LOVE AND REFORM
A Chamber Operetta

A THESIS IN
Music Composition

Presented to the faculty of the University
Of Missouri-Kansas City in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree:

MASTER OF MUSIC

by
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LOVE AND REFORM
A Chamber Operetta

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University of Missouri-Kansas City, 2011

ABSTRACT

“Love and Reform” is a chamber operetta composed from a libretto written by the composer for female narrator, soprano, tenor, bass, and string quintet. The drama is an Epicurean satire concerning the imagined afterlife of recently deceased Emperor Joseph II of Austria (1765-1790). The language of the libretto combines ironically antique verbiage with a bawdiness characteristic of early French operetta. A pastiche of the light and pseudo-serious musical idioms, the music of “Love and Reform” avoids stylistic unity in favor of juxtaposing drastically different musical types for comic effect. To this end, the string ensemble often mimics other instruments and musical genres. An arpeggio figure reminiscent of continuo figuration serves as a motto to signify changes in mood or plot, and likewise, portamento figures evoke the sound of a slide guitar playing blues music. Frequent internal musical references to previously heard arias and recitative figures help to create dramatic and musical cohesion, and function like leitmotifs. The opening motive, constructed from perfect fifths moving in contrary motion by minor second, becomes symbolic of Joseph’s ‘suffering’. In contrast, a recurring passage constructed from common practice materials represents Joseph’s ‘idealism’. Jazz rhythms, blues-like harmonies, and linear chromatic writing are all prominently featured throughout the work. “Love and Reform” ends in a ghostly quotation of Beethoven’s early memorial cantata “On the Death of Emperor Joseph II”.

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The faculty listed below, appointed by the Dean of the Conservatory of Music, have examined a thesis titled “Love and Reform” presented by Ryan Gagnon, candidate for the Master of Music Degree, and certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

Supervisory Committee

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VITA
ORIGINS OF THE WORK

The initial concept for Love and Reform developed out of my interest in the early Beethoven cantata On the Death of Emperor Joseph II, WoO 87, the subject matter and performance history of which share humorous parallels.

At the age of twenty, Beethoven received his first large commission from the Bonn ‘reading society’ to compose a memorial cantata on texts celebrating the life of the recently deceased emperor, Joseph II. Although Beethoven completed the work within a month, the grand orchestral writing proved too difficult for the reading society to perform. Consequently, the work was entirely forgotten until Edward Hanslick, the Viennese music critic, purchased the score at auction. Under the direction of Brahms, the cantata was premiered in 1884, nearly a hundred years later.

I suppose what first amused me was the situational irony of a ‘memorial’ work not being performed, and even worse, lost to history; however, considering the cause for the aborted performance, namely Beethoven’s unbridled musical ambition, in context with the biography of Joseph II, suggested deeper correspondences between the fate of the music and the fate of the emperor.

Joseph II ruled the large and diverse Austrian-Hungarian empire from 1780 until his death in 1791. Under the auspices of enlightened despotism, Joseph inaugurated a program of sweeping reforms, effectively centralizing and unifying the power of the state under the monarchy in Vienna by systematically rescinding the traditional privileges of the Catholic Church and the regional nobility. A short list of Joseph’s major reforms would include: closing 71 contemplative monasteries, restructuring the church hierarchy, extending religious toleration to protestants and Jews, relaxing censorship, establishing freedom of the press, abolishing serfdom, mandating primary education, unifying criminal codes and the court system, banning torture and execution, reforming tax codes, and establishing German as the official language of the empire.

In all, Joseph enacted over 5,000 reforms, many as trivial as the banning of incontinence inducing gingerbread and the decree that singers should perform only one encore per evening to prevent
inordinately long opera performances. A personality that contemporaries describe as austere and
taughtly simple in manners, did little to help Joseph assuage those powers whom his reforms had
profoundly offended, and toward the end of his reign, even the common people who had once
viewed Joseph as a hero, came to resent the petty interferences of the emperor in their daily affairs.
As Joseph fell terminally ill, his ministers increasingly failed to carry out his orders, and even his
brother and successor, Leopold II, declined to visit his bedside in Vienna to avoid any future
political liability from associating with Joseph and his unpopular reforms. Joseph finally died
alone, completely dejected, knowing that his ambitious program of reforms would die with him.
However forward thinking, the legacy of Joseph II is equivocal as his self-authored epitaph
implies, Here lies Joseph, who failed at all he undertook.
CHARACTERS

