

Benjamin Britten and His *Metamorphoses*

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George Caird looks at the Composition Sketch and the Fair Copy of *Six Metamorphoses after Ovid*, Op 49



Roland Haupt

Benjamin Britten c. 1951.

On Thursday 14 June 1951, the Aldeburgh Festival promoted two concerts by the Cambridge University Madrigal Society under the direction of Boris Ord. The programmes included English madrigals, Jacobean part-songs and twentieth century music. In the first concert in the Parish Church at Aldeburgh at 11.00am, Benjamin Britten's *Hymn to St. Cecilia* (1941) was performed and in the second concert, performed on The Meare at Thorpeness at 4.30pm, the oboist, **Joy Boughton** played 'a new work by Benjamin Britten, specially written for the occasion'.

This first performance of *Six Metamorphoses after Ovid*, Op.49 is well documented by **Sarah Francis**: 'Ben wanted Joy to play the *Six Metamorphoses after Ovid* standing on a raft, but she felt unsafe, so compromise was reached and she stood on an island' (Francis 1994, 4-7). In fact, a touching note in typescript on the Fair Copy 'made for Joy Boughton' states: 'The first performance took place in a punt on the boating lake, The Meare, at Thorpeness. At one point this copy blew into the water, causing the ink to run on some of the pages', a charming but elemental comment for this allegorical work. It should be noted, however, that Francis is of the view that the mishap took place at the second Aldeburgh Festival performance in 1953.

Sarah Francis makes the point that the *Metamorphoses*, like most of Britten's music, was written for a specific person, in this case, Joy Boughton. Her personality and musicianship are integrally bound up with the work. Francis believes that Britten did not see the oboe as 'limited in range' and certainly not superficial as some commentators such as Frank Howes (1951) did:

It is a slight but pretty idea for its setting. The oboe's tone carries well in the open air. Miss Boughton is an accomplished artist, instrumental accompaniment could not easily be managed in mid-Meare and something unpretentious, faintly pictorial, goes well with the imaginative word-painting of Weelkes and his madrigalist contemporaries. (Howes, 1951)

Joy Boughton was a 'star pupil' of **Leon Goossens** and was an obvious choice to join the English Opera Group at an early stage. She played with the group in many performances of Britten's works including the first performance of *The Turn of the Screw*. The distinguished oboist **Sidney Sutcliffe** recalled his impressions of her when she was a senior student on his entry to the Royal College of Music: 'Her playing always gave me tremendous pleasure. She was an inspiration to me.'¹ Francis has also pointed out that, as the daughter of the composer Rutland Boughton, Joy would have known her father's work including the operas written for Glastonbury with all their mythical and Arthurian content. Joy was a well-read, talented, sensitive though strong-minded oboist whom



John Vickers, The Rutland Boughton Trust

Joy Boughton

Britten clearly admired, the rightful recipient of this great work. Despite some intriguing letters (Boughton 1954-60) which reveal Joy's wonderful personality and insights into the subsequent recordings of the *Metamorphoses*, it is sad that no information has been found on the preparatory work which Britten and Boughton did together, probably in the month prior to the first performance, save for assumptions about the alternative ending to *Arethusa* based on the source material to be discussed here. Nonetheless, with this close connection between composer and oboist



Fritz Curzon

Sarah Francis

explored, it is touching that the day of the premiere, 14 June, was in fact Joy Boughton's birthday.

This study sets out to look at a remarkable work from historical, literary and musical viewpoints and to discuss its position in relation to *Billy Budd* and other

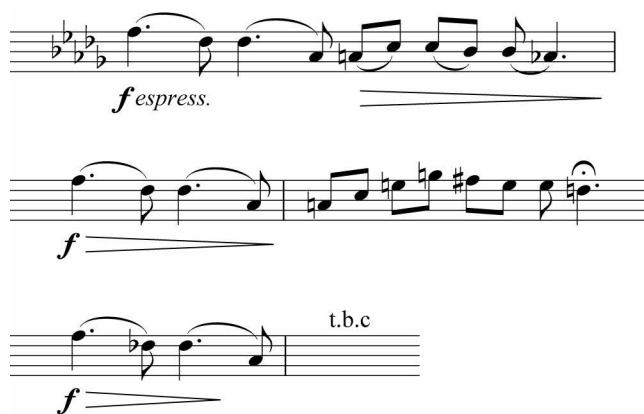


Benjamin Britten, Fair Copy,
Six Metamorphoses after Ovid.

