascent and trill, and then loosely sequenced a whole step higher. Three distinctive themes set the stage for what is to come – tentative woodwinds and high strings telling a ghost story of multiple layers. The first theme, continuing the higher register instrumentation, is a descending call-and-response line, ironic in its laughter-like musical rhetoric, a foreshadowing mockery of Lady Macbeth's destruction (Ex. 5.1). The omnipotent presence of the witches, who act as a collective primary character in Verdi's *Macbeth*, have achieved their goal of trickery of mortals and mischief for mischief's sake, and present themselves deviously even when offstage. Though they never interact directly with Lady Macbeth, their total contamination of her world is obvious. Their objective of complete human chaos reached, they hide in the background of the characters' music, adding commentary and gloating their success.



Ex. 5.1: Theme 1, descending witches' laughter.

Image: http://conquest.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/8/82/IMSLP122264-PMLP55443-Verdi_-_Macbeth_vocal_score_.pdf

Hypnotic repetition of the dominant scale degree in the by-now firmly established key of F minor serves as a transition to the second theme, a languid, expressive melody of double-dotted rhythms and underlying activity, a psychologized representation of the prima donna's state of mind (Ex. 5.2). The prevalence of subconscious commotion in Lady Macbeth's mind is obvious, as she will begin to relive past events, but the surface is glassy, disconnected. A four-beat sequencing pattern occurs (Ex. 5.2), recalling her first appearance in Act I, which is preceded by four upward sequencing patterns, and further ambitious sequences in her Act II aria, "La Luce Langue" on the text "é necessario!" Lady Macbeth is again defined by sequences – here, in a downward manner. Instead of constantly reaching upwards out of ambition and desire to empower all those around her, she starts a descent into the depths of her psyche.

The final theme combines Lady's characteristic sequential ideas with apparent chromaticism, which spirals through the double reeds via an ascending scale outlining the tritone, answered by a thin chromatic descent (Ex. 5.3). This is again representative of the hypnotic heroine whose psyche it is signifying; tainted and sinister, there is something inherently unnatural and dark about both her music and her mind. With a four-bar codetta, cadencing on a strong F minor and using thematic material from the first four bars, the instrumental introduction takes on a self-contained characteristic, a prelude to a mini-drama that holistically represents Lady Macbeth's unstable mental state before she enters the scene.

14

P con espressione
Ped. * Ped. * Ped.

Ex. 5.2: Theme 2, long melody with underlying arpeggios; four-beat sequenced material in third phrase

Image: [http://conquest.imsip.info/files/imglnks/usimg/8/82/IMSLP122264-PMLP55443-Verdi - Macbeth_vocal_score_.pdf](http://conquest.imsip.info/files/imglnks/usimg/8/82/IMSLP122264-PMLP55443-Verdi_-_Macbeth_vocal_score_.pdf)

The following recitative is firmly grounded in the key of F minor, as the Doctor and the lady-in-waiting converse about whether or not Lady Macbeth will walk that night; in between their dialogues, snippets of the aforementioned themes appear,

signaling her approach. Though the instrumental material is chromatic and thematic, the recitative is tonally grounded; the lady-in-waiting always returns to a tonic or dominant scale degree. The Doctor and the lady-in-waiting are thus branded as normal and sane through their vocal lines, despite their presence in such a dark and abnormal scene.



Ex. 5.3: Third theme, scale outlining the tritone, chromatic descent which sequences downwards; repetition an octave lower.

Image: [http://conquest.imsip.info/files/imglnks/usimg/8/82/IMSLP122264-PMLP55443-Verdi - Macbeth vocal score .pdf](http://conquest.imsip.info/files/imglnks/usimg/8/82/IMSLP122264-PMLP55443-Verdi_-_Macbeth_vocal_score_.pdf)

A miniature iteration of each of the themes from the orchestral introduction occurs; the first signals Lady's entrance, and the third coincides with a stage direction – "Lady depone il lume e si sfrega le mani, facendo l'atto di cancellare qualche cosa" ("Lady puts down the lamp and rubs her hands, in the act of wiping away something"). An exchange between the Doctor and lady-in-waiting explains the motion as Lady's hand-washing, thus directing attention to her body and her actions, instead of her impending song.

