Richard Strauss: Brentano-Songs op. 68

Selected songs for coloratura soprano

Master’s Thesis

Written by Veera Niiranen

Supervisors:
Professor Annemarie Zeller
Professor Peter Revers

Graz, 2015
Table of content

1. Richard Strauss ........................................................................................................3
   1.1 Richard Strauss as a lied composer ..................................................................6

2. Clemens Brentano ....................................................................................................8

3. Brentano-songs op. 68 ..........................................................................................10
   3.1 An die Nacht ....................................................................................................11
      3.1.1 Translation of the poem ...........................................................................11
      3.1.2 Analysis of the song ..............................................................................12
   3.2. Ich wollt' ein Sträusslein binden .....................................................................15
      3.2.1 Translation of the poem ...........................................................................15
      3.2.2 Analysis of the song ..............................................................................16
   3.3. Säusle, liebe Myrthe! ....................................................................................19
      3.3.1 Translation of the poem ...........................................................................20
      3.3.2 Analysis of the song ..............................................................................21
   3.4. Amor ................................................................................................................26
      3.4.1 Translation of the poem ...........................................................................26
      3.4.2 Analysis of the song ..............................................................................27

4. Sources ..................................................................................................................33
1. Richard Strauss

Richard Georg Strauss was born 11 June 1864 in Munich, Germany. He was a conductor and a composer of the late romantic and modern eras. Strauss is well known for his operas, songs and tone poems.

Richard started composing when he was only six years old. His first composition was “Schneiderpolka” for piano. He also composed two songs during the same year (1870), "Weinachtslied" and "Einkehr". Strauss was inspired to write songs by his aunt Johanna Pschorr, to whom he dedicated many of his early songs. Strauss composed his first choral work “Der weisse Hirsch” 1871, first orchestral piece Hochlands Treue 1873, an overture for a Singspiel and first chamber music piece Zwei kleine Stücke in 1873 for piano and violin. Before his 10th birthday he had composed over 30 pieces, which included songs, piano pieces, choral, chamber and orchestral works and two études for solo horn. Strauss received lessons in piano and violin. He was also taught composition and music theory by conductor Friedrich Meyer. Under his influence Strauss composed a Festmarch in E♭. The composition was published in 1881 and became his Op.1.

Richard’s father was also musician. He played the French horn in the Munich Court Opera and was a great admirer of Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven. As a result these composers had a major influence on Richard’s early compositions. In 1874 Strauss heard Lohengrin and Tannhäuser from Wagner. Strauss's musically conservative father prohibited him from studying Wagner's music. It was not until the age of 16 that Strauss was able to obtain a score of Tristan und Isolde and could immerse himself into Wagner’s music. Franz Strauss had a crucial impact on his son's developing taste, not the least in Strauss's lasting affection towards the horn.

In 1882 Strauss performed his Violin Concerto in D minor for the first time. He accompanied his teacher, Benno Walter, playing a piano reduction of the orchestral part. During the same year, he

---

1 Walter Werbeck (ed.): Richard Strauss Handbuch, Kapellmeister und Dirigent by Roswitha Schlötterer-Traimer (p 18-21)
3 http://www.richardstrauss.at 13.1.2015
started his philosophy - and art history - studies at the University of Munich. As he gained more experience in conducting an orchestra, he dropped out from the university. Richards's most important acquaintance was Hans von Bülow, who conducted the Meiningen orchestra. Bülow had been enormously impressed by Strauss's Serenade for wind instruments, which he had composed at the age of 16. Strauss learned conducting by observing Bülow’s orchestral rehearsals. Bülow commissioned Strauss's *Suite for 13 Winds* and asked Strauss to conduct its premiere in Munich in November 1884. After a successful performance, Bülow offered Strauss a post as an assistant conductor in the Meiningen orchestra. Strauss's success as a conductor was as successful as his work as a composer.

Strauss met composer Alexander Ritter in Meiningen. Ritter encouraged Strauss to abandon classical forms and look towards Richard Wagner, whom Strauss had secretly admired for years. He also advised Strauss to express his musical ideas in the medium of programmatic composition, as Franz Liszt had done. In 1889, Strauss conducted the debut of his symphonic poem *Don Juan*. After the performance the audience announced him as Wagner's heir. 

Strauss's compositions are very energetic. They are often built on short, striking motives. He was also able to compose melodies that are very emotional. His style is very majestic, but he lightens the mood with humoristic fragments. Strauss's career can be divided in two phases. During his earlier career he concentrated on concert music. He composed several tone poems under the influence of Liszt and Wagner. His most famous tone poems are *Don Juan* (1889), *Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche* (1895) and *Also sprach Zarathustra* (1896). Around 1905 he devoted himself almost fully to opera. His first opera, *Guntram* (1894), had minimal success. Strauss's third opera, *Salome* (1905), was one of the biggest cultural scandals in the 20th century. Its erotic-religious theme and modern sound stirred anger and admiration. His most famous operas are *Elektra* (1909), *Der Rosenkavalier* (1911) and *Ariadne auf Naxos* (1912). As a composer Strauss worked fast and effortless.

