Example 8. (page 20, measures 68-70)
the word "go" in short, staccato quarter notes rising in pitch. The highest note of the melody occurs on the first word of the second phrase "on"—"on the light fantastic toe." Thus continuous movement is implied from one line of poetry to the next (example 9a). At this point the entrance of the beautiful sound of the violins on a high G followed by a descending scale in even eighth notes, and climaxed by four rapid sixteenth notes establishes a motive which precisely captures the exuberant momentum of a dance (example 9b).

Milton's vision of dancing feet is transformed aurally when Handel adds the chorus to the scoring. Sopranos sing the words "trip it" on short notes which are immediately imitated by the altos on different pitches. A bright sixteenth note accompaniment in the harpsichord emerges through the staccato eighth note patterns. The sound of the harpsichord juxtaposed on the alternating repeated words presents a dancing musical image (example 10).

Milton's life-long pursuit of inner harmony and peace comes to fruition in Handel's Il Penseroso Arioso, "Come, but keep thy wonted state/With even step and musing gait" (ll. 37-38; sc. 28-29) and the Accompagnato and Chorus, "Join with thee calm Peace and Quiet (l. 45; sc. 29-33). The Arioso commences in a slow, walking tempo (Andante larghetto) maintained by cellos, basses, and harpsichord
as you go, on the light fan-

euch zum Kranz, schwebt im el-fen-

Example 9a. (page 22, measures 15-19)

tas-tic toe.
zar-ten Tanz.

col Fag.

Example 9b. (page 23, measures 20-22)
Example 10. (page 25, measures 56-57)

throughout the movement. The even, steady eighth note "basso continuo" accompaniment enables the listener to feel the meaning of "even step" and "musing gait" (example 11). The advanced vocal technique of Baroque singers enabled Handel to distinguish the chasm between the pensive nun's
8. Arioso

Andante larghetto

Come, come, come, but keep thy wont-ed state, with e-ven
Komm, o komm, wie es ja stets dein Hang, in gleichem

Example 11. (page 28, measures 1-5)
thoughts of a celestial nature and earthly contemplation. He scored notes covering an extensive vocal range for the soprano expressing the concept, "There held in holy passion still" (ll. 41; sc. 29). The soprano begins the vocal solo on a low C and progresses in an ascending melodic line to a high A. The word "passion" embraces the three highest notes of the melodic line and in this manner translates the inspirational thoughts achieved through divine meditation (example 12).

Example 12. (page 29, measures 2-4)

In contrast the descending melody accompanying the words "With a sad leaden downward cast/Thou fix them on the earth as fast" (ll. 43-44; sc. 29-30) defines the
limitations of human comprehension.

Handel's music literally defines the phrase "and hears the Muses in a ring... round about Jove's altar sing" (ll. 47-48, sc. 30-31). He uses vocal melodic figures that rise and fall combined with the steady eighth note accompaniment. Through these devices one can actually sense the slow, circular movement of the nine muses as they rotate "in a ring" (example 13a). "Jove's altar" is exalted by a B♭ held in the soprano voice for several beats (example 13b).

Confidence and harmony are inspired through lack of confusion and dependability. The continuous even beat of the lower strings accompanying the soft harmonious voices of the choir in combination with the slurred notes in the upper strings projects a perfect sense of "... calm Peace and Quiet" (l. 45; sc. 32-33).

Two birds are described in Milton's poems, the cheerful "lark" and the melancholy "nightingale." Handel's musical treatment of the different birds produces genre tone paintings of individual artistry. The lark is associated with Mirth and is characterized in the brilliant L'Allegro Air, "Mirth, admit me of thy crew" (l. 38; sc. 34-38). Handel selects the cheerful harmony of G Major as a setting for this bird, and combines the bright vibrations of the unison violins' E string with the vibrato of the soprano voice in a high register enabling the listener "To hear the lark
Example 13a. (page 31, measures 27-29)

Example 13b. (page 31, measures 30-31)
begin his flight/And singing startle the dull night"
(ll. 41–42; sc. 36–38).

The fragmented bird song is emulated through accurate
musical notation. Unison solo violins repeat a portion of
a theme several times. They play the same note in a declama-
tory fashion, a high D on the E string represented by a
dotted quarter note. This is followed by a drop in the
melodic line of two steps which are then played as sixteenth
notes leading back to the original note D (example 14).