As the main orchestral theme of Lady's aria begins with a sudden modulation via half-step from an unaccompanied C (the dominant in F minor) to a strong D \flat major, the ascending scale outlining a tritone stays, albeit in a different manifestation – chromatic and from the raised fourth to the tonic. The only true bridge between the *scena* and the aria, this motion denotes both a musical obsession and a bodily one, as the connection is cemented between the tritone idea and Lady's determined hand-washing (Ex. 5.4). Jane Bernstein (2001) interprets the hand-washing gesture as a kind of metonymy; one does not place focus on Lady's voice, but rather her body in conjunction with the orchestral *ostinato* to such degree that they are virtually synonymous.

The image shows a musical score for a vocal and piano piece. The vocal line is written in a soprano clef with a key signature of three flats (D-flat major). The tempo is marked 'AND.te ASSAI SOSTENUTO' with a quarter note equal to 50. The piano accompaniment is written in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a key signature of three flats. The vocal line includes the lyrics 'U - na macchia... è qui tut - to - ra! via, ti'. The piano accompaniment features a prominent chromatic ascending scale in the right hand and a more active bass line.

Ex. 5.4: D \flat ostinato, chromatic ascent outlining tritone, falling $\flat 6$ to 5.

Image: <http://conquest.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/8/82/IMSLP122264-PMLP55443->

[Verdi - Macbeth vocal score .pdf](#)

Lady Macbeth's D \flat fixation can be interpreted through Verdi's use of coded keys in this particular opera, as discussed in Julien Budden's (1973) eminent collection of Verdi opera analyses. As D \flat is connected extensively with the concept of murder, Lady, obsessively reliving her experiences and thoughts immediately following the murder of king Duncan, is therefore likely to obsessively sing in this key – we see a similar instance in Lady's cavatina, in which she moves from D \flat , murder, to E major, associated with power (p. 312). A descending movement from scale-degree $\flat 6$ to 5 in the English horn perpetuates the sinister atmosphere, recalling Macbeth's falling half-step declamation of "Tutto é finito!" following the murder. The pervasive quality of this falling motif, present throughout the entire scene, has broad subconscious connotations; Lady's mind and her environment are both screaming "It's all over!" and she shuts down in response. Even her vocal lines mimic this half-step motion, from her initial line of "Una macchia"; the foreboding sentiment of horrific finality has seeped into her subconscious, and presents itself when she is at her most vulnerable.

Lady's scene is far from the strict double-aria structures with timid departures as sung by Lucia and Elvira – instead, Verdi uses more compositional freedom to truly convey her hypnosis, and establishes one full, fluid scene, which at first glance has no obvious appearances of formal sections. Julian Budden (1973) analyzes the aria's form as two 18-bar stanzas (two poetic stanzas of eight lines each), a 9-bar section, and a coda of 16 bars, both using four lines of text (see Figure 4). A close translation of Shakespeare's original verse by Piave and Andrea Maffei (for though Piave wrote the majority of the

libretto, the latter completely redid this specific scene, as per Verdi's orders) occupies three double quatrains set in careful *ottonario* meter, which incorporates lines that can be

Fig. 4: Giuseppe Verdi, *Macbeth*, IV, ii

Lady Macbeth – Gran Scena del Sonnambulismo, “Vegliammo invan due notti ... Una macchia”

Theme-based recitative, fluid aria in four distinct sections

Section	Key	Length	Characteristics and/or Beginning Text
Instrumental – Largo			
Opening	F minor	8 bars	Sequenced phrases, clarinet trill
Theme 1	D \flat major	9 bars	Staccato sequenced phrases
Theme 2	F minor	11 bars	Long melody in strings, bassoon arpeggios
Theme 3	F minor	10 bars	A-E \flat tritone focus, chromatic descent
Recitative – Molto Adagio			
Introductory recitative	F minor – V7/V	6 bars	“Vegliammo invan...”
Theme 1 / Recit	D \flat – Fm	6 bars	“Eccola!” Lady Macbeth enters
Theme 2 / Recit	F minor	4 bars	“Oh come gli...”
Theme 3 / Recit	F minor - V	4 bars	“Perche sfrega...” End unison C, fermata