---

4 http://www.richardstrauss.at
5 http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/568524/Richard-Strauss
6 Walter Werbeck (ed.): Richard Strauss Handbuch; Strauss Bilder by Walter Werbeck (p 2-17), p 3, 4
In 1894 Strauss got married to singer Pauline de Ahna (1863 – 1950). Pauline was known for her quick-temper and she also maintained a strict discipline at home. Nevertheless, the marriage was a happy one and it lasted until the death of Richard. Pauline’s wild temper was an important source of inspiration to Richard, especially for Ein Heldenleben (life of a hero) and Symphony Domestica. Throughout the years Strauss composed mainly for sopranos and Pauline and Richard often performed together. Pauline and Richard had one child, Franz, born 1897. Richard Strauss died 8 September 1949 in Garmisch-Partenkirchen at the age of 85.\(^8\)

\(^8\) http://www.richardstrauss.at 13.1.2015
1.2 Richard Strauss as a lied composer

Strauss was a great melodist. He wrote over 200 songs and more than half of them were composed between 1899 and 1901 when his wife Pauline was giving recitals. After Pauline retired 1906, it took ten years for Strauss to start composing songs again.\(^9\)

Strauss wrote songs in a more operatic manner than most of the other composers of his time. He used expansive vocal lines, plenty of coloraturas and dramatic challenges for the voice \(^{10}\). His input to the Lied was his development of orchestral accompaniment, and his orchestral songs are his most popular songs, such as *Vier letzte Lieder* (1948) and *Brentano-songs* (1918).\(^{11}\) Strauss was probably more addicted to vocal word painting than any other Lied - composer. He used low notes to paint words about darkness, night and death and high notes for sunlight, heaven and springing.\(^{12}\).

Strauss's lieder were often more difficult than what the ambitus would indicate. There are many difficult leaps, especially high tessituras for an extended phrase, complex, overlapping rhythms, high tessituras within the ambitus.\(^{13}\).

Strauss's lieder can be divided into three categories based on the vocal lines; declamatory, dramatic and lyrical. The declamatory category approaches songs speech-like, accenting the natural conjugation of the words. Interrogative lines are most likely set in a *parlando* style.\(^{14}\) The dramatic category has extensive contrasts of vocal rhythms and ranges, sudden changes of style, and enthusiastic outburst. In the dramatic songs Strauss was able to achieve independent vocal lines and accompaniment, and some times rhythmic conflict between them. His dramatic songs were often built on a handful of motives that he altered along the song, as he would do when composing

\(^{10}\) Lorraine Gorrel: The Nineteenth Century Lied, Portland, 1993, p. 247, 332
\(^{11}\) Michael Kennedy: Richard Strauss, p.186
\(^{12}\) Barbara A. Peterson, Ton und Wort, Michigan, 1980, p. 55
\(^{13}\) Barbara. A. Peterson, Ton und Wort, p.50
\(^{14}\) Barbara A. Peterson, Ton und Wort, p. 45
Strauss's songs are in the lyrical category. In the lyrical songs Strauss varies syllabic declamations with short melismas and ornamentation. As ornamentation Strauss uses portamenti, appoggiaturas, turns, trills, and grace notes. He uses these elaborations to illustrate a word by painting it with certain movements or colours or to underline an important word.  

Strauss often used poems with sexual overtones, giving a more realistic view of love and the world. The content of the text seemed to be a more important stimulus to Strauss than its form, meter or rhyme scheme based on his own comments about his songs. Most of Strauss's songs had strophic texts. He almost never took shortcuts composing verses alike: even refrains had modifications. Strauss almost always stayed true to the poet’s texts, but the small changes he made, were because of repetition of text and changing plural and singular, substituting synonyms, changing word order, and minor modifications in meaning. In most of Strauss's songs, the text settings of the vocal lines are rhythmically so varied that the original meter of the poem is blurred.
2. Clemens Brentano

Clemens Brentano was born 9 September 1778 in Ehrenbreitstein, Germany. Brentano grew up in Frankfurt and in Koblenz. He studied mining in Halle and medicine in Jena, but failed to complete either study. During that time Jena was the centre of the early Romantic Movement and many known authors and poets lived there. He also met Weimar Classicism representatives such as J.W.Goethe, C.M. Wieland and J.G.v.Herder in Jena. Fulfilling his literary tendencies became ever more important to him. Inspired by the environment, he began his career as an author. In 1801 he met Achim von Arnim (1781–1831), with whom he would later publish the three-volume collection of folk songs Des Knaben Wunderhorn. In 1803 Brentano married Sophie Mereu, to whom he dedicated his first important poem “Godwi”(1801). “Godwi” was a story of a wealthy young man and his adventures. It was an experimental piece where the author himself entered the story as one of the characters. His further works were a drama called Ponce de Leon (1801) and a ballad Zu Bacharach am Rheine, which was a fragmentary continuation to Godwi. This ballad was about a young, beautiful Lore Lay, betrayed by her sweetheart and accused of bewitching men and being the cause of their death. In 1824, Heinrich Heine was inspired by Brentano's ballad and wrote Die Loreley, which is one of his most famous poems. 1803 Brentano and Armin started their cooperation with Des Knaben wunderhorn, a three-volume collection of German folk songs and poetry. This became Brentano's most famous work.

Brentano’s wife died in 1806 after the birth of their third child. He moved frequently after his wife's death. He lived in Berlin, Bohemia and Vienna. Restless by nature, he also spent some years wandering the countryside with his guitar. He was remarried in 1807 to Auguste Bussman, but the marriage didn’t last and the couple divorced in 1814.

