

UN CYGNE

From *Six Chansons*

PAUL HINDEMITH (1939)

Text: *Rainer Maria Rilke*

"Un Cygne" ("A Swan") is the second of six chansons for four-part unaccompanied chorus.

A swan advances on the water,
Quite surrounded by himself,
Like a gliding picture.

Thus, at certain moments,
A being that one loves
Is a moving space in itself.

It draws near, doubled,
Like this swan which swims
Across our troubled soul,

Which adds to this being
The trembling image
Of happiness and doubt.

What is the relation of the form of the text to the form of the music? How do harmony and tonality articulate the musical form?⁹ Compare the style of this chanson with that of Bach's harmonization of *Jesu, meine Freude* on p. 65.

Lento (♩ = 60-66)

Un cy-gne a-van-ce sur l'eau tout en-tou-ré — de lui mê-me com-me un glis-sant ta -

S
A

Un cy-gne a-van-ce sur l'eau en-tou - ré de lui-mê - me com-me un glis-sant ta -

T
B

Un cy-gne a-van-ce sur l'eau en - tou - ré de lui - mê-me com-me un glis-sant ta -

The first system of the musical score is for a four-part unaccompanied chorus (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass). It begins with a tempo marking of 'Lento' and a quarter note equal to 60-66 beats per minute. The music is in C major and 4/4 time. The lyrics are: 'Un cy-gne a-van-ce sur l'eau tout en-tou-ré — de lui mê-me com-me un glis-sant ta -'. The Soprano part starts with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The Alto part starts with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The Tenor part starts with a half note G3, followed by quarter notes A3, B3, C4, B3, A3, G3. The Bass part starts with a half note G2, followed by quarter notes A2, B2, C3, B2, A2, G2. Dynamics include piano (p) and mezzo-forte (mf).

5 bleau; ain-si à cer - tains in-stants un ê - tre que l'on

bleau; ain-si à cer - tains in-stants un ê - tre que l'on

bleau; ain-si à cer - tains in-stants, cer - tains in - stants un ê - tre que l'on

bleau; ain-si à cer - tains in-stants un ê - tre que l'on

The second system of the musical score continues the four-part unaccompanied chorus. It begins with a circled number 5. The lyrics are: 'bleau; ain-si à cer - tains in-stants un ê - tre que l'on'. The Soprano part starts with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The Alto part starts with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The Tenor part starts with a half note G3, followed by quarter notes A3, B3, C4, B3, A3, G3. The Bass part starts with a half note G2, followed by quarter notes A2, B2, C3, B2, A2, G2. Dynamics include mezzo-forte (mf) and piano (p).

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⁹ See the references to Hindemith's theoretical writings in footnote 7 of this part.

9 ai - me est tout — un e - spa - ce mou - vant. Il se rap - pro - che dou -

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ai - me est tout — un e - spa - ce mou - vant. Il se rap - pro - che dou -

13 blé com-me ce cy-gne qui na - ge sur no - tre â - me trou -

blé com-me ce cy-gne qui na - ge sur no - tre â - me trou -

blé com-me ce cy - gne qui na - ge sur no - tre â - me, sur no - tre â - me trou -

blé com-me ce cy - gne qui na - ge sur no - tre â - me trou -

17 blé-e...qui à cet ê-tre a - jou-te la trem-blante i - ma - ge de bon-heur et de dou-te.

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