Aria - Andante Assai Sostenuto

A			18 bars	
	a	D \flat major	4-5 bars	“Una macchia...”
	a’		4 bars	“Una... due...”
	b		4-5 bars	“Un guerrier...”
	b’		5 bars	“Chi poteva...”
B			18 bars	
	a	D \flat minor	6 bars	“Che parlo?”
	b	A \flat major	5 bars	“E mai pulire...”
	c	F \flat major	8 bars	“Di sangue umano...”
C			9 bars	
	a	F \flat major	5 bars	“Ohime!” / “Geme?”
	b	D \flat minor	4 bars	“Banco e spento...”
D			16 bars	
	a	D \flat major	8 bars	“Questo ancor?”

b	A \flat major - D \flat major	8 bars	“Oh terror!”
Instrumental Coda	D \flat major	5 bars	Theme I

either split into two parts, or set as one continuous phrase. Verdi's combination of these two techniques, the interjections of the onlookers, and the frequent mismatch between Lady's phrasing and the orchestral music serves to further obscure the form. Lady's lines are fragmented, disconnected, and jump between a high range to a throaty low one; the unrepentive result emulates through-composition but seems to be caught in a purgatory between stylistic recitative and aria. This unusual style of composition calls for an equally rare fach (operatic voice type); Lady Macbeth's arias call for a dramatic coloratura soprano, who has an extremely high range, but powerful mezzo-soprano tendencies as well, to best demonstrate an intense theatricality and undeniable authority. The *Gran Scena* fits into the structure of Budden's formal analysis in terms of tonality, as well. Within sections, the harmonic structure follows relatively normal progressions, but the relationships between the sections' tonal areas are slightly more unconventional. The first 18-bar stanza begins in the solid key of D-flat, moving through an unsettling standard progression of I, IV, and vi chords, her B double-flats foreshadowing a cadential segue into D-flat minor to start the next section. From this point on, the key changes are governed by outside forces – the doctor and lady-in-waiting's first "O terror!" ushers in a movement to the dominant of A-flat major, while their second propels the music into flat mediant territory. Prolonging both a cadence and a solid key change, the orchestra hypnotically adopts and focuses on a C-flat (the fifth scale degree of the next key), while Lady, not cognizant of her surroundings but nevertheless blindly following, recites "Di sangue umano..." on the same pitch, before being thrust into F-flat ("qui sempre.") (Ex. 5.5).

The image shows a page from a vocal score for Verdi's *Macbeth*. It features three vocal parts: DAMA, MED., and LADY, along with piano accompaniment. The key signature is D-flat major (two flats). The score includes the following lyrics and musical markings:

- DAMA:** "DAMA - prò,..... no,mai puli - re io non sa -prò?..."
- MED.:** "Oh terror! Oh terror!"
- Piano:** *ppp* (pianissimo), *ff* (fortissimo), *p* (piano).
- LADY:** "Di san - gue u - ma - no sa qui" (marked with a box containing the number 18).
- LADY:** "sem - pre . A - rabia in - te - ra rimondar sì piccol" (with *con forza* and *pp cupo* markings).

Ex. 5.5: C-flat fixation and move to the chromatic mediant on Lady's "sempre."

Image: http://conquest.imsip.info/files/imglnks/usimg/8/82/IMSLP122264-PMLP55443-Verdi - Macbeth_vocal_score_.pdf

The end of the second stanza employs a cadence in the same key before launching into transitional material that descends chromatically from F-flat to A-flat under a rhythmically off-set repeating pattern in the high strings, leading to an intense tremolo in D-flat minor on Lady's "spento" ("dead") (Ex. 5.6). With a strong return to D-flat major

by way of a perfect authentic cadence, the nine-bar section is ended, and the coda begins, using material similar to the beginning D-flat melody, but without the ascending tritone scale (or the accompanying bodily motion).