Mnemosyne (Female Actor)  Goddess of Memory

Kaia (Soprano)     Mother of the Earth

Lucifer (Tenor)   Principle Divinity of Hades

Joseph II   (Baritone)    Recently Deceased Emperor of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire

INSTRUMENTATION

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Cello
Bass

STAGING AND COSTUME REQUIREMENTS

*Love and Reform* requires almost nothing in terms of props, lighting, costumes, etc. – a group really could faithfully perform the work in a room. So said, the libretto easily accommodates quite elaborate production if desired. I have no preference either way, only that the characters are costumed in some differentiating way to reflect their divergent roles in the drama. As a suggestion, Joseph could be costumed according to his official portrait or some other period garb, but generally disheveled. Lucifer could be costumed unassumingly, perhaps a casual suit, he might wear a hat, depending. Kaia can wear almost anything as long as she looks fashionable and smart.. Mnemosyne should look like a classical goddess.
Joseph and Lucifer lounge by the banks of the river Lethe. Joseph reclines on a chaise agitatedly reading a newspaper. Lucifer sits at a small table disinterestedly playing a game of solitaire. Both are drinking cognac, the effects of which Joseph more readily evidences as Lucifer’s divine constitution is immune to ordinary modes of intoxication. Mnemosyne addresses the audience directly with mock officiousness. Joseph and Lucifer are unaware of her presence.

~

No. 1: Prologue

Mnemosyne:

Abandon all hope, ye who enter here! Not you, but Joseph, the second, recently deceased emperor of the Austrian Hungarian Empire. 1741-1790, I perfectly recall, for I am Mnemosyne, the Goddess of Memory.

(Gesturing to Joseph)

Behold, the great ‘enlightened’ monarch; passionate reformer and celebrated rationalist, dead now for one year, and still Joseph mourns the loss of life. Alas, there is much to mourn! No other ruler had attempted to change the world so boldly, so swiftly. Upon his ascension to the throne, Joseph enacted over five-thousand reforms! By abolishing serfdom, banning torture and execution, establishing a state hospital, extending religious toleration, ending censorship, mandating primary education, equalizing tax codes, and establishing German as the official language of the empire, Joseph dreamed he would usher a new age of enlightenment to mankind … science and art, beauty and truth … to illuminate a dark world; however, Joseph’s inspiration was greater than his political skill, and his austere manner and affectedly simple manners did little to help assuage those powers whom his reforms had profoundly offended. As Joseph fell ill, his ministers increasingly failed to carry out his orders, and even his brother and successor, Leopold, refused to visit his bedside. One winter morning, as the cold sunshine blindingly fell through his bedroom windows, Joseph weakly opened his eyes to glimpse a familiar woman drawing the curtains closed. In the dark of his room, Joseph died alone, knowing his ambitious program of reforms would follow him down to Hades …

… where here, by the waters of the river Lethe, Joseph languishes in memory, unable to reconcile the allure of his inspiration and the reality of his failure, resisting that cool forgetfulness of death; earnestly reading stacks of newspapers as though he could again play a living part, emptying bottles of cognac as though the sum of his headaches could ransom back his life … and all the while, he dreams …
… how his ministers had once encircled the imperial desk, eagerly noting the audacious proclamations of their sovereign …

“The prohibition of books is more to be feared than bad publications.”

“Well put, Majesty, quite right! No doubt, this new abolition of censorship will liberate the brightest minds to better serve their emperor and his reforms.”

At first, Joseph had found the notion of free-speech strange, and had wondered to himself, “If one could say anything, what would one say?” though later, the idea would seem perfectly natural, as if he had always held the opinion. Much of Joseph’s radical thinking followed a similar pattern, and until his death, he had assumed all brilliant people must have comparable experiences. Such is the clouded way divine revelation must appear to imperfect mortal sense, as did the oracles of Kaia, who whispered to Joseph before intimate encounters, a script for the very future.

Ah Kaia, beautiful Goddess of the Earth, once disguised as a revolutionary you appeared to Joseph, inspiring his imagination to perform the works of a great ruler, but human hours are fleeting, and you could not follow Joseph to Hades, for you too are a reformer. Ever-reaching to catch your child, the fallen condition for which you feel responsibility and compulsion to amend, you correct the Earth as a young mother, seeking in vain to finally balance the equations of reality with a some new life-form, impacting comet, or divine idea; but the Earth, like you, will not yield. Therefore, to life, you give your fidelity; to lives, your love, but can mere mortals endure such infinite grace?

