

Moabit Liederbuch

*A Song-Cycle
for Soprano and Piano*

by

Richard St. Clair

*Opus 66
(1990)*

*On German Sonnets by
Albrecht Haushofer*

FOREWORD

World War II saw the destruction of European art traditions on a scale unimaginable. My *Moabit Liederbuch* is based on nine of Albrecht Haushofer's eighty sonnets which he wrote on the few scraps of paper he was allowed by the Gestapo during his internment in the prison for political prisoners in Moabit, Germany towards the end of World War II. These sonnets were found on his dead body, clutched in his hand, when Allied soldiers found him three days after he was cruelly freed then executed by the Gestapo on a roadside during the final days of Hitler's Third Reich. Recognizing the value of these poems, members of the military quickly published them at the war's end. Haushofer's courage and idealism in the face of the omnipresent threat of the Nazi scourge stand as a singular monument to humanity in its best sense. His poems, written when he knew he was doomed, reveal an outpouring of passionate, life-affirming and uncompromising faith in the human spirit. Though his life was ended prematurely and tragically and his creative and diplomatic talents were denied their full fruition, his life was not lived or lost in vain. In his poetry we find the best of that which is human.

The music is composed in the manner of Austro-Germanic *lieder* of the nineteenth century, yet is permeated with an irony, angst and emotional desperation peculiar to the twentieth century, reflecting the poetry, itself, which skillfully weds traditional German and classical sonnet structure in a language both inspired and attuned to the mechanism and impersonality of the technological age. In one of the poems, Haushofer likens his situation to Thomas More: the song based on this poem incorporates the German Lutheran hymn tune "Christ lag in Todesbanden" adding imagery and further symbolism to Haushofer's own. Other musical quotations may be noticed, including fragmentary allusions to songs by Schumann and even an American Revival hymn. These quotations occurred spontaneously during the composition process. The feelings expressed in Haushofer's poems are intense, complex, and sometimes elusive, and I attempted to capture those qualities by suiting the harmonic, rhythmic and contrapuntal elements to the precise meaning of the words. Naturally, Haushofer was a living human being who would have wished for his freedom and life rather than execution for nonexistent crimes, and I have attempted throughout to convey the deep feeling of hope and the love of life which Haushofer so clearly embraced.

—Richard St. Clair

MOABIT LIEDERBUCH

I. Geräusche

Richard St. Clair
Op. 66
(1990)

Moderato

Measures 1-5: The vocal line consists of a whole rest. The piano accompaniment features chords and moving lines in both hands.

6
Von auß-en drückt durch schlecht ge-füg-te Schei-ben ein

10
Kal-ter, win-ter-lich-er Hauch her-ein und bringt in mein-er

14
Zel-le Son-dér-sein Ge-räusch-e, die dem Krieg ver-bun-

17

- den bleib - en. Den Schriill der Wach-e-wie den

20

Marsch-ge-sang, der na-hen Schien-en fauch-en - des Ge-schieb-e,

23

der Waf-fen-werk-e pol - tem-des Ge-trie-be

26

mf *molto portamento*
der nächt-lich-en Si-ren-en wüs-ten Klang. *come primo*

29

Musical score for measures 29-32. The vocal line is mostly rests. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand.

33

Musical score for measures 33-36. The vocal line has lyrics: "Ge-räsch-e, die der Zeit noch gültig sind. Wie". The piano accompaniment continues with eighth notes and a bass line.

37

Musical score for measures 37-40. The vocal line has lyrics: "hör' ich Tag für Tag Mo-to-ren dröh-nen, wie spär-lich manch-mal ein-e Glock-e". The piano accompaniment includes a "riten." marking. The bass line has a "riten." marking.

41

Musical score for measures 41-44. The vocal line has lyrics: "tön-en! Doch ahnt ein Win-ter schon den". The piano accompaniment features a change in key signature and a more complex harmonic structure.

45

Früh - - lings-wind. Es

leggiere

47

Kommt der Tag, wo die Mo - tor-en schwei - gen, und Frie - - den läu - - ten

50

wird ein Glock-en-reig-en, und Frie-den läu - - ten wird ein Glock-en-rei - gen, ein

53

Glock-en-rei-gen, ein Glock-en-rei - - - - - gen.

mf *molto rit.* *riten.* *mp*

mf *molto rit.* *riten.* *mp*

Ped.

p *

Andante moderato

II. Honig

Richard St. Clair
Op. 66, no. 2

Nach-dem sie aus der Hei-mat mich ge-trie-ben, auf mei-ner lang-en Flucht und bitt-ren