The image shows a musical score for Verdi's *Macbeth*. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has a vocal line (labeled 'MED.') and a piano line. The vocal line has the lyrics 'può. Ohi - mè! I panni indossa del - la'. The piano line has the lyrics 'Geme?'. The second system also has a vocal line and a piano line. The vocal line has the lyrics 'notte!.. Or via, ti sbrat - ta!.. Banco è spen - - - to, e dalla'. The piano line has the lyrics 'notte!.. Or via, ti sbrat - ta!.. Banco è spen - - - to, e dalla'. The piano part features a tremolo on the word 'spento'.

Ex. 5.6: Transitional material, off-set orchestra, *D* minor tremolo on “spento”

Image: [http://conquest.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/8/82/IMSLP122264-PMLP55443-Verdi - Macbeth vocal score .pdf](http://conquest.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/8/82/IMSLP122264-PMLP55443-Verdi_-_Macbeth_vocal_score_.pdf)

The $b6$ to 5 motion is now set into context in a neighboring $5 - b6 - 5$ rocking gesture, which Lady imitates, on the natural sixth, on several successive lines (e.g., “A letto, a letto ...”) (Ex. 5.7). Like dreams that incorporate elements of the sleeper’s waking world, Lady’s perception of the motive is slightly distorted, and she does not attempt to seize control of any part of the music. Rather, she continues with it, dreamily following

along in her own realm, through to the end of the coda. A five-bar orchestral conclusion takes the mocking first theme in a subtly altered major quality, in Lady's own key of D \flat .

Ending the scene in F minor, while allowing for a closed, symmetrical, and self-contained structure, would not be consistent with Lady's character and ultimate demise – circling further into her guilt-ridden and catatonic psyche, she cannot be pulled out of her fixation. Deep in her obsessive reliving of a murder, there is no hope of returning to the corrupted but real-world realm of F minor.

The image shows a musical score for Verdi's *Macbeth*. It consists of two systems of music. The first system is for the character 'MED.' (Medea) and the piano accompaniment. The vocal line for MED. has the lyrics: '- cor, non sur - se an - cor, Questo an -'. The piano accompaniment starts with a 'pp' (pianissimo) marking and a measure number '19' in a box. The second system is for the character 'LADY' and the piano accompaniment. The vocal line for LADY has the lyrics: '- cor?.. A let - to, a letto ... Sfar non'. The piano accompaniment continues with a similar melodic material. The key signature is D-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is 4/4.

Ex. 5.7: Beginning of 16-bar coda; cadence in D \flat major, similar melodic material as beginning, 5 – \flat 6 – 5 motion

Image: [http://conquest.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/8/82/IMSLP122264-PMLP55443-Verdi - Macbeth_vocal_score_.pdf](http://conquest.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/8/82/IMSLP122264-PMLP55443-Verdi_-_Macbeth_vocal_score_.pdf)

Several musicologists have commented on the treatment of gender representation in this particular play and its operatic setting; Bernstein (2001) cites the bearded witches, the murdered king Duncan as a classic female victim, and Macbeth's susceptibility to manipulation by the female characters as fundamental examples of defying normative gender roles. Throughout the opera, the locus of control belongs solely to the female characters – the witches and Lady Macbeth govern the majority of the action, with the male roles acting as marionettes of female will. Lady Macbeth, already headstrong and power-hungry from Shakespeare's creation, is enhanced and spun out of control by Verdi and Piave's management of her scenes and role in the murderous plans. Her first utterance is spoken instead of sung, a choice so revolutionary in its lack of melody that the original Lady, Marianna Barbieri-Nini, defiantly sung it as recitative (and was not the last to do so) (Budden, 1973).

