



MUSICAL STRINGS IN THE MELODIES

P. PRABAVATHI

Professor in English
Hindusthan College of Arts and Science
Coimbatore (TN), INDIA.

ABSTRACT

A poem set to music in the German language is called a lied, or in the French language, a Mélodie. A group of poems, usually by the same poet, which are set to music to form a single work, is called a song cycle. Musical setting is a musical composition that is written on the basis of a literary work. The literary work is said to be set, or adapted, to music. It includes choral music and other vocal music.

INTRODUCTION

The main differences between poetry and lyric is that words in a poem take place against the context of silence. Musicians like Will Oldham and David Byrne have recently pointed out, lyrics take place in the context of a lot of deliberate musical information: melody, rhythm, instrumentation, the quality of the singer's voice, other qualities of the recording, etc.. The ways the conditions of that environment affect the construction of the words (refrain, repetition, the ways information that can be communicated musically must be communicated in other ways in a poem, etc. A poem set to music can be a lyric, or just a song.

“Heard Melodies Are Sweet, but Those Unheard Are Sweeter” This line from “Ode on a Grecian Urn” is an example of Keats arguing that the power of thought, the imagination and anticipation is often greater than the act itself. Music and melodies that are imagined and anticipated are always in tune.

Keats is writing about the pipes and tumbrels embossed onto the urn and is imagining them playing. He imagines such sweet melodies that he wants them to play on, not in reality to his

P. PRABAVATHI

1 Page



“sensual ear”, but in his mind because there they are faultless and eternal; whereas in reality they are not only imperfect but finite.

The poem is about immortalizing things through poetry and through the realms of our imagination. The urn is immortalized through Keats’s poem and the “sweet melodies” are perfectly immortalized through our own thought and imagination

Waltzing Matilda

Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda, my darling.

Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me.

Waltzing Matilda and leading a water-bag.

Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me.

- A.B. Patterson

Written 1895, first published as sheet music 1903. "Waltzing Matilda" is a ballad centering on a swagman, an itinerant laborer who walked from one place to the next looking for temporary employment. He carried a swag (rolled-up blanket or pack) containing his belongings--hence, the term *swagman*. The laborer in the poem is a sheep shearer.

.....A ballad is a poem, often set to music that tells a story centering on a theme popular with the common people of a particular culture or place.

Homestead, sixty-two miles northwest of the town of Winton in Queensland, Australia. The homestead was the site of a sheep farm and a shearing operation.Christina MacPherson (1864-1936) set the ballad to music in the same year, basing the melody loosely on a Scottish song, "Thou Bonnie Wood of Craigielea". James Barr (1770-1836) wrote the music for that song, and Robert Tannahill (1774-1810) wrote the words. MacPherson had heard the Scottish song played by a brass band in Warrnambool in Victoria, Australia. Over the years, "Waltzing Matilda" became an unofficial Australian national anthem. In Stanley Kramer's 1957 film *On the Beach*, The poem served as part of the background music. It was used as the theme in other film productions and was played at the end of the 2000 Summer Olympic Games in Sydney. The author wrote the poem plainly and simply with a cadence that made it easy to set to music and sing.

It is a song about the value of freedom. The swagman is a wandering hobo, living off of the land. He is probably a convict or the descendant of one sent to Australia in the first place for being a debtor. The squatter is someone who has appropriated ownerless land and made it his and a jumbuck is specifically a feral sheep whose wool is difficult to shear. The Swagman takes this essentially ownerless sheep, but the Squatter desires to transform the ownerless

P. PRABAVATHI

2P a g e



Australia into a Britain with rules and private property. The swagman realizes that once Australia becomes Britain, he will most likely once again incur debt and be imprisoned and that there is no life for him anymore. He would rather die than be reduced to a life of dishonor.

The poem set to music is seen in the Wordsworth's poem 'The Solitary Reaper' these are the last lines of the poem.

*The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.*

The day dream is now over, and he is moving forward with his life 'mounting' the hill and continuing on his journey. The music will remain in the heart of the poet for ever even though he could no longer hear it.

WORK CITED

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/.../cerys-matthews-poetry-and-music-closely-thin...>

www.john-keats.com › Board index › John Keats Forum › Help and Homework

www.middlemiss.org/lit/authors/patersonab/poetry/wmatilda.html