Observe the fate your affections; how the once proud vessels of your art lay cracked on the floor of Hades! See Hammurabi scrawl nonsense in the dust and Akhenaten cower in the shadows. Hear Alexander command his echo to wage war against the silence, and Joseph, feel him whine … endlessly, drunkenly, pathetically whine, whine, whine … wondering how he could have failed at all he undertook, and whether you, his beloved Kaia, will ever return. Can mere divinities endure such infinite disgrace?

Ah Lucifer, (like Joseph, also a bad Catholic), charged by THE EMPEROR with the Sisyphean task of counseling these poor souls as punishment for having seduced Kaia from her singular chastity to unwittingly bear the Earth, how charmingly you endure this torment! Settled in defeat, your long exile in Hades has emptied your spirit of the ambition that once emboldened your passion to disastrous action, as now the ordinary wonder of cards and the darker truth that we drink to more and worry the less satisfies your attention and douses your thirst. To the deeper mysteries of existence you shrug your shoulders and pour another round, deal the next hand. Will your wisdom save Joseph from tyranny of his memory?

To this question, let us note this cosmic unfolding and remember the folly of divinities and men.
No. 2: Here! Here lies Joseph...

\[ q = 120 \]

Joseph makes a wild motion with hands to emphasize being in Hades.

Here!

Here lies Joseph,---

\[ \text{sul pont.} \]

(\text{ord.})

\[ \text{sul pont.} \]

(\text{ord.})
who failed at all he undertook.
\( \dot{=} 168 \) Joseph stands and violently shakes the newspaper he had been reading.

\( \dot{=} 168 \) Joseph stands and violently shakes the newspaper he had been reading.
Exhausted from his tantrum, Joseph collapses into the chaise.
Joseph shakes his empty glass. Lucifer rises from the table and carries a bottle of cognac to the chaise.

Lucifer, be a friend and show some charity. I no longer wish to live.
Dear Joseph, these late humours betray the tragedy they would serve.
The mind is its own place and can make a heaven of hell, or let us say...
The mf

no more a hell of this fur-ther di-vest-i-ture of tru-ly ex-cel-lent car-i-tas. The

* Lucifer hands the bottle to Joseph.

* Lucifer hands the bottle to Joseph.
news is a bet al-re-a-dy lost, where-as friend-ship we raise e-ven now; there-fore let us drink to friend-ship, man-ly

\[ \sum \sum \sum \]

\[ \sum \]

\[ \sum \]

\[ \sum \]

\[ \sum \]

\[ \sum \]

\[ \sum \]

\[ \sum \]

\[ \sum \]
K.

friendship, and we may yet play a hand or two; all

L.

J.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

Cb.

R.

pizz.

pizz.

pizz.
else is lamenting drama we will no more suffer to parch the joke of jest.
Lucifer drinks the glass of cognac in a single swallow. A tempo

Bot-toms up!

Ahh!

\[ \begin{array}{c}
\text{Vln. 1} \\
\text{Vln. 2} \\
\text{Vla.} \\
\text{Vlc.} \\
\text{Cb.} \\
\end{array} \]
Irritated, Joseph rises from the chaise and waving the newspaper in the air, makes a grand spectacle.

Do you even hear a word I say... Rome is burned...
ing! Listen to this latest headline. Leopold to revoke Joseph's reforms.
* Joseph slaps the newspaper across Lucifer's game of solitaire. Incredulous, Lucifer rather deliberately reaches for a pair of reading glasses, picks up the paper, and clears his throat before reading the article.
No. 3: Newspaper Duet

Kaia

Lucifer

Joseph

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Cello

Bass

Reduction

\( \text{mf} \)

\( \text{mf} \)
Enlightened Monarch and ambitious architect of five thousand reforms...
recently died amid growing unrest throughout the population.
Upon his accession to the throne, Leopold the second has pledged to immediately
re-scind his brother Joseph's unpopular reforms.
My own brother! Snaky bastard! Cain was pleased to merely...
murder the life; Leopold undertakes to bury my
ever having existed at all.
Joseph's sweeping program of reforms included:
closing monasteries and severing Papal influence while extending religious toleration to
protestants and Jews; mandating primary education and the
building of new schools; abolishing serfdom and old feudal privileges;
ban-ning tor-ture and ex-e-cu-tion; un-i-fy-ing tax codes; fund-ing a state hos-pi-tal;
ending censorship; and establishing German as the official language through-
out the empire;

pizz.

pizz.

pizz.

pizz.
The emperor is head of the state! Were I to exempt my tongue from the
service of speech, no doubt I would talk funny! Likewise, I did exercise.
Even the mundane was subject to Joseph's fanatic compulsion to reform.
So as to avoid lengthy performances.
Ope-ra en-core-s were not to num-ber more than one per sing-er.