Lady's controlling demeanor combats the prim lovestruck soprano stereotype with relish, denying her audience excessive coloratura acrobatics or dreamy cantabiles (though the first premiere was still during the first half of the nineteenth-century, they were not omitted entirely), instead dominating masculine roles such as the leader of the Act II brindisi finale. As stated in Budden (1973), this assignment was much to critics' and directors' chagrin; they would have much preferred it was rewritten for Macduff, and pushed for this change in the 1865 Parisian revision, to which Verdi responded that it would be a dramatic contradiction to both characters (p. 278). Verdi's Lady is a domineering force of nature, while Macduff, a mere comprimario role instead of a primo tenore, does not embody enough charisma to lead a full chorus to a grandiose finale. Also notable is the conspicuous absence of a Lady Macduff; Verdi's conscious choice to omit

her from his opera ensured that Lady had no female competitors, and would therefore capture all the attention and all the power.

Piave's departure from Shakespeare in several instances of the opera is justified to further enhance Lady's character, as exemplified in the beginning of Act II, in which Macbeth, fresh from his realization that Banco's sons are destined to be kings and that more blood must be spilled, is challenged by his wife – "Immoto sarai tu nel tuo disegno?" ("Will you be firm in what you intend?"). However, Shakespeare's original plot regarding this specific development does not involve Lady Macbeth at all – Macbeth alludes to a dark plan involving Banco, but refuses to answer her curious, but not aggressive, "What's to be done?" (3.2.50). Discrepancies between the source and operatic setting are again apparent in the Act III duet "Ora di morte e di vendetta"; in Shakespeare's original, the plot to track and kill Banco's sons and Macduff's family is rapidly concocted by Macbeth alone, paranoid from his conversation with the witches ("The castle of Macduff I will surprise / Seize upon Fife, give to th' edge o' th' sword / His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls / That trace him in his line.") (4.1.171-4). Collaboration with his Lady in Piave and Verdi's setting paints her as a goading partner, more in the realm of the unnatural manipulators, playing him as a pawn ("Morte e sterminio sull'iniqua razza!" / "Death and destruction on the wicked brood!").

Budden (1973) theorizes that the departure from the source in this case was justified, but psychologically incorrect; Macbeth at this point is determined to keep the throne at all costs with no persuasion from his wife necessary, especially considering that he barely needed validation to hire murderers to assassinate Banco a full act earlier. Lady, by this point, should be a "spent force," just two scenes away from her somnambulist

breaks from reality; to bestow her with this newfound strength is completely inappropriate (p. 305). However, opera demands extensive excitement, and further murderous collaboration between the two characters – as well as another number for the prima donna, the sole female role except the witches – would undoubtedly appeal to the audience and critics alike. Furthermore, in this particularly vengeful duet, Macbeth and Lady bear a continuing equilibrium with each other, a devilish partnership that presents itself using imitative lines in increasingly quicker succession; the inclusion of this duet on Verdi's part was important to further their character development and solidify their relationship. Whether or not it is psychologically correct, it is dramatically relevant.

Lady's abrupt plummet into the depths of her mind is striking in its own right because of her characteristics of intense strength, power, and a hunger for social ascent at any cost; however, its introverted presentation makes her madness even more haunting. This madness is not frivolous, man-induced, or hysterical; instead, it is disconnected, wandering, caused by a wracking guilt and depleted energy. Any quick runs are declamatory, and the only cadenza-like material descends slowly downwards to a C4 before reaching, even slower, up towards a D \flat 6, to be sung *un fil di voce*. The vocal lines in Lady's part are less interacting with the orchestra than they are superimposed upon them; this intense disconnect is exacerbated at the quick shift in keys; one gets the sense that Lady is being thrown around. Knowing that she should sing within a key, she subliminally does as she is told without paying any kind of attention to her surroundings. This certain ceding of control, out of character, is the hallmark of Lady's catatonia. She sings, but the days of vocal acrobatics and hysteria are no longer; here is an apathetic madness that reaches to the expansive outer ranges of the voice but is still unable to

express anything besides the past. It is contained, remembering scenarios but unable to articulate her reactions to them.