21 http://fi.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clemens_Brentano 4.3.2015
22 http://biography.yourdictionary.com/clemens-brentano 23.3.2015
23 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lorelei 23.3.2015
24 http://han.kug.ac.at/han/KUuGL/eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?sid=34e073ed-33e0-4d81-8b77-e359d8ed9375@sessionmgr114&vid=2&hid=114&bdata=JnNpdGU9UG9ZWRzLWxpdcmU=#db=ers&AN=89872940 24.3.2015
25 http://www.hyperion-records.co.uk/c.asp?c=C3015 24.3.2015
In 1818 after his relentless travels, Brentano isolated himself to a Roman Catholic monastery for six years. He converted to Catholicism and devoted himself copying Sister Anne Catherine Emmerich's dictations. After her death in 1824 Brentano published *The Dolorous Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ* based on her journals and devoted himself to religion. From 1833 to 1842 Brentano lived in Münich, where he met painter Emilie Linder and wrote many erotic poems about her. 26

Clemens Brentano died 28 July 1842 in Aschaffenburg, Bavaria (now in Germany). His most known works are *Der Knaben Wunderhorn* (1805), *Geschichte vom braven Kasperl und dem schönen Annerl* (1817), the fairy tale *Gockel, Hinkel und Gackeleia* (1811). 27

26 http://www.clemens-brentano.com 23.3.2015
3. Brentano-songs op. 68

Between 1906 and 1918 Strauss didn't find any time to compose songs. He was fully concentrated composing operas. After his opera *Frau ohne Schatten* (1917) he began to immerse himself again to songs.\(^{28}\) The will to start composing songs again was a result of the following: during Christmas 1917 Strauss spent his time reading the prose and poetry of Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano and he'd become inspired by the voice of Elisabeth Schumann (1888-1952). He decided to use six poems from Brentano and compose them Elisabeth Schumann in mind.\(^{29}\)

The Brentano-songs were his most significant song cycle until the creation of the *Vier letzte Lieder* (1946-1948). Strauss composed the songs early in 1918 and the cycle contains six songs: 1. An die Nacht, 2. Ich wollt ein Sträusslein binden, 3. Säusle, liebe Myrte, 4. Als mir dein Lied erklang, 5. Amor and 6. Lied der Frauen. The song cycle lasts approximately 26 minutes. The songs are very demanding for a singer and for a pianist containing coloraturas, high tessituras, difficult leaps, sudden chromatic and harmonic changes.

“Op. 68 in particular demands a versatile voice capable of both elaborate coloratura and broad sustaining power.”\(^{30}\)

Strauss was inspired by Brentano's poems vast imagery and he produced songs, which were full of virtuoso vocal writing and complex piano accompaniments that are clearly influenced by his many years of writing operas. Strauss rarely used poems from a single poet and this was one of the few where all the poems come from the same author.\(^{31}\)

Elisabeth Schumann performed the cycle just once, in 1922. Only four of the songs were perfect for her light coloratura voice, so it wasn't a surprise that she was not very keen on performing the cycle as a whole piece. Especially writing *Lied der Frauen* op 68 nro 6, it seems that Strauss had a totally different voice in mind.\(^{32}\) For this thesis I chose only four of the six Brentano – songs for the same reason. *Als mir dein Lied erklang* and *Lied der Frauen* are very demanding for coloratura soprano.

\(^{28}\) Michael Kennedy: Richard Strauss p. 192-193  
\(^{29}\) http://www.chandos.net/pdf/CHAN%2010236.pdf 24.3.2015  
\(^{30}\) Barbara A. Peterson, Ton und Wort, p.26  
\(^{31}\) Michael Kennedy: Richard Strauss p. 192-193  
\(^{32}\) http://www.hyperion-records.co.uk/dc.asp?dc=D_CDA67746 5.1.2015
They both demand great stamina and strong legato, which usually is harder for coloratura soprano. Also the order of the songs creates some difficulties; singing *Amor* between *Dein Lied erklang* and *Lied der Frauen* feels almost impossible because of their very different texture.

Strauss was aware the songs he had written were a masterpiece. He had signed an agreement with publisher Bote & Bock in 1906, which obligated him to give his next set of songs to them. During that time his relationship with Bote & Bock was uneasy. Strauss decided to keep the Brentano songs for himself and offered them a song cycle he composed after Brentano-songs, called *Krämerspiegel* and when it was rejected, the *Ophelia-Lieder*.  

3.1 An die Nacht

3.1.1 Translation of the poem

*Heilige Nacht! Heilige Nacht!*
*Holy Night! Holy Night!
Sterngeschloßner Himmelsfrieden!*  
*Starfilled Heavens peace!*
*Alles, was das Licht geschieden,*
*Everything what the light divides,*
*Ist verbunden,*
*is connected,*
*Alle Wunden*
*all wounds*
*Bluten süß im Abendrot.*
*Bleed sweetly in the afterglow.*

*Bjelbogs Speer, Bjelbogs Speer*
*Bjelbogs spear, Bjelbogs spear*
*Sinkt ins Herz der trunken Erde,*  
*sinks in the heart of the drunken earth,*
*Die mit seliger Gebärde*
*which with blessed gestures*
*Eine Rose*
*a rose*
*In dem Schoße*
*in the bosom of the*
*Dunkler [Lüfte] niedertaucht.*
*Dark breeze deep immerses.*

*Holy Night, chaste Bride, chaste Bride!*

33 http://www.hyperion-records.co.uk/dc.asp?dc=D_CDA67746 5.1.2015
Deine süße Schmach verhülle, 
Veil your sweet shame, 
Wenn des Hochzeitsbechers Fülle 
when the wedding goblets filled, 
Sich ergießet; 
overflowing; 
Also fließet 
so runs 
In die brünstige Nacht der Tag! 
The day into the heated night. 3

1 Originally Brentano wrote Lüste which means
2 This “Heilige Nacht” was added by Strauss
3 Translation by Veera Niiranen

3.1.2 Analysis of the song

This poem by Clemens Brentano is somewhat an erotic poem about a bride's wedding night. The first verse is romantic and comforting. It has the feel of a mother comforting her child with a hymn about the consummation of marriage and the love binding the married couple. The second verse has more action in music and in the content of the text. Here Bjelbogs (a Slavic god of light) spear sinks into the heart of the drunken earth and a rose emerges from the depths of earth. This clearly implies what really happens during the wedding night.