Oper-a is bor-ing! Why pro-long what al-re-a-dy
or to prevent pandemic indigestion the

seems un-ending

44
An awful cookie! And I would not that the people...
ple foul the empire with noxious fur zen!
Toward the end of his life, even the common people, who had once regarded Jo-
seph as a hero, joined the nobility and the clergy in deeply resenting the
radical interference in their affairs. Fredrick of Prussia noted that,
'Joseph takes the second step before the first!'
No. 4: My Dream ...

My dream was to usher the light of the enlightenment to the empire...
science and art, beauty and truth... to help illuminate a dark world... but, here I
lie at the bottom of the earth, witness to the destruction of all I held dear, my
re-forms... and my love!
Wo-men are a hell re-served for the liv-ing.
Forget their torments.
* Joseph and Lucifer speak, 'Café Anglais, vieux cognac, Clos du Grieffes, 1788.'

Speak the name of your deliverance.

There

A tempo
now, a more cheerful epitaph for spirits to share.

The morning I first fell ill.
snow had fallen in the night, and I awoke to dazzling sunlight.
before she drew the curtain closed. I detect a faint note of iris.

* Uneasy, Joseph takes a sip of cognac.
No, dear Joseph, a music...
iridescent hymns her golden wings enfolding
dark accords from gods to men, not so sweetly herald when against the furies
howling wept the Thracian bard for Eurydice's loss have
beauty's blossoms flowered little more than air;
Let he who hath ears listen
Drink to more and worry the less, for soon to be is not, our
poems recite in lines to slight the verses tally naught.

To
name a deed by proud display contracts the same disease that
actions waged for shame conceal in grave securities. So
Drink to more and worry the less, for soon to be not;
flesh that plays to mask the mind at curtain call will rot. All

arco
pizz.
Love like men will rise and fall eternity's best spent
tween the thighs of pretty eyes where waste en-dows the rent. Oh,
Drink to more and worry the less, for soon to be is not, the
The heart's a meat the helper eats ere Cupid's wound is clot. The
truth is just the sum of things a ledger scored in ink, that
no one wrote or read or dreamed would all of Time out think. So,
Drink to more and worry the less, for soon to be is not; the
days we wear till thread - bare rend, shiv er - ing at the plots.
No. 6: A handsome excercise in ballad...

\[ \text{\textit{A handsome exercise in ballad,}} \]

\[ J = 72 \]

\[ \text{\textit{A handsome exercise in ballad,}} \]

\[ J = 72 \]

\[ \text{\textit{A handsome exercise in ballad,}} \]
but I am unsure if your wisdom comforts much.
ceit that we speak of possessing what from us is insepаrable

rit.
A tempo

K.

L.

J.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

Cb.

R.

My life, my love, my reforms...

Your refreshment.

A tempo
From the lips to the tips! as though we could break free from this cast.

(Lucifer makes a lewd gesture)
No. 7: Once the Time was Kind

My self, I would conceal in the anonymity of shadow and...
dream that earth embrace this offending substance made no longer mine, but some other custody rising
with the sun of a new world, and my memory scattered in the
infinite diffusion of that first light. Once the time was
kind and held the hours Gently in the
east... though nightly drifts the closing hand, re-
membrance is all that's ours.
No. 8: Kaia's Arrival

Walking along the river bank, Kaia approaches the chaise where Joseph wallows in debauchery, silently observing the spectacle before lighting the first of many cigarettes. Joseph is unaware of her presence; however, Lucifer has noticed her arrival, and has knowingly taken the liberty of pouring two glasses of cognac, one for Kaia and one for Joseph.
(Lucifer hands the glasses of cognac to Kaia)

Thank you.

Am - bro - sia.

9 Am
bro - si - a.
Kaia offers the glass of cognac to Joseph, who looks up in disbelief.

Here, you look dead.

Kai - a?
I would have thought you would remember better the girl...
you claim ruined your life. I will be where I will be.

Time passes slowly in Hades.

In mp

pizz.

arco
deed my dear, solitary games of solitaire... botttom-less bot-tles of li-quot... can-
tank-er-ous con-ver-sa-tion ...

(guttural)

time
crawls
How fares the world and you?

* Lucifer suddenly and boldly kisses Kaia.