Lady's recollection of a gruesome murder presents a prime scene to analyze using Tomlinson's (1999) discussion of noumenalism within the Italian operatic repertoire, as past remembrances are a foundational aspect of this theory. The function of mad scenes to this point has been to manipulate the audience away from the surface plot and active representation, and draw them into the subliminal psyche, the forces that render us incapable of control or rationality. These madwomen sing an ongoing scena with semi-lyric recitative styles, accompanied by orchestral music that incorporates recognizable themes from earlier in the opera; their composers emphasized woodwinds for an ethereal quality, and wrote in intensely virtuosic vocal lines. All of these musical madness cues, which inject a kind of otherworldliness into their subjects, have been seen in mad scenes such as Lucia's, but also in scenes of sleep-induced hallucinations, such as Bellini's *La sonnambula* from several years earlier, denoting that composers of this time equated the two types of madness. In a noumenalistic context, the use of these techniques together compile an image of the madwoman's psyche, allowing listeners to hear what she hears, to delve momentarily into her mind and madness; recollections of musical lines portray various memories coming to the surface of her subconscious, while their fragmented nature and orchestral presentation forcibly divides the audience's concept of the memories from the voice and makes it a dramatic other.

Tomlinson (1999) argues that the comparative lyricism of "Una macchia" (as opposed to madness concentrated in recitative, which is rarely melodic or lyrical – see Lucia) allows for a depth of noumenalism, even in its great differences from other scenes

of this kind (p. 95). In fact, what makes Lady's scene so striking are the departures from these established mad scene conventions; by this point, the departed-from-the-norm techniques used by Donizetti and Bellini may have seemed a bit tired, to the point where their once-radical departure had become the norm. Therefore, acrobatics eschewed, Verdi attempts to invoke catatonic realism into Lady's hushed, fragmented lines on a higher level than his predecessors or contemporaries. The fact that a lengthy recitative section is completely lacking and replaced by a short scena introduction of which the madwoman is not even involved speaks to his desire to upend the tradition, as does its avoidance of thematic material. Though the scena is indeed thematic in its presentation of three distinct themes, these themes are never present when Lady herself sings. The focus is instead on two gestures; a small repetitive scalar motion outlining the devilish interval of a tritone in companion with her hands, and the half-step $b6 - 5$ motion so associated with the impending doom of Lady, her husband, and, by the end of the opera, the entire country of Scotland as she knows it.

However, this orchestral voice serves not as a blatant auditory hallucination, such as the imagined voice of a lover, but resists obvious objectification as a representation of an underlying psychic force. This rocking $b6 - 5$ motion, heard throughout the scene and the opera, acts simultaneously as an outside voice and a remembered theme, a repetitive lament of ongoing despair which casts subliminal messages all over the stage, becoming even stronger as it comes to fully imitate Macbeth's original iteration of $5 - b6 - 5$.

Lady's noumenalistic awareness (arguably the only awareness she possesses) is thus linked with her husband's, as he was the original voice of the half-step motion following

both the murder and his hallucinatory dagger scene, which thus cast himself into a noumenal realm as well. Their joint descent into chaos and victimization at the witches' hands is made obvious by her subconscious and the orchestra. Though her entire scene is one of remembrance, this motion is the only outside musical cue that signifies that fact; all the other indications of this being a reliving experience are in Lady's text. As an inherent focus on the past in operatic mad scenes is common and pervasive, Lady's scene is no different. The placement of her mind in the past while composing completely new music for this entire scene, with only tiny cells of a musical idea meant to cue past events, places a great amount of emphasis on the reminiscent musical motion. As the sleepwalking music has not been heard before and will not be heard again, the focus is more on the half-step gesture, which has now essentially achieved the stature of a *leitmotif*. However, it also serves a more sinister, prophetic purpose – one of Verdi's intentions with the falling motive in the English horn was to be a replacement for a death-rattle (Budden, 1973, p. 305).