Fahrt
(sm)-

ein Glas mit Ho-nig hab ich mir ge-spert— so viel an Hei-mat ist

mir nun ge-bleib- - - - en. Ich

13

öff - ne's nur: dann steigt ein Duft em - por von tau - - - send

ossia $F^{\#}(\#F^{\#})$

cresc. poco a poco

16

Blü - ten, ja von tau-send Bäu-men, und Bie-nen sum-men wie aus bun-ten Träu-men aus al-len

f

19

Eck-en rings her - x vor - Es ist noch Win-ter in der wei-ten Flur: Ihr Bie-nen, Bra - - - -

sost.

pp *p sost.* *(poco)*

22

hü - tet euch vor früh-em Schwär-men! Laßt euch die Son-ne noch die Pel - - - - ze

ten. a tempo *riten.*

riten. *a tempo mp*

25 a tempo

wär -- men! Ihr sammelt süß-es Heil im Ho --- nig nur, wenn röt-lich-

a tempo

8va

28

-weiß die Pflau-me-näs --- te blühn, und gold-ne Prim-eln

mp

Ped.

31

leuch-ten auf im Grün.

rit.

p

7.14 - 8.6.90

III. Abschied

Richard St. Clair
Op. 66, no. 3

Moderato

Schon müs-sen Ju-pi-ter und Ve-nus bleich-en, die Gip-fel hellt ein ers-tes

5
Ros-en-licht. Ich weiß um mein-e nächs-ten We-ge nicht, weiß nicht, ob

10 rit.--- (rit.) più mosso
Grüß-e je-mals mich er-reich-en. All-mähl-ich

15 rit. rit. rit.
schwin-det in den Berg hin-ein das Huf-ge-trap-pel, das mich fort-ge-leit-et.

(poco sost.)
Tempo I^o

9.

18 ritard.

Das Maul-tier, das zu Tal - e mich be - glei - tet, ist

22

rit. - - - - - Tempo I^o

um - ge - kehrt im frü - hen Mor - gen - schein.

26

30

Noch im - mer hört mein Ohr den grau - en Huf.

34

Der Saum-weg win-det sich den Fluß ent-lang.

38

Es rauscht. Es trap-pelt... Un-ge-wis-ser Klang...

42

rall. ----- Adagio rit. -----
 Er-storb-en nun-der Hei-mat letz-ter

45 *Tempo I*

cresc. ed accel. ----- più mosso
 Ruf. Die Was-ser ström-men aus der Berg - - e

11.

49

Tor, und fer - - - ne Huf - - e zur

ff

piu cresc.

ff

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

53

Alm em - por.

ritenuto *Slower*

mf

mf

ritenuto *ff* *mf*

Ped. Ped.

57

p

mp

dim. e morendo

Ped. sempre

61

pp

IV. Die Mücke

Richard St. Clair
Op. 66, no. 7

Molto vivace

5

leis - tes Ge - surr. Auf mein - e Hand sinkt flüg - el - schwir -

sfp *sfp*

8

- rend ei - ne Mück - e nie - der,

sf p

11

ein Hauch von ei - nem Leib, sechs zart - e Glied - er - wo

sva

14 *f* *p*

Kam sie her aus win-ter-lich-em Land?

18

22

Ein Rüs-sel...schlag ich zu? Miß-

sf p *sf p*

26

-gönn ich ihr den Trop-fen Blut, der sol-ches we- - - sen nährt?

sf p *sf p*

30

Den leich-ten Schmerz, den mir der Stich ge-

cresc.

33

-währt? Sie han-delt, wie sie muß. Bin ich ein

f *sfp*

36

Tier? So stich nur zu, du klein-e Flüg-el-

mf *cresc.* *mf*

39

-see-le, so-lang mein Blüt-ge-fäß dich näh-ren mag,

42

so - lang du sorgst um dein - en kurz - en

45

Tag!

gva.

49

gva.

Stich zu, daß es

dim. *pp*

53

dir nicht an Kräf - ten feh - le! Wir sind ja bei - de,

slower

slower

56 rit.-----

← d. = d →

Mensch und Mücke, nichts als kleine Schatten eines

60 molto rit.-----

großen Lichts.

V. Nemesis

Richard St. Clair
Op. 66, no. 5

Sostenuto

Handwritten musical score for the piano introduction. It consists of three staves. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of two flats (G major) and a 2/4 time signature. The middle and bottom staves are a grand staff with a key signature of two flats and a 2/4 time signature. The music features a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the left hand and a more complex melodic line in the right hand. The dynamic marking *p cresc.* is written below the first measure of the grand staff. The word *Bva* is written at the end of the first system.