A tempo

Never better. Never
Joseph shrieks -- outraged, jealous, confused, and drunk, draws his ceremonial saber, raises the blade, and promptly loses consciousness.
A tempo

\( \text{mf} \)

\( \text{mp} \)

\( \text{arco} \)

\( \text{~} \)

\( \text{A tempo} \)

\( \text{mf} \)

\( \text{mp} \)

\( \text{arco} \)

\( \text{~} \)

\( \text{A tempo} \)

\( \text{mf} \)

\( \text{mp} \)

\( \text{arco} \)

\( \text{~} \)

\( \text{A tempo} \)

\( \text{mf} \)

\( \text{mp} \)

\( \text{arco} \)

\( \text{~} \)

\( \text{A tempo} \)

\( \text{mf} \)

\( \text{mp} \)

\( \text{arco} \)

\( \text{~} \)

\( \text{A tempo} \)

\( \text{mf} \)

\( \text{mp} \)

\( \text{arco} \)

\( \text{~} \)

\( \text{A tempo} \)

\( \text{mf} \)

\( \text{mp} \)

\( \text{arco} \)

\( \text{~} \)

\( \text{A tempo} \)

\( \text{mf} \)

\( \text{mp} \)

\( \text{arco} \)

\( \text{~} \)

\( \text{A tempo} \)

\( \text{mf} \)

\( \text{mp} \)

\( \text{arco} \)

\( \text{~} \)

\( \text{A tempo} \)

\( \text{mf} \)

\( \text{mp} \)

\( \text{arco} \)

\( \text{~} \)

\( \text{A tempo} \)

\( \text{mf} \)

\( \text{mp} \)

\( \text{arco} \)

\( \text{~} \)

\( \text{A tempo} \)
K.

will explain everything.

L.

mp

evrything.

J.

Yes, please do.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

Cb.

R.
No. 9: Interlude

Mnemosyne:

Poor Joseph! If only he would accept Lucifer’s sage counsel, perhaps he would abandon this ritual of self-deception … reading newspapers, drinking cognac, not to solve the riddle of his undoing, but as penance, however ridiculous, for having failed Kaia, whom he vainly believes has abandoned him for his failure, and by destroying the offending self, sustains the hope to reclaim what he has lost. No doubt, now that Kaia has returned, Joseph wagers he holds a final chance at love and reform, though I fear his odds may fall as Lucifer and Kaia raise an unpleasant history. No one has yet reformed a lover, let alone, a Goddess.

Strange, that Kaia would return at all! While the world is still so flawed, when her work is far from complete, why promenade along the Lethe? She will be where she will be! Surely, as she loves all of her creations, Kaia also loves Joseph, but to those others, she did not return. Perhaps in Joseph, Kaia had found a sympathetic spirit, a fellow muse deserving at least her farewell, and perhaps for all his bluster, a word or two in parting, would grant Joseph the peace he undoubtedly will seek through riskier means.

Let us listen to the sad story of the birth of world that leads to this sadder game of hearts.
No. 10: Before the Creation

$\frac{1}{2} = 42$ The stage goes black. A spotlight shines on Kaia and Lucifer who face the audience like an 'otherworldly' chorus. They appear godly and strange as they proceed to relate the story of the birth of the universe.
ad-equate training their talented daughter might garner sufficient accomplishment to attract
favorable attention from The Emperor.
who, in turn, would find her well suited for a position of some

17

112
prominence within the forthcoming administration.

prominence within the forthcoming administration.
dedicated and gorgeous young girl,
Kaia dutifully studied self-secluded in her dimension-less...
room, the for-mu-la of at-oms
molecules and the various beings that were to
furnish the highly anticipated solarium of the unfinished
K. L. J.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

Cb.

R.

\begin{equation}
J = 92
\end{equation}
quell the sense that she was lonesomely nor dissaude her growing desire to enliv -

\( \text{\textcopyright} \)
To cope, Ka-ia took up cig-ar-ettes her smo-ky ex-hal-a-tions like her en po-ten-tial with ex-press ion.
dreams of the Pantheon, the unknown splendors of experience, and the mystery of the formuлаe.
Meanwhile, Lucifer, the handsome,
brooding, and notoriously restless archangel.
stepping out from yet another shady garden party hosted by the
Emperor sat alone at the edge of the
Pantheon, staring into the oblivian where the
Solarium was soon to be realized. Guitar in hand, Lucifer sang into the
nothing, imagining that his song would fill the emptiness with the tumult of his
mind co-al-es-cing as his fru-stra-ted vi-sions took the shape of a new world and call-ing.
\[ j = 66 \] With weak rock & roll / blues styling, like an out of tune guitar played by not so able teenager

O, Great Void,
Lucifer, an inept songwriter, searches in vain for another line.

how like my mind would be filled...
O Tu mult, how like the stars,
end-less burn,
end-less burn ...

