



TONY LLEWELLYN, IX°
M.W. Frater Supreme Magus

Flores et Taciturnitas

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of the
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Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia

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This pamphlet has been published by the Metropolitan Study Group of the Metropolitan College No. 1, Societas Rosicruciana In Anglia. The MSG is an open forum and we welcome all individuals, men and women, who are interested in exploring the deeper mysteries of Nature, Science and Truth.

We normally meet on the 3rd Saturday of the month. All of our meetings can now also be accessed virtually, and we host attendees from many countries.

If you would like to attend any future meetings, please sign up to our mailing list on our website at srialondon.org



Introduction

Dear Fratres, Sorors and the wider universal fellowship of Seekers,

Welcome to the June 2023 edition of the Rosicrucian pamphlet, as ripe as midsummer's solstice celebration, delirious and giddy with abundant possibility!

It is also with a sense of pride and a tinge of sadness that I must inform you that this will be the last Rosicrucian pamphlet produced by the Metropolitan Study Group for the Province of Greater London of the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia. The editorial team will be moving on to what we hope will be brighter and more expansive horizons. The High Council of the SRIA has given the green light for a society-wide publication and the hard working editorial team, that have tirelessly put the pamphlet together over the past few years, will be taking up the reins on behalf of the Society.

If we cast our minds back to the dark early days of the pandemic, there was discussion in the Metropolitan Study Group on what to do in the unusual times we found ourselves in? How could we honour the Rosicrucian teachings whilst utilising the technology we all have at our fingertips? If our work was to *"cure the sick, and that gratis"* what could be done at a time of Global crisis, when we were all prevented from meeting in person? The answer lay within the original Rosicrucian teachings – the manifestos themselves. A simple but effective method to impart evolutionary ideas. And thus the new Pamphlets were born.

Within those pages we have carried the torch of *Living Rosicrucianism*, an interpretation that the Province of London has been promulgating for some time now. The Universal and Perennial teachings of the Western Mystery Tradition have often been couched within opaque and enigmatic texts (for justified reasons considering the political and religious fervours engulfing history). Now that we live in a more transparent age, how best to expound the enduring

messages contained within these texts in an accessible and intelligible manner?

This has been the backbone of our work in London, and we hope that our pamphlets have helped clear the 'air', light the 'fires' of enthusiasm, made the 'waters' of understanding flow a little easier, and 'earth' our hearts and minds in the ever-eternal present moment, to release the 'spirit' within.

Which brings me to the contents of this edition. We have a beautiful paper on the perception of eternity; a contemplative piece on Time, Space and our place within the Universe; a contemplation on our relationship with The Goddess through the painter Giorgione and the Venetian School of renaissance painting; a fascinating look at the story of David and Goliath through a geometric and kabbalistic prism; and finally a riveting journey through Busoni's opera *Faust* through Masonic eyes (it is clear from this piece how the intertwined Rosicrucian, Alchemical and Masonic traditions have walked the same path together throughout history).

So, dear readers, we will see you again in December. The same beating heart, clothed in fine new vestments, transporting *Living Rosicrucianism* to pastures new... and we hope you will join us on our metaphysical journeying. In the words of one of our fratres, M. O. Osborne:

"True Rosicrucianism is a philosophy, and be the adherent Christian, Jew, Muslim, Hindu or Buddhist there is a desire for the furtherance of knowledge."

May we all continue to further our knowledge and, with love and hope, transmute it into Wisdom...

The Metropolitan Study Group would like to wish you all a fruitful Summer Solstice, filled with peace and plenty, and we thank you for your support over the past three years.

With Love from London,

The Metropolitan Study Group

Alexander Rofaila
Chief Adept - Province of London, SRIA
Director of Studies - London College of Adepts



Circle of Unity

The Times They Are A-Changin'

Dear Fratres and Friends,

If we were to look back through the history of human evolution, we would note that at certain pivotal moments our view of the world we live in and our perceived place in the universe has, out of necessity, shifted and changed. And at times in the past, such changes were considered heretical and even blasphemous.

Human beings are largely creatures of habit, and we tend to hold on tightly to our own particular worldview. But what if some new information were to become available to us, which may challenge our perceptions of creation... would we stubbornly hold on to what we believe we already know? Or would we be prepared to let go of our assumptions and preconceptions?

As many of our readers will already know, we have recently drawn attention to the entrance of

Pluto into the astrological sign of Aquarius, and a number of us have chosen to gather together in meditation and prayer so that we may align ourselves with, and surrender ourselves more completely in service to the highest positive transformational energies within us as individuals, as well as collectively for Humanity as a whole.

The second to last time the planet Pluto traversed the sign of Aquarius, this astrological event ushered in a paradigm-shift in our understanding of our place within the wider scheme of creation. This shift was triggered when Copernicus published his heliocentric theory. At that time, to suggest that our worldview was incorrect and that the sun does not revolve around the earth as we had liked to believe, but that the earth in fact revolves around the sun was met with ridicule and scorn.

How true it still is that humanity likes to think that everything of revolves around us, and how tightly we tend to hold on to our self-centred beliefs and vain notions of self-importance.

The influence of Pluto in Aquarius will continue to build momentum from January 21, 2024, and its effects will be felt until 2044. During this time it is highly likely that there will be a succession of ground-breaking and potentially radical discoveries that will come to light throughout the next 20 years, illuminating our understanding of the deeper mysteries of creation, along with our place within it.

To give an example of how this influence is already beginning to challenge our understanding of the mechanics of creation, I encourage you to listen to an excerpt from a recent podcast by Lex Fridman who interviews cognitive scientist Donald Hoffman:

[Click for Video](#)

This is a discussion about our assumed understanding of 'Space-Time', and whether we are now beginning to discover that our perceptions of 'Space' and 'Time' are in fact fundamentally incorrect.

Human experience is measured by what we call space and time, as these two fundamental constructs have underpinned our views on life and the laws of Nature herself... But what if all this were about to change?

What if we, whether we like it or not, are stood upon the precipice of a radical new understanding of the hidden mysteries of Nature and Science? Are we prepared to let go of the beliefs which we've clung to all our lives, when presented with a deeper truth?

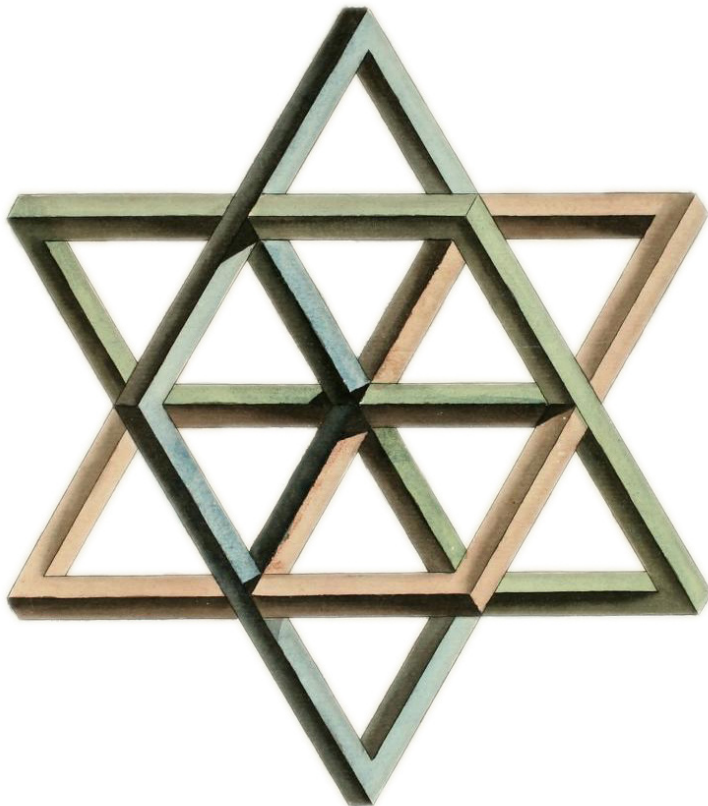
There is a short quote I'd like to share with you all, which comes from the second book of Esdras:

For whosoever seeketh, so shalt ye marvel!