Example 14. (page 34, measures 5–7)

Another imitative device is achieved through the violins
playing a repeated sixteenth note pattern representing a
rapid melodic turn culminating on a note of higher pitch. At
the same time the soprano sings a different rhythmic pattern
of notes; a dotted eighth note followed by a sixteenth note.
The two final notes of each pattern move in opposite melodic
directions and coincide simultaneously. The repetitive,
rhythmic and melodic contrast produced by the voice and
violins increasing in dynamic level to a loud "forte" depicts the cheerful warbling of the "lark" in "his flight," chirping a melody which startles the silence of the "dull night" (example 15).

Example 15. (page 38, measures 67-68)

The morning sound of the lark is cheerfully projected by the constant repetition of "good morrow" by the soprano sung against the melodic motive in the violins (example 16).

Example 16. (page 38, measures 70-71)

A contrasting mood characterizing the nightingale is established in the soprano recitative introducing the song
of "Philomel . . . in her sweetest, saddest plight/Smoothing the rugged brow of Night" (ll. 56-58; sc. 39). Sustained chord progressions modulate through minor keys - e minor, b minor and f# minor expressing a poignant lament. Handel is an imagist in his concrete representation of bird calls. His imaginative scoring for the solo obligato flute, violins, and soprano magically transforms the notation to the exquisite sounds of a nightingale. This effect is created through the rapid alternation of chord tones in octaves and other intervals in varying rhythmic patterns. One of his most frequently occurring rhythms is the repeated longer dotted sixteenth note followed by a short thirty-second note. An even progression of very fast thirty-second notes precedes this rhythm. Rapidly ascending scales and the ornamentation of trills add color to the sound and emulate the warble of a soaring nightingale with precise clarity (Example 17).

The soprano literally woos the "chauntress . . . to hear thy even song" (ll. 63-65; sc. 43). She sings a short eighth note on E which is a pickup to a higher note A. This melodic progression of a fourth expresses the words "I woo." These notes are immediately imitated by the flute implying an intimate interaction between the singer and flute (nightingale). An outburst of bird song ensues in melodic passages performed by alternating flute and violins (example 18a). These instruments sing their melodies in unison while the soprano
continues with her melodic fragment "I woo." She climaxes
the bird song with a descending scale on the words, "to
hear thy even song." An immediate entrance by all
instruments on a quick ascending scale inspires the night-
ingale to soar to the beautiful tone colors of violin
strings and vibrating flute (example 18b).

This Air depicting the nightingale is in "da capo"
form. The form is characterized by a second new musical
idea which is introduced following the performance of
the first section of a piece. After the second idea is
stated the first section is repeated until the composer
brings the entire movement to a close. Following the
first section including the obligato flute and soprano
solos, Handel introduces a contrasting portion illustrating
"And missing thee, I walk unseen/On the dry smooth-shaven
green" (ll. 65-66; sc. 48). A continuous, even pattern of
eighth notes played by all instruments specifically describes
"walk."

Milton's words, "To behold the wand'ring moon/Riding
near her highest noon" (ll. 67-68; sc. 49) enables Handel
to musically translate Milton's philosophy of the harmony
in the music of the spheres, and his concept of measure.
A steady rhythm maintained by the instruments accompanies
the soprano melody moving in stepwise progression in both
whole and half-steps until a climax is achieved on a high A
Example 18a. (pages 42-43, measures 29-32)

solo, of, r, J, ~w+g ~. ~ "7 ~! I woods a-mong, I woo, I ria ins, es zieht zu dir, zu -I 3 ~-~ uI
to hear woo thy c-yan song, derr meth kim dern a head loud.
Example 18b (page 43, measures 33-35)
depicting "highest noon." This masterful combination of rhythm and melody literally portrays the melancholy protagonist observing the steady movement of the moon as it rises to its full height as evening approaches (example 19).