O Heart,
how like the Great Void, would also be filled.
Kaia, emerges from her 'singularity', irritated that Lucifer has disturbed her studies. A tempo \( \text{mf} \)

(Will you please,)

\begin{align*}
\text{(with a soulful self-satisfaction throughout)}
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
\text{(wondering about the line)}
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
\text{(gutteral)}
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
\text{and end-cess-ly end-cess-ly end-cess-ly (like the stars?) burn, too!}
\end{align*}
Lucifer, embarrassed that Kaia has overheard his singing, suddenly and awkwardly turns around. I am trying to study very important subjects.
and you are to-tal-ly an-noy-ing.

Ex-cuse me, I}
I would hope so. 

(thinking confidently)

thought I was alone, and no other state is so bold as solitude.
You are a very bad singer.

You are uncommon.
Why have I never seen you before in the Pantheon?
I have never been
I would remember
1. Kaia suddenly flicks away her cigarette locks eyes with Lucifer.
2. The two move close -- a moment of pause before passion ensues.

1. U
2. U

1. Kaia suddenly flicks away her cigarette locks eyes with Lucifer.
2. The two move close -- a moment of pause before passion ensues.

1. U
2. U
Kaia and Lucifer bow.

K.

End Scene.

L.

pp

End Scene.

J.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

Cb.

R.

Kaia and Lucifer bow.

\( \text{mf} \)

\( \text{p} \)

\( \text{pp} \)

\( \text{rit.} \)
The Emperor Awarded Kája an early commission and...
No. 12: I Ever-reach to Catch a Falling World

\[ \text{\textit{K}} \]

\[ \text{\textit{Lucifer}} \]

\[ \text{\textit{Joseph}} \]

\[ \text{\textit{Violin 1}} \]

\[ \text{\textit{Violin 2}} \]

\[ \text{\textit{Viola}} \]

\[ \text{\textit{Cello}} \]

\[ \text{\textit{Bass}} \]
falling world and lift above the rising
tide this hope; that Earth, my child, though dan-ger-ous-ly
sways_ sways_ will yet by na - ture one day bold - ly stand.
In dreams, I darkly whisper secret words, inspiring thoughts to
those est-eemed e-lect
for whom I feel a deep-er long-ing love
that they might

mf

f
rise with me and mend. To you, Joseph, I gave my
K.  swee- test  muse:  No  oth- er  song  have  I  in- toned  so  bare.

L.

J.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

Cb.

R.

155
so true: a fragile golden thread in space suspends
spends that chry-sal-ian blue our love.
With-in the val-u-es of the var-i-a-bles hide dis-ease and war that bend the e-qual sign.
No. 13: But what of you and Lucifer...

For-give me, dear Jo-seph,

But what of you and Lu-ci-fer?!
but I lack sensi-tivity in these sit-ua-tions, but she is unconscion-ably de-sirable!
I cannot help but embrace her. Do not be like the child who refuses to
Kaia rolls her eyes. Joseph ignoring Lucifer, suddenly impassioned, stands.

Kaia, why did you leave me to die alone?
Why did you inspire me to reform a world that is hopeless and flawed?
Nothing is ever hopeless. Jospeh, you have been told so much, yet heard so little.
You were never this dull in life!

I have heard enough!
Still thy passions darlings. Please, allow me to pour another soothing round.
and usher our quarrel to the more civilized field of cards.
Joseph indignantly returns to the chaise and opens a newspaper. Kaia coldly turns away and lights a cigarette. Lucifer shrugs his shoulders and returns to the card table. Gloom hangs in the atmosphere. Lucifer shuffles cards in frustration, while Kaia smokes her cigarette, before Joseph breaks the silence by reading another newspaper article.
For - sa - ken in life: For - got - ten in
for-mances of a mem-mor-i-al can-ta-ta for Jo-seph the sec-ond by the young com-poser
Bee - tho - ven have been can - celled. Sour - ces close to the mat - ter cite that the
Bonn reading society, who sponsored the commission, is unable to procure...
ad-equate musi-cians to ef-fec-tive-ly ne-go-ti-ate the high-ly am-bi-tious or-ches-tral wri-ting.
Like-ly not. Bee-tho-ven will be-come the

No doubt an un-re-mark-a-ble ef-fort!

\[ q = 72 \]  
\[ q = 66 \] (with a prophetic-like trance)
principal musician of the modern world... author of an art that will transcend even the en-
I would imagine the music is most remarkable.
A fitting tribute is what every ruler needs to summarize.
to his people the accomplishments won on their behalf, but,
Joseph's music, like his dreams, is silenced and comes to nothing.
Should I simply forget my sorrows in endless games of cards,

(addressing Lucifer)

A tempo

181
Yes! I beckon you to the table!
day-dreaming death away?
K

I have vital matters awaiting my attention.