In the third verse we come to the present moment. The day turns into a heated wedding night as the cups are overflown, which means that the wedding celebration has reached its end. The guests are drunk and tired and the married couple can retreat into their bridal suit.

This poem has many sexual overtones, which Strauss often used, demonstrating a more realistic view of love.”Alles was das Licht geschieden ist verbunden” is a romantic view of love where everything is connected. ”Alle wunden bluten süß im Abendrot” clearly implies the husband taking the brides virginity.

In the first measures Strauss introduces the main motive that is used in various forms throughout the song. This motive can be seen in the vocal part and in the accompaniment (Examples 1 and 2). 34

Example. 1

Example 2.

Strauss changed Brentano's poem so that it would fit to his motive; Brentano wrote originally “Heil'ge” instead of “heilige”, “Zücht'ge” instead of “züchtige”, “Brünst'ge” instead of “brünstige”. He changed the words from two-syllable conjunctions to three-syllable words. The motive gives the song a lullaby like expression, which makes me think that the narrator in this song is the mother of the bride singing to her daughter.

The song starts in Eb-major and without prelude. The first two measures are in I-VI-I-VI. Then in “Sternengeschlossner Himmelsfriede” Strauss changes the tonality to Cb-major, which gives a very calm and peaceful feeling to describe “Himmelsfriede”. Strauss changes the main motive from song melody to piano in measure 6 “Alles was das Licht...” He highlights words like “Wunden” and “bluten” with suspension to create a more chromatic feel.

The first verse is very calm: it's not until measure 14, which leads to second verse, that there is some agitation takes place. Strauss exemplifies this with a crescendo and rising triplet pattern. This leads to measure 16, which should be played in forte, where “Bjelbogs Speer sinkt ins hertz der trunken Erde”. The rhythm in the voice, a dotted quarter-note, eight-note and half-note, gives a feeling of thrust. The second verse is also the most dramatic of the three verses. In the second verse Strauss especially wanted to highlight the word “Rose”, with an octave jump in the singer’s melodic line. (Example 3)

Example 3.

The third verse Strauss starts with the same melodic pattern as in the first verse. This time it is written in A♭, subdominant to E♭. In measure 34, “Heilige Nacht”, is written in forte, the following “Züchtige Braut”, Strauss writes in piano, to describe the word “Züchtige”, chast. The chords are rather the same, but they are written lower and with fewer notes.

The third verse, from the measure 36 to measure 46, has an intensity and pull which is not released until in measures 46's “Tag” in C major and the sound is particularly bright (Example 4). The measures in between have constant chromaticism that changes with every chord. In measure 52 Strauss returns to the basic motive in A-minor in the piano. Then the motive changes to the melody in voice and the piano has the same majestic arpeggios as in the beginning. After intensive chromaticism Strauss returns to a calming cadence in tonic E♭ major.

Example 4.
3.2 Ich wollt ein Sträusslein binden

3.2.1 Translation of the poem

Ich wollt ein Sträußlein binden,
I wanted to bind a garland,
Da kam die dunkle Nacht,
but then came the dark night,
Kein Blümlein war zu finden,
no flowers were to be found,
Sonst hätt ich dir's gebracht.
Otherwise I would have brought them to you

Da flossen von den Wangen
Then flowed from my cheeks,
Mir Tränen in den Klee,
my tears in to the clover,
Ein Blümlein aufgegangen
a small flower opened
Ich nun im Garten seh.
I only saw in the garden.

Das wollte ich dir brechen
I wanted to pick it for you
Wohl in dem dunklen Klee,
from the dark clover
Doch fing es an zu sprechen:
But it started to speak:
Ach, tue mir nicht weh!
Oh, please don't hurt me!

Sei freundlich im Herzen,
Have a friendly heart,
Betracht dein eigen Leid,
consider your own sufferings,
Und lasse mich in Schmerzen
Nicht sterben vor der Zeit!

Und hätt's nicht so gesprochen,
Im Garten ganz allein,
So hätt ich dir's gebrochen,
Nun aber darf's nicht sein.

Mein Schatz ist ausgeblieben,
Ich bin so ganz allein.
Im Lieben wohnt Betrüben,
Und kann nicht anders sein.

and don't let me die in pain
before it's my time!

And if it hadn't spoken so,
in the garden all alone,
I would have picked it for you,
but it wasn't meant to be.

My love has not come,
I am so all alone.
In love lives heartache
And it can be no different.¹

¹ translation by Veera Niiranen

3.2.2 Analysis of the song

"Ich wollt ein Sträusslein binden", is a song about love, betrayal and spiritual growth. This song, as well as the first song “An die Nacht”, has sexual double-meanings in the poem. The narrator in this poem is a young girl who has fallen in love. She wants to give her loved-one everything she has, but there is nothing left to give. She is devastated. She cries and from her tears emerges a flower, here a symbol of virginity, and she wants to give it for him. The flower starts to speak; please don't pluck me, don't kill me. The flower speaking is the girl’s inner voice, telling her to be careful and not give away the most precious thing she has. She is still too young and has not experienced enough. In the end, her love hasn't come to meet her, for all he wanted was to use her. She is alone and sad, but grateful and wiser for the experience she had.

In this song Strauss uses two motives, two triplets and a dotted eight-note, sixteenth note and two eight-notes (Example 5 and 6).