Example 19. (page 49, measures 85-87)

At this point Handel returns to the first section once again depicting the nightingale singing "thy even song" in the most beautiful musical phrases. Since vocal and instrumental technique were greatly advanced during the Baroque period, Handel freely places enormous technical demands on the vocalist as well as flutist. Each is assigned an extremely difficult technical passage in imitation of the other. A superb effect is achieved when both the soprano and flute trill on high notes simultaneously. The soprano
maintains this trill for several beats while the flute performs rapid notes on alternating chord tones. Tremendous breath control is required of the vocalist as she executes these technical passages on the word "even." This scoring denotes a remarkable awareness of the potential of musical sounds (example 20).

At the conclusion of the Air Handel notates "ad libitum." The solo flutist and soprano are thus given the freedom to improvise a bird song and express their individuality and technical mastery. Rapid passages in the treble range of the harpsichord provide a perfect blend of delicate sonority with the voice and flute throughout this Air. The movement illustrates original musical invention conceived by the imagination of a genius.

Milton suggests to Handel the exact instrument to depict the cheerful anticipation of hunters and hounds in the words, "Oft list'ning how the hounds and horn/Cheerly rouse the slumb'ring morn" (ll. 53-54; sc. 52) sung in the L'Allegro Air, "Mirth admit me of thy crew" (l. 38; sc. 50-53). Handel conceives a perfect marriage of resonance and mellowness by combining the $E_b$ french horn with a bass vocalist. He selects a dancing duple meter ($6/8$) to establish a tempo of animated gaiety. An exact hunting call depicted through rising and falling wide intervallic leaps is sung by the bass and reinforced through repetition by the horn soloist.
Declamatory tones expressed in the rhythm of broad dotted quarter notes instantly "rouse the slumb'ring morn" (example 21).

Example 21. (page 53, measures 65-68)

Handel defines the word "echo" with great skill by using a melisma. The bassist sings E♭ chords in different melodic combinations on the syllable "e." These are expressed in a rising tonality in repeated rhythms of a triplet followed by a dotted quarter note. Each rhythmic and melodic progression is echoed exactly by the horn. When the horn and voice finally merge it appears that the echo overtakes its source as Milton's words "echoing shrill" are concluded with resonant reality (Example 22).

A charming Il Penseroso Air for soprano and strings perfectly interprets "Oft on a plat of rising ground/I hear the far-off curfew sound/Over some wide-watered shore/Swinging slow with sullen roar" (ll. 73-76; sc. 54-55).
Example 22. (page 53, measures 69-81)
The swinging motion of the water is represented by a descending melodic line of slurred notes in thirds played by the violins. A distant sound of the curfew is emulated by pizzicato (plucked) notes occurring on the first and third beat of a measure in unison cellos, violas, and cembalo. The deep sounds of the lower strings in combination with the articulation of the cembalo creates an imitation of muted, remote sounds (example 23).

Example 23. (page 54, measures 5-9)

Handel describes the pleasures of L'Allegro in the country in a lilting Siciliana Air of a pastorale nature. A siciliana is a 17th or 18th century dance in medium 12/8 tempo. It employs dotted rhythms and a flowing melodic line depicting the "ploughman" whistling, "milkmaid" singing, "mower" whetting his scythe, and "shepherd" telling his tale (sc. 59-60).
Skillfully blending the multi-colors in his musical palette, Handel paints an exquisite genre portrait of a rustic sunshine holiday in the Air and chorus, "Or 'let the merry bells ring round!" (l. 93; sc. 66-78). The tempo, Andante allegro, is marked by a rapid basic beat of four notes to a measure. The entire piece is based on descending scale passages through which Handel achieves thematic unity. His economy in using materials to achieve effects marks his creative genius. An initial statement of the theme by the soprano in a descending scale of even eighth notes establishes the merry mood. This scale is immediately imitated by the unison upper strings and tinkling glockenspiel which combine their treble registers and create brightness of sound. Each repetition of the first theme occurs in contrasting dynamics of loud (f) or soft (p) intensity (example 24). It is later played in a rhythm twice as fast in sixteenth notes. The felicitous spirit is reinforced through melodic repetition and rhythmic acceleration (example 25).

Gaiety is also expressed through rhythmic variety. The soprano adopts a new dancing rhythm of a dotted eighth note followed by a sixteenth note defining "And the jocund rebecks sound" (l. 94; sc. 67). The violins representing rebecks) play a triplet figure which occurs simultaneously with the dotted rhythm in the vocal melodic line. When the soprano sings "Dancing in the chequered
Andante allegro

Example 24. (page 66, measures 1-3)

Example 25. (page 67, measures 8-10)

Or let the merry bells ring round.