Therefore dear Fratres and Friends, the more we attempt to delve, ever more deeply into the hidden mysteries of Nature and science, the more humbled we become, as we are struck with awe and reverence by the breath-taking Beauty and Majesty of Creation.

Wishing all our readers a wonderful and illuminating Summer!

Frater Cheyne Towers
Director of Studies, Metropolitan College No.1 SRIA
Suffragan, Province of Greater London



Moments in Eternity

and their perception through colours, numbers, rituals and drama

What is eternity if not an endless succession of single moments in time?

We call them seconds, minutes and hours, days and years; we consume them at such a fast pace that they have become just numbers and symbols, on our watches, on our phones and on our computers.

We waste eternity running after deadlines and careers, relegating our dreams to mere oneiric journeys that we embark upon when we are asleep because that it is where they belong to, or so we have been told.

No daydreaming, not anymore... we don't have enough time, too many things to do, too many tasks to accomplish, too much money to be made. We rarely stop to enjoy the beauty of a bright starry night, a beautiful sunset or colourful bunch of flowers, all of us too self-absorbed in the daily routine.

Time is money they say. But time is not refundable, not the one we have been given when we reached this plane.

What is connecting mind and matter? Vibrations and frequencies.

Mother Nature and the Arts

Mother Nature inspires us when her forces and beauty are put on display, producing a powerful yet humbling effect; so do human constructs, a ritual, a beautiful painting by an old master, or a great song; or simply walking through ancient ruins.

They make time stop, they make us forget about the past and the future, they make us connect to a plane beyond our mind and our body, a place we are rarely able to access from the everyday race to satisfy our material needs; a place where time do not exist and in which we can dwell as long as we want. A place that we can repeatedly reach if we learn and remember the way back.

Every grandiose display of power from Mother Nature or any sort of Art, made of colours, sounds

or scents with its unique designs and materials, creates a reaction, physical and emotional; they talk to us in the universal language of frequencies, and they affect our physical, spiritual and ethereal minds and bodies.

And when we listen to them, those moments in eternity are suddenly opened before our mind, timeless and still, immovable and immutable.

The structure of the Universe is based on vibration.

On its unfolding, from the highest and fastest frequencies to the lowest and slowest, all things, thoughts, phenomena and beings are all assigned to a specific frequency.

Those moments of eternity allow us to discover at first, and then attune to, those higher frequencies we wouldn't be able to otherwise reach, and enter in resonance with the very fabric and structure of the universe itself.

Our mind is the tuning mechanism, enabling each one of us to be in syntony and resonate with those higher frequencies. When we enter in resonance with those energies, when we tap into those timeless moments, everything becomes eternal, time ceases to exist as we know it. It loses its purpose because we transcend the human limits of our very own constructs. Those frequencies are dimensional bridges, bridges we can walk upon to reach higher vibrational states of being.

"As Above, so Below; As Below, so Above" – The Emerald Tablet

"Know thyself, and thou shalt know the universe and God." – Temple of Apollo at Delphi

They speak to us of eternal principles and primordial images, Jungian archetypes and Platonic Ideas that connect our world to the universe beyond and above, which exists spaceless and timeless, eternal. These are the vibrations that our active consciousness translates for us first as images and sounds and then as feelings and emotions.

Because words cannot describe what it cannot be described by words alone.

Those moments are eternal because they require no active thinking, any unnecessary worrying; the very act of not thinking enable us to feel our true emotions, be in touch with our inner self and listen to the Divine Voice of Nature. All of which are constantly shut down by the coarse and low vibrational state of solid matter; A blank mind but a full heart, a feeling of fulfilment and well-being that rises after freeing oneself from the constraint of the physical world. In perfect resonance with what is above and beyond.

No boundaries, no walls, we are in syntony with the universe.

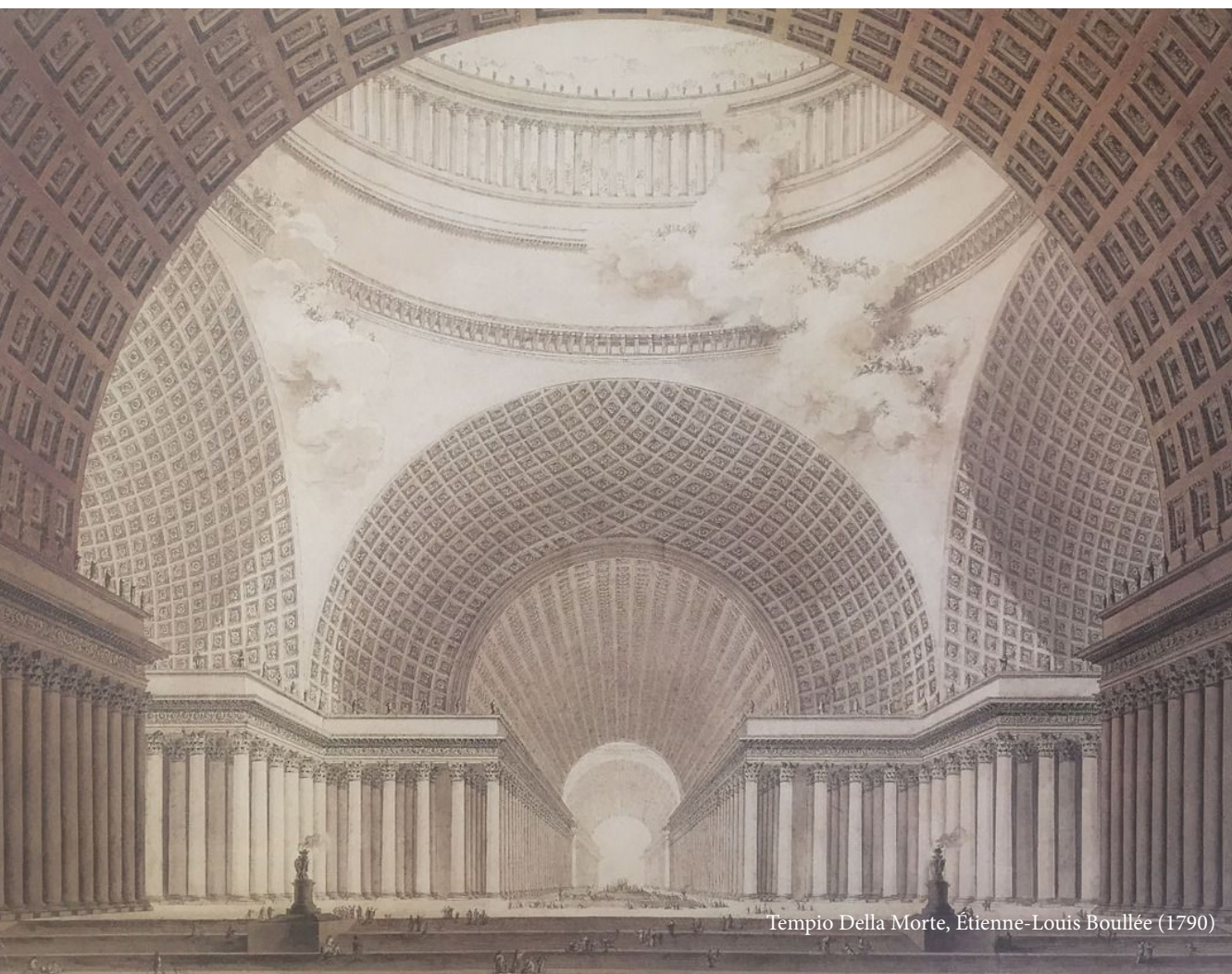
A true moment of eternity never passes by, never ceases to exist, it is forever. How, now, can we connect to those pure and true moment of eternity?