These motives can be seen in the singer’s melodic line and in the piano part. Strauss introduces the first motive in measure 2 to describe “Sträusslein”, a graland. In measure 10 he uses the motive
again to describe “Blümlein”, small flower. The song starts in F major and without prelude. It starts very carefree and happy until measure 5, where Strauss starts to modulate towards F minor to describe “dunkle Nacht”, the dark night (Example 7). The triplet motive repeats again in measure 9, but in minor to reflect the girl’s disappointment for not finding any flowers. The whole feel of the song changes darker and joyless. In measures 17 and 19 the triplet motive is written for the first time for piano. The motive is in minor and reflects teardrops that are falling from the girl’s cheeks. Strauss describes the text upfront for in the next part of the poem it is said that “Da flossen von den Wangen mir Tränen in den Klee”, then flowed from my cheeks, my tears in to the clover. In measures 25 and 26 Strauss alters the motive in the singer’s melodic line to describe sobbing and breathlessness (Example 8). The melody in piano continues this breathlessness until in measure 29 Strauss introduces the second motive (Example 6).

Example 5.  

Example 6.  

Example 7.
Measure 29 is written in A\(^7\), and has a more whimsical feel because of the major chord and the new motive. \(^{36}\) Here a new hope has risen, for the girl has found a flower that has emerged from her tears.

In measure 42 Strauss starts to reduce the accompaniment and writes it in octaves with the singer’s melody to create a new colour and anticipation. In measure 46 the flower starts to speak. The accompaniment is minimal and the singer’s melodic line is very simple. Thus Strauss has created a soundscape for the flower. In measure 49, Strauss highlights the word “Weh” with a diminished chord, which is very typical for Strauss (Example 9). The whole 24 measures when the flower

\(^{36}\) Nichole Dechaine: A singer approach to the Orchestrated Piano Lieder of Richard Strauss, p 40
speaks, Strauss wanted the musicians to stay in piano excluding measure 62, where he has written a sforzato to underline the word “Schmerzen”, pain. For the word “Schmerzen”, Strauss has used a diminished chord to create a pain-like-feeling.

Example 9.

![Example 9](image)

The next verse “Und hätt's nicht so gesprochen”, starts in a tempo and in C\(^7\). It starts very normal, not suggesting sorrow or joy until measure 75, where Strauss describes “ganz allein”, all alone, with unisono in piano and voice. This is a very straightforward way to describe loneliness for there is only one line, one sound, one being. Also in the next measure Strauss has written an A diminished chord to amplify the feeling on pain.

The last verse starting from measure 87 is written in present time and is the only verse in present, besides the speech of the flower. The repetition of A\(^1\) in voice and in piano, gives a feeling of astonishment and a slow realisation that the girl’s loved-one has not arrived. Then again in measures 92-93, there is repetition on C\(^2\) both in voice and in pianos right-hand in unisono for the word “ganz allein”. It has a hint, a memory-like feeling of measure 75 where Strauss described the same words in unisono. From measures 87 to 94 the girl singing gets more and more anxious as she realises that her love hasn’t come to meet her. The melodic line ascends as it does in speech as well, when a person gets agitated. The comprehension of the situation hits in through measures 97-99, acceptance and sadness in measures 100-104. This Strauss describes with a downward melody line and chromaticism.
Strauss binds the song together with his last seven measures. The tonality returns to F major and he shows both motives one last time. The F major and melodic line in the right-hand, gives a hint of a happy ending.

3.3 Säusle, Liebe Myrte

3.3.1 Translation of the poem

Säusle, liebe Myrte
Wie still ist's in der Welt,
Der Mond, der Sternenhirte
Auf klarem Himmelsfeld,
Treibt schon die Wolkenschafe
Zum Born des Lichtes hin,
Schlaf, mein Freund, o schlaf,
Bis ich wieder bei Dir bin!

Rustle, lovely Myrtle!
How silent is the world,
the moon, the shepherds of the stars
in a clear heavens field,
herds the cloud-sheep
to the spring of the light,
sleep, my friend, oh sleep,
Until I'm again by your side!

Säusle, liebe Myrte
Und träum' im Sternenschein,
Die Turteltaube girrte
Ihre Brut schon ein.
Still ziehn die Wolkenschafe
Zum Born des Lichtes hin,
Schlaf, mein Freund, o schlaf,
Bis ich wieder bei dir bin!

Rustle, lovely Myrtle
and dream in the starlight,
the dove cooed,
Her brother to come in.
Quiet are the cloud shepherds pulled
to the place where the light is born,
Sleep my friend, o sleep,
Until I'm again by your side!

Hörst du, wie die Brunnen rauschen?
Hörst du, wie die Grille zirpt?
Stille, stille, laßt uns lauschen,
Selig, wer in Träumen stirbt;

Can you hear, how the fountains rush?
Can you hear, how the crickets chirp?
Hush, hush let us listen,
Blessed is the one, who dies in their dreams;
Selig, wen die Wolken wiegen,  
[Benn] der Mond ein Schlaflied singt;  
Oh! wie selig kann der fliegen,  
Dem der Traum den Flügel schwingt,  
Daß an blauer Himmelsdecke  
Sterne er wie Blumen pflückt;  
Schlaf, träume, flieg, ich wecke  
Bald Dich auf und bin beglückt!

Blessed is the one, who is cradled by the clouds,  
When the moon sings a lullaby;  
Oh! How blissfully can he fly,  
the one who 's dreams swing their wings,  
so that in the blue roof of the heaven,  
he may pluck stars like flowers;  
Sleep, dream, fly, I will wake you  
Soon and I'll be blessed!