works written at the time. It could be argued that the *Metamorphoses* were written as light, occasional pieces for the setting of the first performance. But could their musical quality be seen as fine examples of Britten's chamber music writing and rightful precursors of the later unaccompanied suites for solo cello? Could Britten's knowledge of the oboe, gained through his writing of the *Phantasy Quartet*, Op 2, written for the great oboist Leon Goossens, the *Temporal Variations* and the *Two Insect Pieces* give the composer a special affinity with the oboe? Could Britten's extraordinary literary skill bring a unique view of the work of Ovid in these pieces? And could this understanding relate to the larger themes, which he was exploring in his operas, to date *Peter Grimes*, *Albert Herring*, *The Rape of Lucretia* and *Billy Budd*, but later *The Turn of the Screw*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and especially *Death in Venice*? It is hoped a wider debate on the place of the *Metamorphoses* will be forthcoming.

The *Metamorphoses* were probably completed only shortly before the first performance (Mitchell, Reed, Cooke 2004; Reed 1993, 42-73; Banks 1999, 95).

Looking at Britten's pocket diaries for 1950 and 1951, it is striking just how busy the composer was, working on *Billy Budd* and on a new edition of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* (with Imogen Holst) as well as performing, rehearsing and attending performances of his works. In the six weeks leading up to the first performance of the *Metamorphoses*, Britten conducted the first and subsequent performances of *Dido*, performed at the Wigmore Hall with Peter Pears and attended performances of *Lucretia*, *Albert Herring*, *Let's Make an Opera* and other works. The most likely time for the work's commencement is March 1951, when the diary does indicate some free time. Pears left for Amsterdam on 14 March and Britten, it seems stayed in Aldeburgh. The diary has the pages for 18-21 March torn out and then nothing till the 28th where, remarkably, the only entry consists of an opening for *Niobe* written in light blue ink, beautifully complete with expression marks and phrasing in place:



Of course, the positioning of this sketch in the diary does not necessarily mean it was written at this time. Could the missing pages have had more of the *Metamorphoses* on them, *Pan* perhaps? Whatever the timing of composition, the work was certainly written only just in time to be referred to in the groundbreaking *Commentary* by Donald Mitchell and Hans Keller in which the editors wrote of this work:

It is a real open-air piece written by way of relaxation during the creation of *Billy Budd*...Like in Ovid's poems, the movements present dramatic scenes in lyrical form, for which purpose the expressive tone, as well as the limited range of the oboe seemed most suitable.

(Mitchell and Keller, 1952, 211)

It is worthy of note that the pre-publication score

of *Billy Budd* had 'Op 49' as its opus number instead of its final 'Op 50' – could this indicate a late decision to publish the *Metamorphoses*? (Mitchell et al 2004, 664). The connection between the *Metamorphoses* and *Billy Budd* is an intriguing one and will be discussed in relation to the composer's work with Ovid. For now, it is enough to comment that the open air setting for the premiere is appropriate for Ovid's vision as set out in his immortal opening lines:

Of bodies changed to other forms I tell:
You Gods, who have yourselves
wrought every change,
Inspire my enterprise and lead my lay
In one continuous song from nature's first
Remote beginnings to our modern times
(Ovid, tr. A.D. Melville, 1986)

This grand ambition seems out of scale with Britten's miniature portraits but the reflection of nature, the connection between the present day and the beginnings of time and the cyclic significance of 'my lay in one continuous song' should be noted.