Horch, wie das Glockenspiel er-klingt.
shade" (l. 96; sc. 68) the second note of the triplet played by the violins is subdivided into sixteenth notes, and this rhythm is constantly repeated in the upper strings. When these various rhythms are played and sung simultaneously the melodies literally dance (example 26). At times the soprano sings a melisma on the word "dancing" and changes her rhythmic pattern joining the upper strings in a unison dotted rhythm. This varied rhythmical treatment implies several different dance patterns.

Following the Air for soprano and instruments, the chorus joins the revelry joyfully interpreting "And young and old come forth to play/On a sunshine holiday/Till the livelong daylight fail" (ll. 97-99; sc. 70-73). The full-bodied chorus adopts the themes and rhythms animating the first section and brings this "sunshine holiday" celebration to a climax. It repeats the words "till the livelong daylight fail" several times in a loud (forte) dynamic level thereby establishing a feeling of excitement.

An impressive color is achieved when the chorus firmly sings the first syllable "day" and makes a sudden dimuendo to a soft "piano," which sound continues to decrease as the chorus sings "daylight fail." This musical effect enables one to "feel" the approach of twilight. After a short rest Handel creates a moment of unsurpassed beauty. He sets the next phrase in slower moving quarter notes in a d minor
Example 26. (page 68, measures 23-25)
tonality. Commencing on a high A the melodic line gracefully descends sung softly by the chorus in harmony illustrating "Thus past the day, to bed they creep" (sc. 74). The nobility of this melody captures memories of a wonderful holiday (example 27a).

Example 27a. (page 74, measures 51-53)

Soft voices "whisp'ring" in the chorus joined by an undulating, legato slurred sixteenth note figure in the violins perfectly emulates the sound of "whisp'ring winds" (Example 27 b).
Balance and unity in this movement is established at the conclusion when Handel assigns a different descending melody to the words, "Thus past the day, to bed they creep/By whispering winds soon lulled to sleep (ll. 115-116; sc. 77). The chorus sings the descending scale passage in quarter notes delaying melodic progression through repeated articulation of the same note. Slower rhythm combined with repeated notes creates a feeling of smoothness and peace which accompanies the relaxation preceding sleep. An appearance of a dissonant chord on each repeated note resolving to a consonant pitch defines the alternating tension and relaxation of approaching repose (example 28).
Thus past the day, to bed they creep, by whisp'ring winds soon lull'd to 

Wind ein Schlummer

Thus past the day, to bed they creep, by whisp'ring winds soon lull'd to 

Wind ein Schlummer

Thus past the day, to bed they creep, by whisp'ring winds soon lull'd to 

Wind ein Schlummer

Example 28. (page 77, measures 61-65)
The cheerful tonality of the D Major key established at the beginning of the Air characterizes the joyful daytime activities of the shepherds, and the related key of d-minor which brings the movement to a close depicts the weariness and rest experienced at the end of day leading to slumber.

Milton believed the harmony of music could be emulated thereby providing peace for man's restless soul. For this reason he loved music and apprehended its sounds in the world around him. In the hauntingly expressive Air, "Hide me from Day's Garish eye" (l. 141; sc. 110-111) Handel adopted the wisdom of George Herbert's observations in Jordan II stating, "There is in love a sweetnesse readie penn'd: Copie out onely that and save expense (ll. 17-18)." The sublime beauty of this movement emerges because of the simplicity of musical form.

A sustained soprano solo in a slow (Largo) tempo accompanied by strings on a soft dynamic level (pianissimo) creates an atmosphere of peace. "While the bee with honied thigh/That at her flow'ry work doth sing/And the waters murmuring" (ll. 143-144; sc. 110) are the sounds of Nature Milton describes which "Entice the dewy-feathered Sleep" (l. 146). These sounds are imitated by the upper string.