1 Brentano wrote Mirte  
2 Brentano wrote Wem (to whom)  
3 Translation by Veera Niiranen

3.3.2 Analysis of the song

The text for this poem originates from Brentano's fairy tale “Das Märchen von dem Myrthenfräulein”. In the fairy tale, a prince falls in love with a myrtle tree, which he has obtained from a local potter. Every night the myrtle tree transforms into a beautiful girl, who sings to the prince as he falls asleep. The prince is infatuated by the maiden and decides to capture her when she is in her human form. He offers to sing her a song when she emerges from the tree. When the maiden surrenders herself to the song, the prince captures her.

Brentano wrote the text in a way that the first two verses were sung by the maiden and the third by the prince. Strauss composed the song so that one narrator could sing all three verses.  

In Brentano's version the poem can be interpreted so that the song is a lullaby to a child, friend or a lover. Here the narrator calls her loved-one myrtle. Myrtle is Aphrodite's flower and symbolises

---

37 Sarah K. Sarver: Embedded and Parenthetical Chromaticism: A Study of Their Structural and Dramatic Implications in Selected Works by Richard Strauss p.64
love and is the Hebrew symbol for marriage. For this reason I interpret the subject of the lullaby to be the lover of the narrator.

The song has a comforting feeling. The first verse is magical with references to shepherds of the stars and cloud-sheep. It hints that all this is happening outside in the cool summer night. The shepherds are herding their sheep towards the daybreak. The second verse starts with the same comforting words, “Säusle, liebe Mirte” and it continues to paint an image of the sleeping nature, even the turtledove has put his brood to sleep. Here again is a reference of the cloud-sheep going towards the new day. The third verse is longer and has more mystical feel then the two others. “Selig, wer in Träumen stirbt; Selig wen die Wolken wiegen”. Blessed is the one who dies in their sleep; blessed is the one who is cradled by the clouds. This is the most profound meditation in the song and it is followed by a section where the narrator is singing to herself and getting excited about the surrounding nature. Then she returns to her love and sings again the melody of the lullaby.

Strauss composed the song in G major and written in 4/8. This song, as the two before this one, starts without prelude. The weight is on after beat. It is a through-composed song that is divided into three sections, as Brentano's text. There are two motives in this song. The “säusle - motive in measure 1 and again in measure 24 (Example 10 and 11), where Strauss modifies the motive to a more complex note-pattern, and “schlaf” - motive in measure 15 (Example 12).

The first verse is in G major until measure 4 where Strauss changes the tonality to E minor, the parallel tonic. The first verse is quit bare and doesn't have much movement until measure 11, which indicates strong pull towards to the highpoint of the verse, measure 13. In measure 13 “Born des Lichtes” Strauss also changed the tempo in to ¾ to enable the word “licht” be sung wider. He highlighted the word with dissonance and sforzato in the accompaniment.

---

In measure 14 the tempo changes back to 4/8. In measure 15 Strauss has again reduced the accompaniment into minimum to exemplify the feeling of a cradle song. Also he has written an organ point (D) in the accompaniment, to give a feel of ease.

The second verse start is G in measure 23 where the piano plays the varied “säusle”- motive. Then in measure 24, the motive is repeated but in G minor, which gives a calmer and a deeper feel to the verse. In measure 28-31 almost all the movement is on the right-hands chromatic progression. Melody in the voice is in G, the fifth of C minor that is the harmony in the measures, until measure
30 “girrte auch ihre Brut schon ein”. The chromatically rising triplets on the right-hand describes the doves cooing (Example 13).

Example 13.

From measure 33 there is a clear pull towards measure 39-40. It has similarities with measures 11-14, but the harmony in measure 40 ends in E major while in measure it ends in D major. Also the “schlaf” - motive is repeated in E major, as earlier it was in D major. In the second verse in measures 46-48, the melody goes downwards in “wieder by dir bin” and gives it a sense of closure as in the first verse the melody in measures 20-22, where the text is the same, the music stays up and makes the listener expect follow-up.

The third verse starts completely different as the two before. The “säusle” - motive comes first in on the second measure of the verse, in measure 50. The accompaniment builds the third verse from measure 48 with a rising triplet-pattern, this time describing the rushing fountains. This time the movement is much larger and for this reason it gives the accompaniment a feel of a large wave. The wave repeats one more time in measures 51-53. In measures 53-54 Strauss uses the “säusle”-motive as he did in the beginning of the third verse. He stretches the first note from eight-note no dotted quarter-note. In measure 56 Strauss portrays the chirping crickets very literally with a grace
note. Strauss's most commonly used vocal ornament was a grace note and here it has an onomatopoeic function. 39 (Example 14)

Example 14.

In measure 57 the melody is written low and describes the calm night and how everything listens. Even the narrator doesn't want to disturb the sounds of the nature. Then in measure 61, the tonality changes to E major, which gives a sense of bliss. Strauss also wanted the singer to be able to colour the G♯ by giving the singer time to do it. The harmony changes again in measure 63 to Eb major. Strauss wrote an organ point in Eb from measure 63-70. It binds the measures together. In measure 71 after a long organ point, something new clearly begins; the narrator is getting excited. The harmony changes to E7. This lasts until measure 82. The culmination of this section is in measure 80, under the word “blumen”, flower. The melody gradually rises towards it and Strauss tops it off with a chromatic line in measure 80. In measure 83 Strauss goes back to the “schlaf” - motive. This time he stretches the motive longer and the melody goes up which gives a feeling of a question; has he fallen asleep? The next “schlaf” - motive in measures 85-86 have implications of the word “flieg” which comes in measure 86. Under the word “flieg” Strauss wrote a diminuendo, portraying a storyteller who gradually tries to stop singing without disturbing her loved ones sleep. The break in the following measure is full of anticipation; will he continue sleeping or is he disturbed by the