“The psychic undercurrents which determines man’s feeling and image of the world are manifested through colours and forms, tones and words, which crystallised into symbolic spiritual figures expressing man’s relation both to the archetypal world and the world in which he lives.” (Erich Neumann, art and the creative unconscious, page 84)

It is this relationship that allows us to experience those moments in eternity. Mother Nature and Art convey those frequencies for us; we must actively tune to them.

You are what you think.

This is a very personal endeavour; we all are different, and we perceive and feel the world in a different way.



Tempio Della Morte, Étienne-Louis Boullée (1790)

We all have experienced the power of mother nature once in life, we have called it the Sublime, and defined it as:

of outstanding spiritual, intellectual, or moral worth.

tending to inspire awe usually because of elevated quality (as of beauty, nobility, or grandeur) or transcendent excellence.

The sublime, even before I could give it a name, has always been a way to experience the powerful presence of something that has transcended my basic understanding of the material world.

I can stare for hours at those beautiful sunsets I enjoy when I am at home.

Or at those winter storms I used to watch through the window when I was young, with menacing dark clouds, loud thunders and bright lightning and the roaring waves crushing on the pier.

Or at the Majesty of a tall snow-capped mountain, immovable and powerful, which makes everything look small and insignificant just by looking at it.

Or at the vastity of the open oceans, where you can feel but helpless compared to its enormity.

Or just walking in the wood in spring, surrounded by the soothing scents and sounds of Nature while she is awakening from the winter sleep.

Not only mother nature can stir those emotions, Art, too, is also able to create a such an effect. Through those human constructs and artefacts, which were thought, planned, and created in accordance with the Divine and Natural Laws of the Universe, we reach a sense of eternity, immortality, and fulfilment that goes beyond the mere experience of the coarse world of matter. Humankind can reach that superior knowledge it has lost when we have silenced our inner spiritual voice.

There are endless examples that can be given of those artefacts, all of which have stirred in me the same emotions. In my personal journey, beside the power of mother nature, the recurrent way to experience those moment in eternity has been mainly through sound.

Sound, be the voice of Nature or music, has always had a significant impact on my mind and body. Music has been my partner since early age, and it is still an integral part of my daily life; it gives me pockets of down time in between everyday life tasks. I rarely walk around without listening to music, it helps forgetting the noise of the outside world and shuts those negative thoughts down which are constantly running through the mind.

Music makes me feel good.

Sound carries a powerful energy; it is not just something you hear. There is more to that. As humans we are not built to hear every sound, every vibration, to experience the full spectrum of The Music of the Spheres; our physical bodies can but perceive only a small portion of them.

Everything in the universe vibrates, from all sorts of matter, through our deepest emotions to the noblest thoughts. Everything has its own frequency. The number of vibrations per second is known as frequency and it determines the very essence, the universal blueprint, of everything.

“If you want to find the secrets of the universe, think in terms of energy, frequency, and vibration.”

Nikola Tesla

I believe those moment in eternity are windows opened directly on our inner self, our real essence, which is the same of the universe itself; After all, we are all made of the same matter and thoughts, we are projections of the same thing.

These windows open to a place where we can understand those secrets Tesla was talking about. And, if we learn how to tune to those secrets, those higher frequencies, we can change the way we are interacting with the reality we live in, by working on our behaviours and our thoughts, on our words and our actions, to unlock our hidden potentials and nurture our souls. Bathing in the soothing experience of Light and Knowledge, in communion with Sophia, to become a better version of ourselves and live a fulfilled and meaningful life.

If we can master Space and Time, we are then in syntony with the plane above; we will experience and appreciate those moment in eternity, we will experience a state we should thrive to achieve on the material plane and exercise throughout our lives.

The Sages and Enlightened people of the past have reached that state and were able to vibrate at those higher frequencies. They have cured humanity on a spiritual level.

It is our duty to master those moments in eternity; to understand their most profound meanings and to become what we were meant to be. To discover our purposes in life, and most importantly, to progress as individuals and species on the path on that spiritual awakening mankind seems to have lost track of in the past centuries.

Frater Stefano Chila



The Enduring Stellar Lifecycle in 30 Doradus, NASA (2023, CC BY 2.0)



The Sleeping Venus, Giorgio Barbarelli da Castelfranco (1510)

The Fateful Gaze of Goddess

When the fruit of my tree has completely melted, I shall awake and be the mother of a king.

The tablet behind the bed of the sleeping Venus, the Fifth Day.

I fearlessly began to relate all the events that had passed, and how I had fallen into them through ignorance.

Christian Rosencreutz, the Seventh Day.

The Chemical Wedding of Christian Rosencreutz

The Guide to Our Art

As we labour in the service of Our Art, it is art that is our incomparable guide, it is as the page who conducted Christian Rosencreutz to the chamber of the sleeping Venus.

We can experience this truth through meditating on the imagery of an extraordinary painting entitled 'The Sleeping Venus' attributed to the Venetian master Giorgione da Castelfranco.

Giorgione

Giorgione da Castelfranco, known as 'Giorgione,' lived from 1473-1510. Together with his younger contemporary, Tiziano Vercelli, known as 'Titian,' he founded the Venetian School of renaissance painting. His genius was to communicate in his work an elusive poetic quality

of 'colour' and 'mood' that was so remarkable that he became much sought after by aristocratic patrons such as the Doge Agostino Barbarigo and the condottieri Consalvo Ferrente.

The Three Philosophers

And yet, apart from 'The Sleeping Venus' there are only five other surviving paintings attributed to him. Almost all we now know about his life is from Vasari's *Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*. Giorgione was born in Castelfranco in the Veneto, then apprenticed to Giovanni Bellini in Venice where he met Titian who was a fellow apprentice of Bellini. He rose to prominence and received Leonardo da Vinci on his visit to Venice in 1500.

Vasari described Giorgione as a person of distinguished and romantic charm, who expressed in his art the sensitive and imaginative grace, touched with poetic melancholy, of Venetian life at his time. Of course, these qualities of perception are those associated with those who practise *Our Art*, and so unsurprisingly feature in one of the five other surviving paintings attributed to him, 'The Three Philosophers.'

The Three Philosophers was commissioned by Taddeo Contarini a Venetian merchant who was also an Hermeticist and Alchemist. The painting was once thought to depict the Three Magi prior to the Epiphany, but now is regarded as concerning the *transmission of knowledge* symbolised by a Greek philosopher, perhaps Plato, passing a text to an Arab Philosopher,



The Three Philosophers, Giorgio Barbarelli da Castelfranco (1510)

perhaps Avicenna. The youth, a personification of the Italian renaissance, gazes into Plato's cave. Others have even advanced to case that the three are King Solomon, Hiram, King of Tyre, and Hiram Abiff.

On the manuscript held by the oldest philosopher is written the word *eclipsis* referring perhaps to the solar eclipse and conjunction of 1503 which were held to have the greatest significance.

The scarcity of his work, the absence of almost all details of his life, and his extraordinary personality have led Giorgione to be regarded as one of the most mysterious figures in European art.

Sleeping Venus

What then of his painting, 'The Sleeping Venus.' It is the first full-length female reclining nude in Western painting. The composition mimics Venus's body in the lush hills of the landscape behind her. Venus is asleep and posed to imply that the composition is not overtly sexual but rather suggesting a oneness of Venus and Nature. Sydney Frieberg writes:

"Venus sleeping is the visual demonstration of a state of being in which idealised existence is suspended in harmony. Venus denotes not the act of love but the recollection of it. The perfect embodiment of Giorgione's dream, she dreams his dream herself."

Cupid was painted at the feet of Venus but was later overpainted.