3

Handwritten musical score for the first line of the vocal entry. It consists of three staves. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef with a key signature of two flats and a 2/4 time signature. The lyrics are: "Noch ges-tern hat er vier zum Strick ver-dammt,". The middle and bottom staves are a grand staff with a key signature of two flats and a 2/4 time signature. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the left hand and a more complex melodic line in the right hand. The dynamic marking *sfz* is written below the first measure of the grand staff. The word *(Bva)* is written below the first measure of the grand staff.

7

Handwritten musical score for the second line of the vocal entry. It consists of three staves. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef with a key signature of two flats and a 2/4 time signature. The lyrics are: "und heut-e liegt er". The middle and bottom staves are a grand staff with a key signature of two flats and a 2/4 time signature. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the left hand and a more complex melodic line in the right hand. The dynamic marking *sfz* is written below the first measure of the grand staff. The word *Bva* is written at the end of the first system.

11

tot in den Ru- i- nen, wird Kei-nen mehr zu Strang und Beil be- die-

ff (stark)

17

- nen, ein Hauf-e Trüm-mer ist sein gan-zes Amt. Ge-

f

22

- richt-ein schwer-es Wort! Ihn hat's ge-freut, wenn er die Waag-e

f, *sfz*, *mf*

28

tief zum Bös-en wandt-e, wenn er dem Hen-ker neu-e Häl-se

p, *mf*

Bra ---
8va ---

33

Handwritten musical score for measures 33-39. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of three flats and a 4/4 time signature. The lyrics are: sandt-e, Kein Tod - es - ur - teil hat ihn je ge - reut.

p

(BVA) - - - - -

40 (haltend)

Handwritten musical score for measures 40-45. The vocal line continues with the lyrics: Ge - richt - ein Zu - fall? Taus - end Bomb - en schlug - en in

46

Handwritten musical score for measures 46-51. The vocal line includes the lyrics: dies - er groß - en stadt auf Mensch - en ein - und eine Bomb - e durf - te Rich - ter

f

52

Handwritten musical score for measures 52-57. The vocal line includes the lyrics: sein? Ge - richt - so vie - le von den Tot - en fru - gen ver - - ge -

(slower) *mf*

ff

(slower)

58

20. sost.

*più mosso,
accel. - - -
f cresc.*

ff *(fo) (fo) (fo)*

-blich nach dem Sinn... drum rich-tet nich! Uns al-len

sfz sost. *più mosso,
accel. - -
f cresc.*

62

rit. - - - - - ff

gilt ein hö- - - he-res Ge- - richt!

Tempo I^o *6*

rit. - - - - *ff dimin.*

66

ritenuto

p

Bva - - - - -

71

a tempo

pp

12.18.90

VI. Sir Thomas More

Richard St. Clair
Op. 66, no. 6

Moderato, con moto

Sir Thom-as lag im Tow-er lang - - - e

fest, bis man sich ernst-lich auf den Block be - sann.

Bri - - tan - - - niens frau - - - en -

wech-seln - - - der Tyr- ann hätt' lie-ber sein - - en Kopf zum

15

Dienst ge- preßt. # zu - erst um - warb man ihm den

18

streng - en Sinn, und mit Ver - lock - ung wur - de nicht ges - part -

21

24

mp cresc. dann quäl - te man und band. *rit. --- f* *a piacere*

Ein

cresc. *rit. ---* *(a piacere)*

27 rit. - - - - -

lang - er Bart ent - wuchs in die - ser Zeit des Kanz - lers

30 a tempo, sost. (grave) f

Kinn. a tempo, sost. (p) Als man zum Block den Kopf ihm ^{nieder}

ten. grave p

34 mf

-tat, den un - ver - fähr - bar treu - en, Klar - en, weis - en,

38 mp

schoß er den Bart zur Seit - - - e,

ff

42

sprach mit lei - - sen, ge - lass - nen Wor - - ten läch - elnd "Hoch -

46

- ver - rat hat nur der Kopf und nicht der Bart be - gang - en."

49

Tempo I°

Und läch - elnd gab er sich dem

53

Tod ge - fang - - - - en.

sost. *riten.* *a tempo, rit.*

VII. Spatzen

Richard St. Clair
Op. 66, no. 7

Allegro

mf molto marcato

3

Zu - weil - en kommt Be -

fp

6

-such: Das Eis - en - git - ter, für mich Ge -

fp mf

9

-fäng - nis, ist für and - re

11 *f*

Rast. Ein Spatz - en - paar ist gern - e da zu Gast,

15 ein Spatz - en - fräu - lein und ein Spatz - en - rit - ter.