39 Barbara A. Petersen, Ton und Wort, p 49
silence? The singer/narrator can’t hide her excitement and she breaks in measure 89 “ich wecke bald dich auf”. The voice melody comes from nothing and is full of enthusiasm. The tonality has returned back to G major. It leads back to the dream world with diminuendo and altered “schlaf” - motive on the piano as the singer composes herself. Here Strauss uses a calming I-V-I-V-I progression. In measure 97 there is one more V/V accord, which doesn't belong to the tonality. It’s a hint of the chromaticism heard before. Otherwise the whole ending is total I-V-I harmonic progression. In the last six measures Strauss combines all the key-elements of the song. The reality in measure 89 can be seen again in measure 98. The “schlaf” - motive is in measures 99 and 100 on the piano. The original “säusle” - motive and the altered version are also in the piano in measures 101 and 102.

3.4 Amor

3.4.1 Translation of the poem

By the fire sat a child
Cupid, Cupid

Amor, Amor
and was blind;
Cupid, Cupid

Und war blind;
with his small wings he fan
In die Flammen er und lächelt,
in to the fire and laughed,
Fächle, lächle, schlaues Kind.
Fanned, laughed, cunning child.

By the fire sat a child
Cupid, Cupid

Amor, Amor
and was blind;
Cupid, Cupid

Und war blind;
with his small wings he fan
In die Flammen er und lächelt,
in to the fire and laughed,
Fächle, lächle, schlaues Kind.
Fanned, laughed, cunning child.

Ach, der Flügel brennt dem Kind!
Oh, his wing got burned!
Cupid, Cupid

Amor, Amor
Run quickly!
Cupid, Cupid

Läuft geschwind!
Beating his wings he cries out;
Run quickly!
Beating his wings he cries out;

"O wie ihn die Glut durchpeinet!"
"Oh how the ember pains!"

Flügelschlagend laut er weinet;
to the shepherdess he runs
In der Hirtin Schoss entrinnt
Screaming for help, that cunning child.
Hilfeschreiend das schlaue Kind.

Und die Hirtin hilft dem Kind,
And the shepherdess helped the child,
Amor, Amor
Bös und blind.
Hirtin, sieh, dein Herz entbrennet,
Hast den Schelmen\(^2\) nicht gekennet.
Sieh, die Flamme wächst geschwinde.
Hüt dich vor dem schlauen Kind!

Cupid, Cupid
Wicked and blind.
Shepherdess, look, your heart is burning,
You didn’t recognize the rascal.
Look, the flame grows rapidly.
Shelter yourself from this wicked child!\(^3\)

1 Brentano wrote originally mich (me)
2 Brentano wrote originally Schelm du (rascal you)
3 Translation by Veera Niiranen

3.4.2 Analysis of the song

“In classical mythology, Cupid (Latin Cupido, meaning "desire") is the god of desire, erotic love, attraction and affection. He is often portrayed as the son of the love goddess Venus, and is known in Latin also as Amor ("Love"). Cupid is winged, allegedly, because lovers are flighty and likely to change their minds, and boyish because love is irrational. His symbols are the arrow and torch, "because love wounds and inflames the heart."\(^{40}\)

In the first verse Cupid is sitting in front of the fire and fans the fire. This characterises he’s playfulness, cunning nature and somewhat boredom, which drives him to play with fire. In the second verse Cupid has set his wing on fire and runs to the shepherdess for help but he has a hidden agenda. As the shepherdess helps cupid and comforts him, he sets the shepherdess's heart on fire; he makes her fall in love.

In this song Strauss altered Brentano's poem by writing instead of “mich”, “ihm”, which gives a totally different meaning for the subject who is pained by the glow changes from the shepherdess to Cupid.\(^{41}\) This might have been unintentional for there is not a solid reason why Strauss would alter the poem.

“Amor (op.68, no 5) is the most elaborate and stylised example of ornamental coloratura in all of Strauss's dramatic

\(^{40}\) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cupid 24.3.2015
\(^{41}\) Barbara A. Petersen, Ton und Wort, p.64.
songs. Amor is unique among Strauss's lieder as a predominantly melismatic text setting. 42

The melody itself is difficult to sing, but because of Strauss's word-settings, the song becomes even more demanding; for example in measures 10 and 11 Strauss has written “lächelt”. The ambitus of the melodic line is more than an octave, it has trills on five notes and it ends in A², where the singer should be able to dictate “lä-chelt” clearly (example 15).

Example 15.

![Example 15](image)

Strauss rarely uses vocal trills in his songs. In Amor there are, however, numerous examples of trills in the accompaniment, usually illustrating the text. 43 Strauss used more word-painting in this song, than in any of the other Brentano-songs.

In this song Strauss uses a sixteenth note triplet-patterns to describe words like “Feuer”, “flügeln”, “fächelt”, “Flammen” which all describe Amor's actions, his wings and his cunning mind (example 16).

The song is written in G major. The first two measures introduce the “feuer” - motive. It can be seen in the accompaniment and in the second measure in the voice melody. The song is through composed and the “feuer” - motive can be seen in almost every measure.

In measure 3, Strauss omits the “feuer” - motive and calms down the movement in to quarter-notes

42 Barbara A. Petersen, Ton und Wort, p.47
43 Barbara A. Petersen, Ton und Wort, p 48
to give some room for the word *Amor*. All the parts where “*Amor*” is mentioned are treated with the same method on the voice (example 17 and 18).