In Mitchell and Keller's *Commentary*, Paul Hamburger (1952, 211-212) points out that the *Metamorphoses* is only the sixth published chamber work that Britten had written to date: 'The reason for their infrequentness may be found in the fact that modern many-movement form, and particularly sonata form, allows no patent solutions for the conscientious composer'. Of course,

Britten had written many chamber works during his schooldays as well as some more substantial unpublished works, including the *Temporal Variations*. But the formal point is well made and certainly the *Metamorphoses* can be seen as a 'patent solution' as, while the structures of these pieces are ternary with the exception of *Bacchus*, the cycle as a whole is a *tour-de-force* of melodic invention based on distinctive themes which are developed to reflect the metamorphosis in question. The key structure for the six movements takes us from a Lydian mode on D in *Pan*, to the affirmation of D in *Arethusa*, by way of *Phaeton*, built on juxtaposed and unstable dominant sevenths on C, through *Niobe's* D \flat major, *Bacchus* in F (with sections in A and C) and *Narcissus's* C major/minor. A number of analytical studies have been done on the work or individual movements, notably Peter Evans' insightful commentary (Evans 1979, 306-7), an analysis of four of

the movements by Stephen Hiramoto (Hiramoto 1999, 23-26) and an intriguing analysis of *Pan* by Nicholas Cook (Cook 1987, 253-9), which sees the piece as an ABAB form constructed on a set of cadential phrases each ending in a pause. Jane Peters (Peters 1987) argues that the *Metamorphoses* should be looked on as a 'multi-piece' showing a common approach to motivic development and an overall structure for the work as two groups of three pieces. Edwin Roxburgh suggests that a separate study is needed on the *Metamorphoses* in relation to Britten's use of harmony:

For me the most important aspects of the *Metamorphoses* are in the diatonic structures of the harmony. The implied triadic progressions of the single line establish a harmonic backcloth to each piece containing important references to the characterisation of each subject. For instance, *Phaeton* has no key signature but begins on a dominant seventh of F major (as the opening of Beethoven's *First Symphony*). At bar 3, the dominant seventh transfers to A \flat major. These modulating dominant sevenths form the constantly migrating structure of the whole piece, an important aspect of the metaphorical connection with the title. We can see this happening in each movement. In *Niobe*, D \flat major passes to A minor (major?); the coda of *Bacchus* has the repeated Cs followed by arpeggios of E major, G major, B minor, E \flat major, a startling series of triadic associations worthy of Bartók; the echoes in *Narcissus* are never made with the same-key triads, thus distinguishing the subject from the reflection; *Arethusa*'s flowing arpeggios contain at least two different triads in each cascade creating a characterisation of constant movement.²

The idea of writing for a single unaccompanied instrument is of course not unique to Britten. The character pieces for recorder, *Der fluyten lust-hof*, by Jacob Van Eyck and Telemann's *Fantasien* for solo flute are early genre works for comparison, whilst Britten will have drawn influence from Debussy's *Syrinx* for solo flute (1913) and more tenuously from Stravinsky's *Three Pieces* for solo clarinet (1919). The fact that Britten chooses the same Ovidian story as Debussy for his first metamorphosis, *Pan*, is interesting in itself and appears to be in keeping with the classical tradition of reworking old mythical stories as exemplified by Virgil's and Ovid's use of Homer (Graf 2002, 108-121). Mervyn Cooke observes that *Syrinx* can be seen as part of a French tradition of using Greek myths as subject matter, citing Roussel, whose stage works include *Bacchus et Ariadne* and *Aeneas*, as example.³ Roussel's

solo work for flute, *Joueurs de flûte* (1924) does contain movements entitled *Pan* and *Tityre*, but continues with wider inspiration in a third movement entitled *Krishna*. Julie McQuinn (2003) points out that Debussy made great use of the erotic power of the syrinx, not only in this solo work but also in the *Prélude à l'après-midi d'une faune*, the *Epigraphs Antiques* and especially in the *Chansons de Bilitis*. *Syrinx*, originally called *La Flûte de Pan* and written for Gabriel Mourey's play, *Psyche*, was only re-discovered in 1927. Britten would have been aware of Marcel Moyse's first recording of this seminal work (Walker, 2006). This point will be of interest when discussing Ovid's influence on European art (Caird 2006). Gordon Crosse (1976) sees the strong influence of Bach in these pieces, especially in the arpeggiated middle section of *Niobe* and the opening of *Arethusa*. Britten would naturally be drawn to these greatest of all unaccompanied works, the cello suites and the sonatas and partitas for violin.