L

J

Kaia... wait... please stay... if only for a moment.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

Cb.

R.

rit...
Dear Joseph, you must not exist so pitifully little while.

\[
\begin{align*}
K & & \text{\textit{mp} } & & \text{\textit{p}} \\
L & & \text{\textit{mp} } & & \text{\textit{p}} \\
J & & \text{\textit{p}} & & \\
\text{Vln. 1} & & \text{\textit{mp} } & & \text{\textit{p}} \\
\text{Vln. 2} & & \text{\textit{mp} } & & \text{\textit{p}} \\
\text{Vla.} & & \text{\textit{mp} } & & \text{\textit{p}} \\
\text{Vlc.} & & \text{\textit{mp} } & & \text{\textit{p}} \\
\text{Cb.} & & \text{\textit{p}} & & \\
\text{R.} & & \text{\textit{mp} } & & \text{\textit{p}}
\end{align*}
\]
you would break everyone's heart.

Finally!

* Kaia sits at the card table.

A tempo

Rit.

3 pizz.
No. 14: King of Hearts (Trio)

\[j = 132\]

K

L

J

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Cello

Bass

Piano

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

\[j = 132\]
Five-card draw, jokers wild...
Shots, of course.

What will we bet? That could provide an in -
I would hope so. Ante up!

centive to lose.

Lucifer places a fourth glass of cognac in the center of the table and deals the first hand. The players examine their cards. Lucifer pretends to bluff.
The wicked never go unpunished.
The players bet.
The players exchange cards.

One.

Call.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

Cb.

The players bet.
The players exchange cards.

R.
Call. Three of a kind.

Call.
Two pair.

Call. Nothing.
In - ten - tion - al no doubt, but who are we to stand in the way.

195
Joseph sighs and drinks the glass of cognac at the center of the table that Lucifer promptly refills. Lucifer deals the next hand.
197
Lucifer and Kaia exchange cards. Lucifer broods for a moment.

K.

L.

J.

Fold.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

Cb.

Lucifer and Kaia exchange cards. Lucifer broods for a moment.
I will raise Ka ia one strike.
Dear Joseph,
you look confused. A strike is the
punishment administered to the player of the losing hand.
Strikes may include the infliction of physical pain, or
100

mental pain, as I will soon demonstrate.
Lucifer and Kaia throw down their cards.

Call.

Alas!
I am defeated!
Lucifer flirtingly holds his hand and turns his head in mock anxiety (expecting a pet 'strike'), before Kaia decisively snuffs her cigarette on his hand.
God in heaven;

(cigarette snuff)
De vil in hell... witch!

Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!
Ha! You still owe me three shots.
Given the severity of my strike, I implore you grant...
me clemency. Perhaps the table may divide the shots?

As I
have no desire to remain conscious anyway I would
such selflessness I will reward and grant Lucifer's

drink the shots.
Joseph drinks the shots and begins to sway as Lucifer deals the next hand.
Call. One strike any takers?

One.
Al - ways, I will see your strike and raise you a wish.
194

Gran - ted by the play - er of the los - ing hand a wish, dear
Joseph, may fairly include all that is possible.

Poker is more
I agree, but rules is rules!

easily played with the lower stakes of money.
Oh, dark revenge!

The players lay down their cards. Lucifer has won the hand.
wish that Kalia would kiss my hand to make it better.
On what I protest!

Ridiculous as ever
grounds?!
Hon - or and al - so germs You have fil - thy
wishes unlike strikes, one may not so easily rescind.
Wishes are uniquely incorruptible in this fallen world, and have a special
status as such. One may alter a wish... I would
hap-pi-ly wish that Ka-ia would re-move
Thank you, dear Lucifer, I understand the point!
Hon - or, germs, and all o - ther pow - ers are
impo - tent op - pon - ents to wish - es
On - ly
love has the trans-form-ative power to re-form a wish.
Not as much as I would wish for her to...

(To Lucifer)

Do you love Kaia?

(To Kaia)

Do you love
No, but I do admire his...

Lucifer?

Kia do you love

293
Did you ever love me?
305

K.

L.

J.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

Cb.

R.