The first verse (measures 1-16) contains more runs in the voice line than the two others. This is to give a feeling of excitement, plotting and the all-around feeling of a small, winged boy who sits and fans the fire in front of him. In measure 10 and 11 Strauss has written trills to portray the sound of laughter (example 15). The harmony is in F, the harmonic progression I-V7-I-V7-I. In the next measure, measure 12, Strauss has written eight-notes but with plenty of chromaticism. It makes the soundscape more pungent and gives a glimpse of *Amor’s* cunning nature. This is the calmest place in the first verse, maybe to give more time for the listener to hear the sharpness of the chords. In measure 14 Strauss has written a huge octave leap from C₂ to C₃ in piano and a long half-note on C₃ with a trill and poco calando, slowing down a bit. The trill is there to portray again the word “lächelt”, smiles. The contrast between the measures 12-13 to 14 melody-wise, is massive. In measure 14 the melody and the instruction of piano and poco calando give the section a feeling of hold back excitement.

Example 17.

![Example 17](image)

Example 18.

![Example 18](image)
The second verse starts in forte and is far more dramatic than the first verse. The ascending melody-line for the word “Flügel” in measure 18, gives the section velocity portraying Amors panic. Strauss also wrote a lot of chromaticism in this section, as the harmony is Ab-G\textsuperscript{7}-Ab-Em-A. Here, in measure 18, Strauss introduces the second motive, the “hirtin” - motive (example 19). It is a comfortable sounding motive consisting two quarter-notes, dotted quarter-note and a eight-note. This motive appears many times in the accompaniment and in voice in the second verse. Every line starts with this “hirtin” - motive.

Example 19.

In measures 19 and 20 “Amor, Amor”, is repeated as it were in the first verse in measures 4 and 4, but a quarter higher. This intensifies the dramatic feel. The tempo comes from piano, for it is filled with ascending triplet-patterns (example 18). In measure 20, Strauss describes “läuft geschwind”, with a rising demisemiquaver-pattern in piano and a V-I harmonic progression to A major. In measure 24 Strauss uses again the sixteenth-note triplet-pattern describing wings beating “Flügelschlagend”. In measure 25 Strauss writes arpeggio chords in the piano and chromatically ascending quarter-notes for the voice. This portrays a crying child whose intonation rises when getting agitated and starting to cry. The culmination is in measure 27, where the piano plays H major and the voice has a suspension, G\textsuperscript{2} which then ends in F#\textsuperscript{2}, as a child's moan would end, not on the highest note, but dropping to a lower note as a final sob (example 20).
Measures 28-31 are very calm and comforting as the “hirtin” - motive dominates. In measure 32 the melodic line in voice the jumps to H² and piano has a wild triplet-pattern in the right hand. This portrays an actual scream as Amor is screaming for “hilfe”, help. In measure 33 Strauss has written a calando, which means gradually decreasing tempo and volume. The melodic line in the voice descends chromatically. The difference to measure 31 is striking. In measure 33 Cupids real cunning nature is revealed. It is as he was plotting his next step.

The next verse starts calmly with the “hirtin” - motive. Harmonic progression in measures 34-38 is G: V⁷-I-V⁶-I. We are back in the original key, and because of the V-I movement, the general feeling is relaxed.

Measure 42 starts the same way as measure 34, but a half step lower. The anxiety can be seen in the chromaticism in the accompaniment and in the voice as it is written much higher than in measures 36-42. Also there is a wide leap in the voice’s melodic line in measure 43 from C² to H² where the text is “dein Herz”. This portrays the heart jumping in the shepherdess’s bosom. The song’s most tumultuous part is in measures 46 -51. The “feuer” - motive is in all of the measures and also simultaneously in the voice and in the piano in measure 47. The “hirtin” - motive recurs in measure 52, to the text “hüt dich”, protect yourself. This advice is directed to the shepherdess.

The most difficult section for a singer is measures 55-58. The long coloratura figuration has a wide
ambitus and it is very demanding breath-wise (example 21). Also in measure 59 the jump from $F^1$ to $G^2$ in piano is very challenging. The harmonic progression underneath helps as it is in G major for the whole cadenza, and in measure 58 it progresses to the dominant, D major, and then back to G major.

Example 21.

In the last 10 measures Strauss has combined the “hirtin” - motive and the “flammen” - motive. It starts with the “hirtin” - motive in piano and a small triplet-pattern on voice. Then from measure 62 on the “flammen”- motive dominants and the accompaniment becomes wild. At the same time the voice has a trill in $H^2$, which then descend chromatically to $G^2$. The trill describes wings beating, heart trembling, and the shepherdess moaning. After all that, Strauss ends the song with a simple V-I harmonic progression that gives the listener some ease after a wild, all-out song.
5. Sources

Correl, Lorraine: Nineteenth century German lied, Amadeus press, Portland, 1993
Petersen, Barbara A: Ton und Wort, UMI Research Press, Michigan, 1980
Sarver, Sarah K: Embedded and Parenthetical Chromaticism: A Study of Their Structural and Dramatic Implications in Selected Works by Richard Strauss, DigiNole Commons, The Florida State University, 2010

5.1.2015 fi.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Strauss
13.1.2015 http://www.richardstrauss.at
4.3.2015 http://fi.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clemens_Brentano
23.3.2015 http://biography.yourdictionary.com/clemens-brentano
23.3.2015 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lorelei
24.3.2015 http://www.hyperion-records.co.uk/c.asp?c=C3015
24.3.2015 http://www.chandos.net/pdf/CHAN%2010236.pdf