19 Sie lie - ben sich in Zank und Zärt - lich - keit,

23 sie ha - ben schnä - belnd sich viel zu er - zäh - len, und *mp*

27

wollt ein and-rer Spatz die Spätz-in wäh-len, dann

30

gäb es ein-en fürch-ter-lich-en Streit.

cresc. --- f.

33

Wie selt - sam ist es, un-

sf p

36

- ge-hemm-ten Le-ben in Fes - - seln vol-ler

rit. --- ad Lib. mp rit. ---

40

Frag-e nah-zu-steh- ob mich die flink-en,

45

schwarz - - en Au-gen seh-n? Sie schau-en fort.

48

Ein Tschlip, ein Flü-gel - he - - -

52

-ben, der Ei-sen-rost ist leer.

29.

Adagio

58

Ich bin al - lein. Wie ger - ne möcht ich bei den

f *pe.* *(fa) be*

Adagio *mf*

63 *rit.* - - - - - *Tempo I°* *Ped.* - - - - - *

Spatz - en sein -

rit. - - - - - *Tempo I°*

mp *f* *sfz*

66

sfz *ffz*

30.
VIII. Acheron

Richard St. Clair
Op. 66, no. 8

Adagio

Ein großer Dich-ter hat das Wort ge-prägt, man

3
müs-se selbst den Ach - - e-ron be - we-gen, wenn sich zur Hil-fe nicht

5
die Göt-ter re-gen. Mein Va-ter hat es oft im Trotz ge-sagt.

7
Mein Va-ter war noch blind vom Traum der

c on Ped.

10

ad libitum

misurato

Macht. Ich hab' die gan-ze Not vor-aus-emp-fun-den. Zer-stör-ung,

13

Brand und Hun-ger, Tod und wun-den, das gan-ze Gra-u-sen

16

sol-cher Teu-fels-nacht... Be-wuß-ten Ab-schied hab'ich oft ge-

20

-nom-men von al-lem, was das Le-ben Schö-nes bot: Von

24 *rall.* - - - - -

Hei-mat, Werkund Lie-be, Wein und Brot. Nun ist das

27 (d=f)

Dun- kel ü-ber mich ge- Kom- men. Der Ach-e-ron ist

29

nah, das Le- ben fern. *a tempo* Ein mü-des Au- ge

32

sucht nach ei- nem Stern.

33.

36

12.23.90

IX. Traumgesicht

Richard St. Clair
Op. 66, no. 9*Tempo di Siciliano, con tenerezza*

5
Du hast so lang-e mich im Traum ge-mie-den, Du früh Ver-blich-ne.

9
Heu-te, heu-te warst Du da, so jung, so un-zer-stört, so

12
selt-sam nah wie da---mals, als zum er-sten-mal wir schie-den.

16

Wie lo-der-ten in je-ner Nacht die

19

Ster-ne; wie schien die Welt voll Glück. Wie lang ist's her. Wie

22

wur-den Dir die jung-en Jahr-e schwer. Wie trieb es mich hin-

riten. *ad lib.*

24

-aus in al - le Fern - - - e. Nun prüfst Du mich im Traum.

rit. *molto rit.* *Tempo I°*

27

Es ist kein Schmerz und kein - e Trau-er mehr in ihm ge-

30

-we-sen. Du nickst und flüst-erst. Bist Du nun ge-ne-sen?—

più p, intenso

subitop *crac.* *mf*

33

Ich lie-ge still.

p sub. *espr.*

37

In Ru - he schlägt mein Herz. Ge-blieb-en—

più p

41

ist ein Dank. Der Dank soll ziehn hin-auf zu

Sost.

sost.

44

Dei-nem Grab in En-ga-din.

molto sost. *a tempo*

molto sost. *a tempo*

48

espr.

Ped.

Began July 24, 1990, Completed December 30, 1990

Richard H. Clair
Somerville, Mass.

Translations of Song Texts

I.
NOISES .

From outside a cold, wintry breath
passes through the badly fitted panes
and brings into my cell's separate existence
noises still connected with the war.

The warden's footsteps as well as the marching song,
the hiss and push on nearby railway tracks,
the rumbling activity of munitions works,
the desolate sound of sirens in the night.

Noises relevant still to the present time.
How day after day I hear the drone of motors,
how sparse the occasional ringing of a bell!

Yet a winter already senses the wind of spring.
The day will come when motors will be silent,
and a rounddance of the bells will ring Peace in.

II.
HONEY .

It happens, when they had driven me from home
on my long flight, on my bitter journey—
as I had saved myself a jar of honey
that much of home now still remains to me.