Let me take games seriously.
kiss his hand and end the game.
High-card draw...
Interesting.

Loser forfeits his wish or his soul!

A
Why then bet
soul is worth more than a wish,
Souls are the source of wishes.
a dollar on a dime?
Joseph, none of this is necessary.

(turning heroically to Kaia)

Love.
Indeed, dear Joseph, are you certain that risking your soul for a
A woman who abandoned you on your deathbed is consistent with...
A soul without love is a burden. All or
I live for these moments.

no-thing! Draw Satan!
Lucifer reaches for the deck and draws a card.
Jack of clubs. Nervous?
Re - mem - ber what I taught you. You were al - ways so
I could never forget.
King of Hearts

Tempo ad lib.
King of hearts

256
Well played... but risky!
My God what fun! I re-lin-quish my wish.
Madness!

(visibly drunken)

Always quit when you're ahead

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco
No. 15: Why are you tormenting Joseph ...

\( j = 120 \) Joseph tumbles back to the chaise as Kaia and Lucifer argue at the card table.

Why are you tormenting Joseph!

Some medicine is bitter.

---

Violin 1

\( j = 120 \) Joseph tumbles back to the chaise as Kaia and Lucifer argue at the card table.
He is only a mortal!

You left him alone to die.
and I only mean to rectify him to that fact.
I light his life on fire! I inspired him to a
greatness he alone could never dream.
Yes, my dear, but as always You leave them to burn out.
I will resolve every thing. The world is changing! I can

\( q = 66 \)
\( q = 96 \)
feel the equations balance even now. The unknown values cry out! The variables vanish._
and the world should be as it should be.
And when the world becomes as the Pantheon.
Will we too spend eternity hosting garden parties.
I have entirely something else in mind.

I trust I will see you again soon.

* Kaia blows Lucifer a kiss that he returns. Kaia finds Joseph semiconscious in the chaise. She sits by his bedside, and holds his head in her hands.
No. 16: I must leave now ...

I must leave now. Thank you for sparing me from

Will you ever return.
Lu- ci- fer's wish. If we could play a- gain, when all the world is si- lent al- ways.

273
I would wish to hear my music

only us for what would you wish?

I would wish to hear my music
How could I grant your wish? I have never heard the work.
One can wish for anything—nothing is hopeless.
Kaia stands, lights the last of her cigarettes and walks to the riverside, filling her glass with water from the river Lethe. Returning to the chaise, Kaia hands the glass to Joseph, who upon drinking the water, will forget his former life and Kaia.
Do you re-mem-ber when we first met?

The sun-light was bril-liant... I saw you from the carr- iage.
You were distributing seditious pamphlets arguing for free
speech and you were beau-ti-ful. I or-dered the couch-man to stop and I asked you, 'if one could
say anything, what would one say? and you answered

* Joseph loses consciousness
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No. 17: Epilogue

Mnemosyne:

When all else is ended, memory remains … the final boundary before the solace of oblivion. Here, Joseph once lingered, unable to forget his love he became a ghost to himself, until forgetting his love, he became a memory.

Ah love, that secret, shaping force, how you reform even me! And what is life, but one long memory distorted by love. Poor Joseph, you could not accept that a happy death requires only that one choose the most expedient lie.

Though you forget us, forget Lucifer, even your beloved Kaia, while we yet live, we will not forget you.

Farewell dear Joseph …

You who fought a monster whose name was fanaticism. You who failed, at all you undertook.

(addressing the audience)

And you …

Drink to more and worry the less. Remember the line, and leave this place blessed.

~
Ryan Gagnon was born in 1979 in Santa Rosa, California. From 1998 to 2003, Ryan studied music at the University of Houston, where his principle teachers included Mike Warney (trombone and euphonium), and Michael Horvit (music composition). Ryan graduated from the University of Houston cum laude in 2003 with a B.M. in Music Composition. Ryan was twice awarded 1st Place in the Louisa Stude Sarofim Undergraduate Composition Competition in 2000, and 2002. In 2003, Ryan was awarded 1st Place the Golden Key Honor Society International Composition. At the University of Missouri, Kansas City, Ryan has studied music composition with James Mobberly, Zhou Long, Chen Yi, and Paul Rudy. From 2006-2008, Ryan was awarded the Virginia French Mackie Music Theory Scholarship. He is currently a candidate for the degrees M.A. in Music Theory, and M.M. in Music Composition. The subject of his M.M. Thesis, the one-act chamber operetta, Love and Reform, is scheduled to premier in Manhattan during the fall 2011 season.