The fabric on which Venus reclines, her bed if you will, is depicted in silver, gold and red whose alchemical symbolism is known to us all.

The Chemical Wedding: The Fifth day

Christian Rosencruetz had spent the evening of the fourth day at a banquet held by the King and Queen following the performance of an elaborate play. The banquet culminated in a terrifying finale, the beheading of the Royal Personages, and the revelation of the sacred task of Christian Rosencreutz and those guests present with him:

The life of these now rest in your hands; and if you will follow me, you will see this death give life to many.

The Virgin

Having fallen asleep after talking to his page, Christian Rosencreutz woke as the clock chimed twelve, and observed from the window of his lodgings a procession of the Virgin and six royal coffins. Each coffin was placed on a ship illuminated by a spiritual flame and the six ships sailed across the lake.

Christian Rosencreutz spoke again to his page before falling asleep. Awaking early on the

Fifth day and finding himself alone he asked the page to guide him around the castle. On this journey he came to a great gate at the entry to the Kings treasury, upon which was wrought. *Here lies the buried Venus, the fair woman who has undone many a great man in honour, blessing, fortune, and propriety.*

Despite this, and other warnings Christian Rosencreutz entered the triangular tomb at the heart of the Treasury and beheld the sleeping Venus. In doing so he commits a sin that Atlas would reveal on the Seventh day when he spoke of the porter who had admitted Rosencreutz to the castle:

...he used to be a famous and skilled astrologer, held in great honour by the Kings father, but he had once offended the Lady Venus, and seen her in her bed...

The King then said:

...that he could be released if someone can be found who committed as great a sin as he; they can take his place, and he will be free.

At the instant Rosencreutz realised that at the end of the Seventh day he would be compelled by his conscience to confess his sin, take up the post of porter at the gate, and to leave the castle never to see the King and Queen again.

Looking at a Goddess

Of the many questions that arise when we attempt to seek the meaning of the 'Chemical Wedding' is why seeing Venus asleep in her bed is so grave a sin as to prevent Rosencreutz remaining with the King and Queen in the castle.

Giorgione's painting helps us to understand what would have been known to the author of the text for he and Giorgione shared a similar understanding of classical mythology and its renaissance reimagining.

Above all Venus was a symbol of unity with Nature and of marriage. Giorgione depicts her sleeping, that is not looking at he who observes her. She is passive and not active, she represents not erotic love but the spiritual love that the *Artist must find in his Art to gain the transmutation, Mystical Marriage that he seeks.*

The greatest danger to the Alchemist who has sought this vision, this initiation, is that in observing the sleeping Venus, erotic desire, sexual enchantment, rather than the desire for knowledge is his emotion. If so he is inevitably dragged down into entanglement with the material world.

The greatest warning to all is that of the fate of Actaeon.



Diana and Actaeon, Titian (1556)

Diana and Actaeon

Actaeon was a great hunter who was seen as the mortal male equivalent of Artemis/Diana goddess of the hunt, vegetation, childbirth, and chastity.

Raised by the centaur Chiron, Actaeon the son of Aristaeus and Autonoe, hunted in the forests with his pack of 50 dogs. He became infatuated by Artemis:

Presuming upon his dedication to Artemis of the first fruits of his hunting, he purposed to consummate his marriage with Artemis at the temple to the goddess.

When travelling to her temple, Actaeon fell asleep near a spring. When he awoke, he saw Artemis bathing in the spring. This is the scene depicted by Titian, Giorgione's closest associate, in his greatest painting 'Diana and Actaeon.'

Decency should have made him turn away, but he did not. Seeing him, the goddess was infuriated as depicted in *Metamorphosis* by Ovid:

She caught up a handful of water and threw it in his face and gave him the horns of a mature stag, lengthened his neck and made his ear tips pointed, changing feet for hands, long legs for arms, and covering his back with a dappled hide. And then she added fear... only his mind remained unchanged. Pursued by his 50 hounds his life ends in enumerable wounds.

Actaeon's gaze is a sin because it violates Artemis both as a goddess and the goddess of chastity, which is spiritual unity. Her response is to transform Actaeon into a stag, one of her own symbols, and so Actaeon loses himself in her. He and the goddess become one in the hunt which ends in his sacrificial death.

The Redemptive Gaze

In the *Metamorphosis of Apuleius*, the protagonist, Lucius is overwhelmed by an insatiable curiosity to see and practise magic. His desire overcomes all else and he accidentally transforms himself into an Ass. This book, and the tales it includes are thought to have inspired both the French fairy tale *Beauty and the Beast*, and Shakespeare's character Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

The book concerns the allegorical journey of Lucius, the adventures he experiences, and the tales that he is told. He eventually gains the wisdom to purify himself by seven immersions



Titian and Bottom, Edwin Landseer (1851)

in the seas before praying to the Queen of Heaven, the Universal Goddess, to be returned to human form. The Queen of Heaven appears to him as Isis who reveals that his transformation can take place if he eats a garland of roses held by one of her priests at her festival which will take place the following day. In return, he agrees to be initiated into the Navigium Isidis, the Priesthood of Isis. Lucius complies with her instructions, is transformed, and then in due time initiated into the priesthood. In the conclusion of the story, Lucius is finally initiated into the College of Pastophori 'Shrine bearers', where he serves both Isis and Osiris.

A Dangerous Encounter

Any encounter with a goddess is fraught, more so if it is the result of an inappropriate desire, arrogant hubris, or unbridled curiosity.

Christian Rosencreutz's curiosity overcomes his piety and caution, leads him to disregard the warnings placed in his path. However, the purity of his character protects him from any inappropriate desires when he gazes on the sleeping Venus. He *sees her* as an allegory to be understood, as we are encouraged to do, rather than to be violated. Thus his sin, if sin it is, does

not cause Venus to awake. It is the awakened Venus that the warnings in the Treasury concern, for there is *no telling* of what could happen if a goddess returns your gaze. Rosencruetz escapes the gaze of Venus and is able to continue his spiritual quest, though its ultimate fulfilment is now impossible as he will discover.

Actaeon knows what befalls him when Artemis returns his gaze but *he cannot tell of it* because as a stag he has lost his powers of speech. His lust and hubris, his bestial character, that led him to the goddess has become his form. His life has reached its conclusion, he is absorbed into her mysteries but not as her initiate but as her sacrifice.

Lucius wins the right of audience with Isis because through his journey he learns wisdom and humility. This is *seen* by Isis who *recognises* his newfound spirituality. He partakes of her mystery by eating her symbol, the rose, unlike Acteon who is eaten by Artemis in her symbolic form of the 'hunt'.

Seeing and Being Seen

To the renaissance scholar vision was not passive, never just mechanical. When one *looked* something of the viewer went forth from the eye, encountered an object and brought back something of that object to the viewer *which changed them*. If this could happen from looking at a mundane object then viewing a goddess could have inconceivable consequences. For a goddess to view a man would potentially take that individual into the mind, the being, of the goddess. Thus, it became the death of Acteon, the apotheosis of Lucius, and the fateful, unintentional error of Rosencruetz.

A Fateful Encounter

And so we too should be cautious when seeking a fateful encounter with the Queen of Heaven, the Goddess, for if we are unprepared, unpurified, then the course of our spiritual journey could be thrown into turmoil. We would, as it were, find ourselves *going to the dogs*.

So finally, it is fitting that we exchange glances with Venus as Dante Gabriel Rossetti painted her in 1868, just as our Society was founded.

She is surrounded by roses and honeysuckle, bears the arrow of cupid, and holds an apple.

As a member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, Rossetti sought to return to the compositions of Italian painting of the Sixteenth Century, to that of Giorgione. The Sleeping Venus Awakes. We too seek a return to the House of our Rosicrucian forebears.