I merely open it: then a fragrance rises
from a thousand blossoms, yes, a thousand trees,
and bees come buzzing as out of motley dreams
from all the gray corners here about—

It is winter still in the wide meadows:
Take care, you bees, beware of early swarming!
Let the sun still warm your furry coats!

You gather honey's healing sweetness only
when plumbtree branches bloom their reddish-white
and golden primulas glisten in the grass.

III.
FAREWELL .

Already Jupiter and Venus must be paling,
a first rose light is brightening the peaks.
I do not know what ways I shall take next,
I do not know, will greetings ever reach me—

Little by little the pattering of hoofs
that brought me away is vanishing into the mountain.
The mule that guided me down into the valley
turned to go back in the morning's early light.

My ear keeps on hearing those gray hoofs.
The mule-trail winds along the river's course.
A rustling. A patter . . . A vague clanging sound . . .

Died out now—the last call of home.
The waters stream out from the mountain's gateway,
and distant hoofs move on up to the alm.

IV.
THE GNAT .

A very faintest buzzing. Upon my hand
there settles down with whirring wings a gnat,
a whiff of a body, six delicate limbs—
where did it come from out of wintry country?

A proboscis . . . shall I strike? Do I begrudge it
the drop of blood that nourishes such creatures?
The slight pain the sting will make me feel?
It acts the way it must. Am I a brute?

So sting away, you little wingéd soul,
so long as my blood vessels can nourish you,
so long as you're taking care of your brief day!

Sting away, so that you do not lack for strength!
Both of us, after all, man and gnat,
are nothing but little shadows of a great Light.

* Moabit Sonnets by Albrecht Haushofer. Translated by M.D. Herter Norton.
W.W. Norton & Co., London/New York, 1978.

V.

NEMESIS ·

Just yesterday he sentenced four to hanging,
and today he's lying dead among the ruins,
will serve no one any more to rope or axe,
a heap of rubble now his whole domain.

Judgement—a weighty word! It gave him pleasure
to tip the balance low to mark the bad
so he could send off new necks to the hangman,
no death-sentence ever caused him to repent.

Judgement—a happenstance? A thousand bombs
struck human beings down in this vast city—
and a bomb was permitted to be judge?

Judgement—so many of the dead have asked
in vain what was the meaning . . . so do not judge!
All of us are due a higher judgement!

VI.

SIR THOMAS MORE ·

Sir Thomas long lay fast in the Tower,
till they bethought them seriously of the block.
Britain's wife-changing tyrant really would
rather have had his head pressed into service.

At first they tried courting that austere mind,
sparing him no possible seduction—
then tortured and then bound him. A long beard
grew in this course of time from the Chancellor's chin.

When on the block they had laid down his head,
incorruptibly loyal, clear, and wise,
he pushed the beard aside, spoke with gentle

words, calm, composed, smiling: "High treason
my head alone committed, not my beard."
And smiling gave himself Death's prisoner.

VII.

· SPARROWS ·

At times company comes: the iron grating,
prison for me, can be repose for others.
A pair of sparrows often are my guests,
a sparrow damsel and a sparrow knight.

They love each other squabbling or in tenderness,
have much to tell each other billing and cooing,
and should another sparrow choose the sparrows,
then there would be a terrible argument.

How singular it is to stand in fetters,
full of questions, close to unhampered life—
whether those quick black eyes are seeing me?

They look away. A chirp, a lift of wings,
the iron grid is empty. I am alone.
How I would love to be among the sparrows—

VIII.

· ACHERON ·

A great poet coined the saying thus:
one must oneself set Acheron in motion
when the gods will not bestir themselves to help.
My father often said this in defiance.

My father was blinded still by the dream of power.
I felt forebodings of the whole disaster:
Destruction, burning and hunger, death and wounds,
the total horror of such diabolic night . . .

Quite consciously I often bade farewell
to all life offered that was beautiful:
to home, to work and love, to wine and bread.

Now the darkness has come over me.
Acheron is near, life far away.
A weary eye is searching for a star.

IX.

DREAMFACE ·

You have so long eluded me in dream,
you, early gone from us. You were here today,
as young, unravaged, and so strangely close
as at that time when we first left each other.

How the stars glowed that night, how full the world
then seemed of happiness. How long ago.
How those young years grew difficult for you.
How something drove me out, out far and wide.

You test me now in dream. And there has been
no pain, no grieving in it any more.
You nod and whisper. Are you now well again?

I'm lying still. My heart beats quietly.
What stays—is thanks. My thanks that will be wending
up to your grave there in the Engadine.