As her fellow madwomen do, Lady speaks to her love in the last section ("Andiam Macbetto"); however, unlike the loving sighs or frantic pleas directed towards Edgardo or Arturo, Lady is directing him. Still reliving the aftermath of Duncan's murder, she tells Macbeth to go to bed, so as to allay any suspicion. Interestingly, this is the only control that she has in her entire scene; presumably, he obeys her (as he did that night), but there is no audible sign of him. Macbeth does not sing back to her – in fact, besides the half-step motion imitating his "tutto e finito!" line, there is no representation of him anywhere in the scene (and she therefore has no one to manipulate). This absence is conspicuous in comparison to other mad scenes, where a lover is almost always present

in one manifestation or another; however, those madwomen are in such a state because of their abandonment. Lady, on the other hand, has been infected with the power of the witches and the greed of the crown. She has her man, but she has lost her control, her personality, and soon, her life. There is only one noumenal representation in this scene because it is the only one necessary: an omnipresent entity that has taken any control that Lady originally had, and now stands back to gloat – it's all over.

Daniel Albright (2005) offers an interpretation that could be used in conjunction with Tomlinson's, commenting on the witches' influence on the Macbeths throughout the opera. Even from the Act I duet, Lady is becoming privy to the witches' convoluted mind games, and through the course of the plot, though she never interacts with them directly, they shape her music and her character. By goading Macbeth into creating the witches' reality, she takes on a role as a witch; as she incriminates the king's guards by smearing blood on them, she is off-stage for a mere sixteen bars before returning, successful. She works in "witches time," and is being transported to their realm of unnatural manipulation and condemnation (p. 245). The witches and Lady have an unlikely teacher-student relationship; she takes unintentional lessons in their authority and sheer power. However, Lady is mortal – not meant to bear the weight of this incredible power, she breaks. Perhaps because of the abnormal nature of *Macbeth* and the unnaturalness of its characters, the sleepwalking scene is almost an anti-mad-scene in relation to the standard treatment of an unsound mind – Verdi composes a different kind of insanity, catatonia rather than hysterics being the main objective. Lady's music, and her disconnection from it, has spoken: her demonic nature shattered, she no longer belongs in this world.

• • •

This collection of madwomen – Lucia, Elvira, Dinorah, and Lady – find commonalities in their madness, but are portrayed in drastically different manners. The first two are thrust into the same situation; abandoned by their lovers, Lucia and Elvira are left to their own devices and employ trademark musical hysterics in attempts to defy their gendered and societal confines. However, while Lucia hallucinates, Elvira wanders, and however much we cheer for their eventual liberation, neither of them fully breaks their bonds to fly. Dinorah, in direct opposition, is relatively confined within her form, but is so liberated in her narrative nature and the way in which she satirically reacts to operatic confines, that her scene is both a joke and a complete success of feminine liberation. Drastic differences from the previous three scenes are observed in Lady Macbeth's scene; dropping into dreamy catatonia, hers is a defiance of defiance. Lady obsesses over the past, but no longer has the power to control anyone, including herself – instead, she is thrown around by the music before quietly folding to her fate.

Further research into the ottocento repertoire reveals multiple other scenes that may also be analyzed in this nature – several composers present similarly confined and potentially defiant madwomen, such as in Donizetti's *Anna Bolena* (1830), Bellini's *La sonnambula* (1831), and Ambroise Thomas's *Hamlet* (1868). As it is the way of the composer to offer their unique interpretation of whether or not the madwoman embodies the courage to break free of her operatic and societal confines, analysis of these scenes – hermeneutical as well as philosophical – would likely further expand the knowledge of the musical portrayal of the madwoman.

The noumenalistic aspects of the discussed scenes, again different in quality depending on the respective manifestation, offer a hidden layer of meaning beneath the

qualities we can ascribe to musical signifiers. Whether screaming out an unfortunate fate or representing a lost love, the presence of a significant alternate realm of the psyche with which the madwoman can interact allows us, as spectators, to delve deeper into her mind, in accordance to how she chooses to play with the noumenal forces. However, the sheer presence of cracks in the phenomenal/noumenal division is not enough to push her through. To succeed, the madwoman must have the courage and ability to fly. And to be liberated, she must embody the honest desire to defy.

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