Frater Stephen Goulder



Venus Verticordia, Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1868)



Spleen et Idéal, Carlos Schwabe (1907)

Élévation

Au-dessus des étangs, au-dessus des vallées,
Des montagnes, des bois, des nuages, des mers,
Par delà le soleil, par delà les éthers,
Par delà les confins des sphères étoilées,

Mon esprit, tu te meus avec agilité,
Et, comme un bon nageur qui se pâme dans l'onde,
Tu sillonnes gaiement l'immensité profonde
Avec une indicible et mâle volupté.

Envole-toi bien loin de ces miasmes morbides;
Va te purifier dans l'air supérieur,
Et bois, comme une pure et divine liqueur,
Le feu clair qui remplit les espaces limpides.

Derrière les ennuis et les vastes chagrins
Qui chargent de leur poids l'existence brumeuse,
Heureux celui qui peut d'une aile vigoureuse
S'élancer vers les champs lumineux et sereins;

Celui dont les pensers, comme des alouettes,
Vers les cieus le matin prennent un libre essor,
— Qui plane sur la vie, et comprend sans effort
Le langage des fleurs et des choses muettes!

Charles Baudelaire (1857)

*Above the ponds, above the valleys,
Mountains, woods, clouds, seas,
Beyond the sun, beyond the ethers,
Beyond the confines of the starry spheres,*

*My mind, you move with agility,
And, like a good swimmer who pales in the wave,
You cheerfully crisscross the deep immensity
With an unspeakable and male voluptuousness.*

*Fly far away from these morbid miasmas;
Go and purify yourself in the upper air,
And drink, like a pure and divine liquor,
The clear fire that fills the limpid spaces.*

*Behind the troubles and vast sorrows
Who burden with their weight the foggy existence,
Blessed is he who can with a vigorous wing
Rush towards the luminous and serene fields;*

*The one whose thoughts, like larks,
Towards the heavens in the morning take a free rise,
— Who hovers over life, and understands effortlessly
The language of flowers and silent things!*



David Slays Goliath, Gustave Dore (1866)

Five Smooth Stones

Number in David and Goliath

“Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd’s bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine.”

1 Samuel 17:40

Nothing is written in the Christian Bible in vacuity. Emmanuel Swedenborg once determined that the relationship between the literal and spiritual meanings in scripture *always* point to something significant in every statement, word and number used. If so, what is the symbology of the five smooth stones, and the significance of their number in the myth of David and Goliath?

The stones chosen by David were smooth because they came from the stream meandering through the long, shallow Valley of Elah where the armies of Israel and Philistia met a mere sixteen miles from Jerusalem. The obvious point is that smooth stones were chosen as

projectiles because they travel much faster through the air than rough stones which can also get snagged in a sling. On another level, these rough stones had gradually been smoothed by nature over many hundreds if not thousands of years in readiness for that very moment. For David, too, his time had come since he was ready to leave the hills and his father's flock to become the champion of Israel. Time had smoothed over both stones and a young man.

David, however, knew what he was doing. As a shepherd he had become an expert peltast and used his sling to frighten away or kill predators nearing his flock. In much the same way he was now defending Israel and protecting Jerusalem against altogether more dangerous predators. However, the choice of the number of stones resonates a much deeper meaning with correspondence in the world of spirit. Thus, the story of David and Goliath is an episode containing profound allegorical and mystical significance far beyond its literal interpretation.

If we consider the Hebrew word for "stream" – *nachal* - we find that it also means "to inherit" or "to receive from source". The word for "stone" is *eben*, and its etymology are the Hebrew words "father" (*av*) and "son" (*ben*). The five stones are therefore an inheritance. The setting of the story in the Valley of Elah is no coincidence either. *Elah* translates from Hebrew as "God is in the terebinth tree". It follows that the site of the confrontation between David and Goliath was a sacred place. Thus, we easily see how some seemingly innocuous references in the scriptures are loaded with occult value.

Why five stones? Why not one, two or ten? In the Bible there is always a *reason* for references to number. It is never a random choice because numbers are a 'bridge' between the clarity of higher celestial and lower terrestrial thought. If the speech of angels filters down into the world of human thought then, as Swedenborg observed, "*it falls into rhythms of various different counts.*" In gematria the Hebrew letter *He* also represents the number five and is used to indicate possession of something belonging to—or connected with—someone. It can also relate to a period of five thousand years. The smoothed stones are therefore symbolic of patient preparation for a chosen moment in time. Indeed, time is the key principle to which they allude, since it was on the fifth day of creation when life was made to populate the habitations designed on the second and third days. This interpretation is reinforced by two and three becoming five by addition. Thus, everything is prepared by God in time - just as those five stones were ready to be plucked from the stream. The number five is therefore symbolic of God's omniscience, and of David as an archetypal man chosen to fulfil his destiny.

The other items carried by David into battle were his rod, bag and sling. These represent the authority granted by God over the elements of earth, water and air. Elemental fire features earlier in the story, when Goliath is described as wearing a bronze helmet, breastplates, greaves and a javelin slung on his back. His spear shaft also has a shiny iron point. Fire is represented by the furnaces and casting processes for the armour, and by its reflection in the sun. Aware

of what he is up against, David is offered the bronze armour and helmet cast by King Saul's artisans, but which do not fit him. Besides, as a shepherd with no military training David cannot use the armour and chooses to go into battle with no metal on his person. Upon his approach Goliath mocked this lack of weaponry and taunted David by declaring:

"Am I a dog, that you come at me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. 'Come here, and I'll give your flesh to the birds and the wild animals.'"

David knocked Goliath out by casting just one of the smoothed stones - and then killed him with the giant's bronze sword before beheading him:

"David ran and stood over him. He took hold of the Philistine's sword and drew it from the sheath. After he killed him, he cut off his head with the sword." (1 Sam. 17:51)

The composition date for 1 Samuel was between 630 BC - 540 BC, the time of the Babylonian expansion with a mid-point occurring at about the fall of Jerusalem to King Nebuchadnezzar in 587 BC. The Babylonians invested a lot of effort into mastering an understanding of alchemy, and they recognised five elements: wind, fire, earth, water and sky. The sky occupied what the ancient Greeks identified with the "aether" (or "quintessence", by virtue of its being the fifth element). The following diagram represents these five elements:



The five stones chosen by David represent these five elements. Yet only one of them was required to slay Goliath. This is to say it did not matter *which* one he picked, since that stone was always going to represent the element of Spirit symbolizing God's power over the four lesser ones. In much the same way, Goliath's four limbs and head can be represented by the form of a pentagram. It is only by disabling Goliath's higher part—his head—that David achieves victory.

In this hypothesis the rod carried by David may be said to represent God's Spirit innate in the terebinth tree. The staff is both spirit and fire in one physical object (just as Moses' shepherd

staff was transformed by God at the Burning Bush). David is thereby also identified with the epic figure of Moses and his struggle with the terrestrial power of Egypt.

In 1 Samuel 17:17-18 David is tasked by Jesse to take provisions to his three brothers and the Israelite commander:

“Now Jesse said to his son David, ‘Take this ephah of roasted grain and these ten loaves of bread for your brothers and hurry to their camp. Take along these ten cheeses to the commander of their unit. See how your brothers are and bring back some assurance from them.’”

We can see that Jesse’s gifts of ten loaves and ten cheeses are not a random number selection, not least because their equal division between the three brothers cannot be achieved. These items require to be understood within the context of the eight items carried by David into battle, of which the five stones also equate to the five elements. As we have seen, David is not unprepared. The types and number of items carried by him after he delivered the twenty-one items to the Israelite army camp were eight in number, and they form the shape of a binary cross:

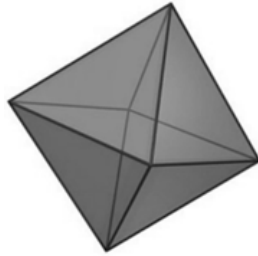
1 rod:	1
5 smoothed stones:	1+1+1+1+1
1 pouch:	1
1 sling:	1

This cross, comprised of four vertical and five horizontal digits, by numerical addition becomes $4+5 = 9$. Interestingly, an *ephah* being four hundred and thirty-two eggs also equates to $4+3+2 = 9$, the same number of digits contained in the binary cross representing the items carried by David into battle.