---

instruments which constantly play slurred notes in stepwise melodic progression upward and downward. Thus a soothing musical rhythm is produced reminiscent of a rocking cradle. Handel translates "And let some strange mysterious dream/Wave at his wings in airy stream/Of lively portraiture displayed" (ll. 147-149; sc. 110-111) in slurred, repeated intervals of fourths or fifths. The notes are played alternately; first the upper note of the interval and then the lower note. Soon the melodic line is alternated, and the violins play the lower note first and then the upper note. Throughout this harmonic progression the soprano sings a lovely solo slowly ascending to a high A and descending in eighth notes more rapidly on the word "eyelids." This is all accomplished very smoothly and delicately portrays a dream hovering on Il Penseroso's eyelids (example 29).

Music is omni-present in Milton's phrases, "And as I wake, sweet music breathe/Above, about, or underneath" (ll. 150-152; sc. 111). Handel interprets the ideal harmony surrounding Il Penseroso in a unison theme expressed by the violins and soprano supported by harmonizing string instruments. A flowing triple meter of half notes followed by quarter notes is synchronized with the iambic measure of the poetry. The vocalist's breathing is perfectly coordinated with the bow changes in the string instruments. This simultaneous rhythmic and harmonic balance of poetry and music denotes the peace experienced by Il Penseroso as he is
Example 29. (page 111, measures 37-44)
Milton was profoundly religious and he believed man could only acquire inner peace and harmony when his thoughts were attuned to God's eternal truths, and that the study and practice of these truths must be constant and motivated by love. These concepts are sung by Il Penseroso in a Recitative, "But let my due feet never fail/To walk the studious cloister's pale" (ll. 155-56; sc. 141). Milton selects the organ as the ideal instrument to express his sublime thoughts. Handel's skill as an organist enables him to write for this instrument with sensitive understanding and reveal the celestial music inherent in Milton's words. John Dryden describes the "holy love" which the organ inspires in "A Song for St. Cecilia's day:"

   But O! what art can teach,
   What human voice can reach
   The sacred organ's praise?
   Notes inspiring holy love,
   Notes that wing their heav'ly ways
   To mend the choirs above (ll. 42-47). 47

The organ and cello, used as a basso continuo instrument, play sustained chords while the soprano soloist sings Milton's words expressing his love of the religious atmosphere of a church, "And love the high embowed roof/With

47Bredvold, The Best of Dryden, p. 301.
antique pillars massy proof/And storied windows richly dight/
Casting a dim religious light" (ll. 157-160; sc. 141). The
effect is electrifying when Handel adds the chorus to the
organ in response to the thoughts "There let the pealing
organ blow/To the full-voiced quire below" (ll. 161-162;
sc. 141). Handel's mastery of the German style is evidenced
in this magnificent chorale. A short interlude of organ
music enhances each sentence sung by the chorus.

Milton's Il Penseroso expresses the idea that the most
intense light man can experience is the illumination of
knowledge perceived through religious contemplation. These
thoughts are embodied in the phrases that refer to the
sound of the organ and choir which "... may with sweet-
ness through mine ear/Dissolve me into ecstasies/And bring
all heav'n before mine eyes" (ll. 164-166; sc. 142). The
beautiful, harmonious voices of the choir singing the chorale,
accompanied by the rich sonority of the organ, are effectively
contrasted by an unaccompanied solo in the soprano. The
words "into ecstasies" are emphasized by a melodic leap of
an interval of a sixth, and climaxd by an even greater
melodic leap of an octave which defines "all heav'n before
mine eyes." Through the exquisite treatment of the melodic
line Handel momentarily captures the divine revelation which
Milton envisions (example 30).

Following the soprano solo a brief fugue on the organ is
Example 30. (page 142, measures 14-19)
improvised. A fugue is the most advanced form of counterpoint. According to Winton Dean on the record jacket of L'Allegro, Ed Il Penseroso, "... the fugue inserted here incorporates Handel's own working of the subject, also in the Fitzwilliam Museum."  

Handel's superb treatment of rhythm to denote emotions is evidenced throughout this composition. He employs slower, steady tempos to express contemplation, nobility, and peace. A lovely cello solo maintains a smooth rhythm in even eighth notes throughout the Air, "And may at last my weary age/Find out the peaceful hermitage" (ll. 167-168; sc. 143-144). A wise elderly person is serene, and the steadiness of the rhythm reflects this mood. The music depicts the flow of an aged person's thoughts, uninterrupted by worldly cares, which are tempered by "old experience" and "attain... something like prophetic strain (ll. 73-74).