So, we may conclude that the intention is to highlight a state of *movement* or change from one state of being to another. In short, the passage tells us that David and the items he takes going out from Jesse and those he takes entering battle correspond with archetypes, and that he is himself a type of man working with a divine code to gain a safe and successful return.

This code finds expression in numerous ways. One of the most interesting of which is geometry, expressed by Plato as a tool to illustrate the correspondences with perfect “forms” found in Heaven. Can the story of David and Goliath be expressed geometrically?

A fascinating idea, and the answer must be yes if the letters, words and numbers convey deeper correspondences with forms to be found in the spirit realm. Thus, if we have eight separate objects of four different types, then these can be represented geometrically as an octahedron:



Moreover, the octahedron is the Platonic solid representing air, through which David's stone must fly. It is also the element closest to that of spirit.

Let us also consider the geometric significance of the five smoothed stones. Five can be represented by a square five-sided pyramid:



This appears as "half" the shape of the octahedron, albeit in reality it has a greater number of sides, although it will be recalled that David only cast one of the four stones at Goliath.

Returning to Jesse's ephah of grain, ten loaves and ten cheeses, by numerical reduction we have $1+10+10 = 3$ items. An *ephah* was a dry measure equating to about twenty-two modern litres or just under six gallons today, but in ancient Israel an *ephah* was the equivalent of three *sebah* or four hundred and thirty-two eggs. Adding in David's items for battle we have 10 loaves + 10 cheeses + 5 stones + 5 elements + 8 items = 20 or 2.

Even if we only add together the items *expressly* stated in the passage, namely 1 ephah + 10 loaves + 10 cheeses + 5 stones + 1 rod + 1 satchel + 1 sling = 2.

The gematria of "David" (DVD) in Hebrew is ten, $4+6+4 = 10$. So, by adding his name we have David 10 + 10 loaves + 10 cheeses + 5 stones + 5 elements + 8 items = 3. The numbers two and three may refer to the corresponding days of creation and the fifth day of their realisation, but it may also codify the binary conflict between David and Goliath as an allegory of chaos and order, good and evil, light and darkness, balance and imbalance etc., and David's triumph with one stone signifying the outcome of that the struggle and restoration of balance.

What we end up with is in fact inexpressible as a geometrical solid, it is a 2 and 1 (three) or 2 and 3 (five or twenty-three) configuration, represented by the pentacle or the cross outlined above.

The name David suggests that the character may even be an allegory for God expressed through the story itself. If so, it will be remembered that Jesse had four sons, three of whom were in the Israelite army but David was the only one who actually fought anyone. Therefore, the four brothers might be allegories of the Quaternary Thought, Will, Action and Outcome or overall Unity. Indeed, four by numerical reduction becomes one. This might be the true meaning of the myth of David's clash with Goliath, as an allegory of the forces of God overcoming and expelling the rebellious energy of Lucifer symbolised by Goliath and his army.

The scene set out in 1 Samuel chapter 17 contains much to make us query what we understand of the knowledge developed by later occult schools, since "embedded" or hidden in texts written as long ago as the sixth century BC are stories that are essentially Kabbalistic. The two contrasting "pillars" of mercy and severity are represented by David and Goliath. The outcome of David's victory is a symbolic expression of a third pillar – the completion achieving balance.

There is sufficient merit in the claim that the Old Testament conveys knowledge of the Kabbalah and that its secrets are much older than many understand them to be. A.E. Waite wrote in *The Holy Kabbalah* (1924):

"it is that which believes in the perpetuation of a secret tradition from an early period of human history, and this is not manifestly an absurd or unwarrantable consequence to draw."

Neither is it *only* Kabbalistic, since the Tanakh preserves a numerological and metaphysical code that preserves the secret theosophy of ancient Judaism just as well as Pythagoras achieved for the Greeks. Nor can we disregard the Rosicrucian and Masonic coincidences of the man who enters the fray without any metal on his person defeating his enemy with one smoothed stone. We cannot but wonder at what secrets are preserved in such a tradition.

Frater M. R. Osborne



Illustrations from *Faust*, Harry Clarke (1925)

Ferruccio Busoni's *Doktor Faust*

Masonic References & Correspondences

The list of musicians believed to have Masonic connections is both long and well-known. Johann Christian Bach, Josef Haydn, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Franz Liszt and Jean Sibelius were luminaries of both the Classical/Romantic traditions of music and also had strong Masonic ties¹.

Music, itself denominated among the seven liberal arts, always seems to have captured the Masonic imagination with its encapsulation of key concepts embodied in the Second Lecture of the Fellow-Craft degree:

Music teaches us the art of forming concords, so as to produce a delightful harmony, by a mathematical and proportionate arrangement of acute, grave and mixed sounds... and it is never employed to such advantage as in the praise of (The Supreme Being)².

1. It cannot escape notice that among the Triumvirate of the First Viennese School of composers mentioned above that Ludwig van Beethoven is missing. Although there does not appear to be explicit reference to a Masonic connection it should be noted that among Beethoven's friends, acquaintances and teachers were Gottlob Neefe and Friedrich Schiller, both reputed to have Masonic sympathies, if not connections, the latter being the author of the 'Ode to Joy'. Beethoven set this text in the final movement of his Ninth Symphony. Schiller's Enlightenment sentiments of universal brotherhood must have had great appeal to his friend Beethoven in order for it to be included in what has become among the most instantly recognisable masterpieces of Western music. See also *Music - Masonic Composers* by W. Bro. R. J. Nairn

2. *Emulation Second Degree Ritual*, Lewis Masonic, Surrey, 2007. P. 119

Perhaps less well-known would be the following association of Music and Freemasonry:

[Music is] the most mysterious of the arts. Around it should float something solemn and festival-like. The entrance to it should be through ceremony and mystery as to a Freemason's Lodge... The entrance to a concert hall should give promise of something unusual and should lead us gradually... into what is exceptional³.

Extracted from a collection of his writings the author of the above is Ferruccio Busoni (1866-1924). During an illustrious career as arguably the foremost concert pianist of his age, Busoni also found time to compose, conduct, write, edit, promote and sponsor many of the younger generation of musicians that surrounded him in search of inspiration and challenge. The catalogue of those who benefitted from this proximity were Jean Sibelius, Edgard Varèse, Arnold Schoenberg, Kurt Weill, and also Egon Petri and Gunnar Johansen to name a very few.

Busoni's influence survives to this day and is well documented by scholars such as Larry Sitsky (himself a student of Egon Petri), Judith Crispin⁴, **Erinn Knyt** and Paul Fleet⁵ who have all contributed greatly to an understanding of the vast legacy of this true renaissance figure.

It is my intention in this brief article to reveal a less considered facet of Busoni's work, Masonic references in the opera *Doktor Faust*, the composer's final, greatest and ultimately unfinished Magnum Opus⁶.

Abbreviated only by death, Busoni's metaphysical speculations were a lifelong feature of his art and the desire to pass on discoveries and issue challenges to continue such researches permeated his style of pedagogy. In every sense of the word Busoni was a germinal figure whose ultimate act of propagation was *Doktor Faust* and its many encodings, together with symbolic and syncretistic layers of meaning.