The concluding words of Milton's Il Penseroso, "These pleasures, Melancholy, give/And I with thee will choose to live" (ll. 175-176; sc. 144-152), are glorified by Handel in a magnificent double fugue for chorus and orchestra. A double fugue is an imitative composition based on two melodies or subjects. Each of these two subjects appears and reappears in different voices at different times, and Handel uses them imaginatively in various combinations.

The sense of variety he thus creates could be related to the variety of pleasures experienced by Il Penseroso (example 31). Toward the end of the movement Handel fragments his theme into smaller motivic units which are passed from one voice to another imitatively (example 32). In the concluding five measures the imitation ceases as the voices unite in rhythmic unison creating a mood of grandeur and majesty.

All of the "delights" of L'Allegro are brilliantly depicted in the Air and Chorus, "These delights if thou canst give/Mirth, with thee I mean to live" (ll. 150-151, sc. 123-140). No listener can be immune to the contagious joy created in this movement. The brilliant sounds of the trumpets, oboes, violins, and tenor voice express happiness. A bright mood is established at once by a loud declamatory quarter note on D announcing the key of D Major. This note is followed by a rest, and the solo trumpet then plays the theme in staccato notes that will continue throughout the movement. The upper instruments imitate this theme which is followed by passages of rapid sixteenth notes giving an effect of gaiety, animation, and warmth (example 33). A cheerful effect is achieved when the solo tenor sings a melisma on the word "delights" in unison with the solo trumpet. The melodic line moves rapidly in repeated sixteenth notes which alternate in stepwise progression (example 34).
Example 31. (page 145, measures 12-15)
Example 32. (page 151, measures 60-62)
Example 34 (page 125, measures 19-22)
The introduction of the chorus repeating Milton's phrases and Handel's bright melodic subjects reinforces the joyful mood of L'Allegro. The vocalists and other instruments emulate the short, staccato sound of the trumpets throughout the piece. Following the choral interlude, a solo trumpet once again states the original theme. As the first trumpet trills brightly on a high A, a second trumpet repeats the theme. Soon all the instruments enter maintaining the felicitous mood. At this point Handel introduces the powerful, booming sound of the drum which emphasizes the already familiar staccato rhythm, and the movement comes to an exuberant climax.

Milton, one of the greatest poets to sing of man's experiences, realized that music and poetry are inseparable. A thorough musicianship enabled him to express his noble thoughts in phrases possessing lyrical beauty, proportion, and rhythm. Unfortunately Handel was born after Milton's death, yet Milton apprehended the creation of sympathetic music for his concepts which would together penetrate the confusion and discord in man's spirit and reveal an undiscovered inner peace. Milton prophesied the release of "the abler soul" through the union of music and poetry when he wrote in L'Allegro:

And ever against eating cares
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce
In notes with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton heed and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony; (ll. 135-44)

Handel, England's greatest musician, was the ideal composer to interpret Milton's work. He understood the singer-poet, Milton, because of his similar musical education, environment, and sensitivity to life. Handel's vast comprehension of music and genius enabled him to precisely define the verbal imagery of Milton's thoughts through imaginatively inspired musical phrases. Such talent brings to mind Shakespeare's instructions to actors:
"... Suit the action to the word, the word to the action, with this special observance, that you o'er step not the modesty of nature."

By substituting the term "musical phrase" for the word "action," the famous advice is literally followed by Handel for he suits the "musical phrase" to the "word," and the "word" to the "musical phrase." This perfect blending of music and poetry becomes "the abler soul" which...

---

inspires the listener to apprehend those rare moments of truth and beauty Handel and Milton perceived.

A sensitive description of the spiritual edification experienced by an observer to the union of two minds in creative sympathy is expressed in John Donne's words:

He (though he knew not which soul spake,  
Because both meant, both spake the same)  
Might thence a new concoction take,  
And part far purer than he came (ll. 25-28).  

In conclusion, Milton's yearning to capture man's mind and heart in poetic song came to fruition through Handel's musical artistry. The conception, L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, created by the united talents of these masters transcends time and immortalizes the universal experiences of men throughout all ages of history.

A Selected Bibliography


-91-