Busoni stated that the central figure of this operatic work should be mythic, mystical and magical. Having considered then ultimately discarded Merlin and Don Juan as prospective protagonists, Busoni settled on Faust and the associated legend as source material for his opera. Since the Reformation and Germanic origin story Faust has been ubiquitous in world literature, drama and music, easily appropriated as the cypher for the ultimate striving of humankind to understand it's role in the greater cosmos in the context of the limitation of eventual mortality. Typically, Faust is the seeker who always sees further, perpetually unsatisfied and willing to

3. Busoni, F. *The Essence of Music* trans. Ley, R. Dover, New York, 1987. P.182

4. see *Pillars of the Temple: The Busoni-Sitsky Esoteric Tradition*

5. see *Ferruccio Busoni: A Phenomenological Approach to his Music and Aesthetics*

6. A study of this opera is the basis of my current PhD research at City, University of London; *The Musical, Literary, Philosophical and Spiritual Syncretism of Ferruccio Busoni's Doktor Faust*

sacrifice his very soul for the perceived certainty of ultimate knowledge. Early incarnations as con-man, religious rebel, libertine, amoral magician came to be replaced by more nuanced Faust representations. The Classic/Romantic Faust of Wolfgang von Goethe seemed to encapsulate and ultimately exhaust all foregoing possibilities.

Goethe's Faust Part II seemed to re-write the traditional morality-play conclusion of Faust's certain damnation to hell as a warning against religious disobedience. Goethe was aware of this and delayed publication of this second part, containing Faust's redemption story, until after his death. Apart from a parody version by Friedrich Theodor Vischer⁷ and a later, more earnest interpretation by Ferdinand Avenarius⁸ the Faust-story waited until the early twentieth century for complete absorption into the modern age.

This transition is at the heart of Busoni's operatic Faust-work and I would argue that the representation of relentless, unsatisfied striving so characteristic of what Spengler went on to describe as *Faustian Man*⁹ is fully achieved in musical-dramatic terms for the first time in this opera.

Busoni framed his opera in three main structural edifices;

An extended incantatory, expository Prelude contains an initiation scene. A pact is sealed, signed in Faust's own blood at the instigation of Mephistopheles, cunning agent of hell.

The Principal action sees Faust moving through the world endowed with newly acquired powers. He unites adulterously with the newly-wed Duchess of Parma and fathers a child.

The Final scene depicts an exhausted, demoralised Faust, questioning the rather trivial value of everything that has transpired illustrated by his actions since the Mephistophelian pact. A philosophical debate ensues in which students seek answers from Faust's presumed superior insight. Later, in a state of total despondency and emptied of demonic benefits he begins a final search for meaning and, in dying, bequeaths his eternal will to the dead body of his child. A naked youth rises and walks off-stage carrying a flowering branch.

An obvious metaphor, this re-birth contains all that is essential to an understanding of the purpose of Busoni's Faust-work. Frustratingly, this final scene remained unfinished at Busoni's death in 1924. However, it transpired that he had left extensive sketched material for the intended completion. The opera has been performed with conclusions by Busoni-student

7. Vischer, F.T. *Faust, Der Tragödie dritter Theil. Treu im Geiste des zweiten Teils des Goetheschen Faust*, Tübingen: H. Laupp, 1862

8. Avenarius, F. *Faust. Ein Spiel*. Munich: Callwey, 1910

9. Spengler, O. *The Decline of the West*. Trans. Atkinson. Knopf, New York, 1927, P. 343

Philip Jarnach (1924) and a later one by Musicologist Anthony Beaumont (1984). The as yet unperformed completion by Larry Sitsky¹⁰ appears to be the closest to Busoni's original intentions and has the unique advantage of being the fruit of an intensive collaboration with Egon Petri, specifically on the opera and its authoritative interpretation as taught to Petri by Busoni himself.

As previously observed, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was known to be a Freemason¹¹ as was his collaborator, Emanuel Schikaneder¹², librettist for the opera *Die Zauberflöte*. A famous, much-loved and frequently performed *Singspiel*¹³, the Magic Flute has always been considered the *plus ultra* at the nexus of music and Freemasonry. This view is too narrow and does not take into account Busoni's Faust-work. It is my intention to illuminate understanding around *Doktor Faust* and its relevance as a work with Masonic references for contemporary audiences.

I would argue that the three large structural sections outlined above are clearly analogical to the three degrees of Craft Masonry and that furthermore, there are references to ritual throughout, making Busoni's *Doktor Faust* at least as significant to our understanding of the role of Masonic references in music as is Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*. As Frederick Goldbeck observed:

*"Musically most unlike Die Zauberflöte, (Doktor Faust) is nevertheless operatically similar. A huge mystery play, mainly about Faust-the-Magician - only the last act is Faust-the-Sage's - and dramatic throughout."*¹⁴

The journey from darkness to light, expressed in terms abundant in references to Freemasonry, is common to both works. Enlightenment is at their hearts; *audit intelligere*.

In this analysis I shall adhere to the threefold nature of the opera's structure as described previously, broadly analogous to the three degrees of Craft Masonry.

1. Prelude

*Doktor Faust*¹⁵ begins with an orchestral introduction characterised by mysterious bell-like

10. see *Larry Sitsky at 80*

11. see *Mozart & Freemasonry*

12. Mozart was an active participant in Vienna Masonry and even encouraged his father to join the order. In fact, Mozart met many of his friends, including Joseph Haydn and Emanuel Schikaneder, later the librettist for The Magic Flute, through his participation in the Viennese Lodge. See *The Background Story, Symbolism and Legacy of Mozart's 'The Magic Flute'*

13. An 18th-century opera in German, containing both spoken and sung material and usually comic in tone. See also *Singspiel*

14. Goldbeck, F. *Twentieth Century Composers 4*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London 1974, P.88

15. Time code included in the text for illustrative *video extracts from a live performance*, Zurich, 2006.

sonorities clearly in the manner of an incantation (1:30). A mystical, invisible choir intones the single word 'Pax' as the atmosphere nascent spring is evoked. It is Easter. Stormier music introduces us to Doktor Faust himself, the classic Alchemist at work in his Wittenberg¹⁶ laboratory (9:05).

An exchange ensues between Faust and Wagner, his assistant:

Wagner: Sir, three students are outside and wish to see you

Faust: What is their wish?

Wagner: They wish to hand you a book

After an initial, impatient dismissal by Faust, Wagner points out the strange title of the volume; *Clavis Astartis Magica*. Faust, intrigued goes on,

Faust: Let the students in

(Three black-clad students enter)

Faust: Who are you?

Students: Students from Krakow

Faust reminisces about his own time spent years earlier in Krakow¹⁷

Faust: What has led you to me?

The students hand over, in turn, the book, a key and deed of ownership¹⁸.

Faust: How does such a gift come to me?

Students: You are the Master!

Hours have passed, it is midnight. Faust constructs a Magic Circle and begins a conjuration ritual using the *Clavis*.

Faust, very much as a speculative Alchemist, begins by summoning Lucifer, perhaps symbolic of his desire for literal enlightenment (23:24).

Invisible Choir: What is your wish?

Faust: Send me your servants

16. The German city famed for associations with Martin Luther, Faust and Shakespeare's Hamlet. See also; Davalos, D. *Wittenberg* Oberon Bloomsbury, London 2011

17. See *Séances, Dragons & Chakras: Kraków's Magical Past*

18. Three students, three gifts. Possibly analogous to other manifestations of this number; three sections of Tanakh, Abraham receives three visitors (Gen. 18:2), David's three mighty men, three gifts of the Magi, three members of Christ's inner circle (Peter, James and John), the three ruffians of Masonry, three great lights of Craft Freemasonry. The three ladies, attendants of the Queen of the Night, also appear at crucial moments in Act one of *Die Zauberflöte*

Choir: Is this your will?

Faust: It is my will

Choir: Do you insist?

Faust: Yes, it is my will

Six tongues of flame hover in the room,

Choir: Question us

Faust examines the properties of five of the apparitions, dismisses them and, in disillusion, steps out of the protecting circle he had made. Exposed, he is beguiled by Mephistopheles and the promise of being served by him;

Faust: Will you serve me?

Mephistopheles: In what way?

Faust: Let me embrace the world, the East and South too. Let me grasp the works of men and expand them unprecedentedly. Give me genius and give me also the suffering that attends it.

Jeopardy appears in the form of Faust's misdeeds being catalogued by Mephistopheles just as angry creditors appear knocking at Faust's door to arrest him (45:48);

Mephistopheles: One word from you and they will be no more

Faust: Kill them

In the original German the rhythm of this phrase is identical to a significant pattern, not unlike that used by Mozart in *Die Zauberflöte*. Faust's use of this particular phrasing of his command initiates him into the final element of the pact. Simultaneously with the unseen choir intoning a beautifully melodious Credo on what has now become Easter morning, the following dialogue ensues (48:30);

Faust: What more do you ask of me?

Mephistopheles: A short letter drawn in your own blood, red upon white.

We see in the above sequences many analogues to an initiation ritual with Wagner as Inner Guard, the 3 students having journeyed from the East (Krakow) to the West (Wittenberg). Faust had journeyed in his youth from West to East and returned. The format of question and answer further echoes Masonic ritual.

Faust is declared to be the Master, worthy to receive the gift. However, in the ensuing *Clavis* ritual there is a subtle reversion to the role of Initiate when Faust is asked by the

unseen choir 'Is this your will?'; a familiar moment whenever a candidate is asked to express integrity of motive. Later, in renouncing the consequences of his previously dissolute way of life, Faust is asked for 'one word' in order for Mephistopheles to free him from the burden of accountability. He is now open to the ultimate commitment of signing the blood-pact that binds him to Mephistopheles.

2. Principal Action

Two scenes feature here, the first set in Ducal Parma, the second in a Wittenberg tavern.

Since the earlier pact, a reinvigorated Faust has left the confines of his laboratory and has been active in the world. These scenes illustrate his way of life and the wider consequences to himself and others. Remembering that Faust had expressed a desire to embrace truly lofty, noble ideals and sought to improve the world as he found it, the Parma scene sees Faust in the role of travelling magician, with the reputation that he 'burns with an unholy fire'. Not unlike Don Juan and bent on seducing the Duchess on her very wedding day. His conjuring of three Biblical tableaux is encouraged by the Duchess (1:23:08). Her desire to compare the royalty of times past with her present circumstances is the motivation for Faust to use his diabolical powers to underwrite his intentions towards her.

The first of these enactments features King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. The reality of how Faust has lived his life is diametrically opposed to his original aspirations and seems rather trivial and self-serving, very far away from that 'genius and attendant suffering' he had asked of Mephistopheles. It is a scene rich in irony, almost an inversion of the kind of life lived according to the Three Great Lights of Freemasonry. We are led to consider the value of Masonic life and rule by seeing its complete opposite laid bare. It is not unreasonable, though purely speculative, to suggest that the composer may be using allegory here to illustrate the spiritual testing of the Initiate's convictions.

The second scene, set in a Wittenberg tavern, is similarly rich in allegory (1:49:53). Faust has left the world of worldly desires behind in pursuit of something of greater value — the life of the mind. He is surrounded by a diverse group of students hotly debating various issues according to their belief systems and world-views. A Platonist, a Theologian, a Jurist and a Natural Scientist vigorously express their convictions on fundamental philosophical issues of existence, Faust is then asked for his summation (1:54:00),

Platonist: What says the Master?

Students: Let's hear what the Master says.

Faust: Nothing can be proven and nothing is provable.

In his search for meaning through the study of the Mysteries of Art, Science and Nature, and a total indulgence in unrestrained hedonism, murder and adultery Faust has learned little and achieved less. He goes on,

Faust: In every field of learning I have erred every time. It is only certain that we come here only to leave again. We should be concerned most with the interim. Consider the words of that Great Protestant...

Here Faust alludes to a saying of German Theologian Martin Luther,

Faust: Let us console our time on earth with wine, women, art and music¹⁹.

A massive and complex choral representation of ideological conflict between Protestant and Catholic students develops here. Busoni's skill is demonstrated in the way that the violence of the two opposing postures is fully characterised in a supreme display of compositional mastery over form, content and style (1:57:56).

The foregoing scenes articulate the struggle of the human mind and spirit in reconciling life, aspiration and experience. The lack of ultimate fulfilment in intellectual and physical pursuits points to the void at the centre. This is what Faust must now confront in the third, and final division of the drama. What can there be that is good and true? What is the nature and meaning of life? Having exhausted every form of human endeavour and even though aided by mysterious forces of destiny (the students), enlightenment (Lucifer) and transgression (Mephistopheles), Faust must yet face a final encounter in his restless striving.

3. Final Scene

The tavern scene ushers in the denouement. During this transition Mephistopheles reveals the dead child of Faust and the Duchess, whom Faust has previously abandoned. The body is in fact a bundle of straw from which Mephistopheles conjures an image of Helen of Troy as the ultimate representation of Faust's aspirations (2:12:22);

Faust: Dream of Youth, goal of wisdom, image of purest beauty.

In rapt contemplation Faust realises that he can never actually reach the enlightenment he seeks. A renewed conviction comes to him;

Faust: Nothing has been achieved, I must begin anew. I feel childlikeness being reborn in me.

19. Perhaps apocryphal, the saying 'He who loves not wine, women and song, remains a fool his whole life long' is popularly attributed to Luther, even, it seems, by Busoni.

Faust's ecstatic revelation is brutally truncated without warning by the reappearance of the Students from Krakow demanding the return of the gifts (2:21:36). They warn him that the term of his pact has expired, he will die at midnight. Faust welcomes his final evening as events seem to run in retrograde. Faust's former assistant, Wagner, has now attained the position of Rector Magnificus and is declared Faust's worthy successor. A hidden choir sings of resurrection and judgment. The Duchess reappears and for the third time offers their child to Faust saying,

Duchess: Complete your work, before it is midnight.

Wishing to implore the help of God, Faust despairs as he fails to find any words of prayer, only magical incantations. His hallucinations intensify and all that remains for him is to invoke what he considers the highest task. In a final act Faust synthesises themes of resurrection and renewal and bequeathes into the body of the child all that he desired to attain in the first place from Mephistopheles. In dying Faust unites himself, beyond law, embracing all epochs, with mankind, one eternal will.

From the place where the child lay rises up a youth, carrying a flowering branch (2:42:50). It may be fairly speculated that this branch is flowering acacia, a symbol of death and re-birth. Faust has fulfilled his destiny and having learned how to die, can now properly live, renewed and refreshed in purpose. The relationship to the Sublime Degree is clear enough and the conclusion of Busoni's opera places his achievement alongside that of his idol and predecessor Mozart. The encoding of Masonic values, symbolism and allegory is striking.

Legacy

A spoken epilogue intended to be heard at the conclusion of a performance of *Doktor Faust* is key to understanding the meaning of all that has preceded.

In these lines, written 2 years before his death, Busoni explains his work as 'a history of Man and his desire' and further invites the onlooker to consider if his 'alloy' contains sufficient gold. He goes on to speak of the symbols, still unexhausted, hidden and concealed within, that 'a later school shall procreate'. The very phrasing of this reflects Masonic ceremony.

Thus, in this way Busoni's Magnum Opus, *Doktor Faust* is veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols. Whether an opera, or any other artwork, can in itself be a 'peculiar system of morality' remains a matter both of opinion and informed speculation. In any case, in this valedictory work Busoni, as previously quoted, has certainly affirmed that:

Music is the most mysterious of the arts. Around it should float something solemn and festival-like. The entrance to it should be through ceremony and mystery as to a Freemason's Lodge... and should lead us gradually from secular life to the life that is innermost.

Frater Fred Scott







Illustrations from *Paradise Lost*, Gustave Dore (1866)