The choice of the oboe as the medium for these classically inspired pieces needs some discussion. Britten must have known of the syrinx (bound rows of tube reeds) and its relationship to the flute in Debussy's solo work. But he may have been drawn to the qualities of the equally ancient single or double-reed aulos which, argues Linda Ardito (1999, 67-72), represented the opposite of the sensitivities of Apollo's lyre and was associated with 'the Dionysian cult and accompanied dance, poetry, song and drama in rituals of praise for Dionysus (Bacchus), god of wine, fertility and mysticism'. Ardito goes on to say that Apollo's string music had a therapeutic power whilst 'the aulos, with its characteristic shrill and powerful sound, could draw its listener into the dark depths of the Dionysian realm where the elemental, random and impulsive mingle'. Frank Mulder (no date) associates the aulos as expressing 'ecstasy, emotion and unreason' in his programmatic analysis of the *Metamorphoses*. Furthermore, the aulos was associated with mourning according to Boethius, it led the procession of mourners and more generally, was used to accompany Greek tragedies. The choice of oboe for the work could, therefore, be more to do with the weeping of Niobe and the central theme of Bacchus' story. But nonetheless, in keeping with Ovid's explanation that Pan was moved by the sound of the wind in the reeds, Britten may have drawn the connection with the reeds that grow by rivers and marshes in East Anglia, not least at nearby Minsmere, Snape or in Thorpeness, and the instrument that Pan fashioned.

From the time of the first performance, the *Metamorphoses* have found their place at the very



Heinz Holliger

heart of the oboe repertoire. After the first broadcast by Joy Boughton in a live relay which went out on the BBC Third Programme on 3 October 1952, these miniature masterpieces were recorded live for the radio again by Boughton in December 1953. This second broadcast apparently suffered a mishap in which the BBC announcer spoke before the last phrase of *Niobe*, an incident referred to in an apologetic note to the composer:

Monday 30th

Dear Ben

You are owed an apology & it wasn't my fault! The announcer cut into 'Niobe' & I wasn't able to turn her into a mountain! I am so sorry – it so horrified me that I hardly remember *Bacchus* 1st half – I could have wished that **** announcer elsewhere. Just in case you didn't hear the pieces I thought I'd better write & tell you, & thank you so much for all your help – so many people have said nice things about them to me. Boughton, 1953

This letter, written at the end of December 1953, was followed on the 10 January 1954 by another suggesting to Britten that 'they' (the BBC) should replace the curtailed *Niobe* with her own recorded version from the year before (Boughton, 1954). The fact that the existing BBC recording from the National Sound Archive has *Niobe* placed after *Bacchus* seems to indicate a further error by the BBC (Boughton 1952). The announcer on this recording refers to the first performance "last year" which must confirm it as

the 1952 first broadcast.

The published edition by Boosey and Hawkes in its yellow cover with red print, dated 1952 and reprinted in a paler yellow in 1968 and subsequently in blue and black with added metronome marks, has been an essential possession of most oboists across the world. The number of performances and recordings are surely countless and these include interpretations by significant players including Sarah Francis, **Janet Craxton**, **Heinz Holliger**, **Maurice Bourgue**, **Gordon Hunt** and **Nicholas Daniel**. In short, the *Six Metamorphoses after Ovid* is a work of extraordinary stature and has influenced many subsequent composers in the writing of solo instrumental music.

It is hardly surprising, then, that these pieces are brilliantly written for the oboe and this must contribute to their lasting and pre-eminent status in the repertoire. Britten's letter to Sylvia Spencer in 1935 (Mitchell *et al.* 2004, 369) illustrates the composer's commitment to and understanding of the instrument. The tantalising comment that an orchestrated suite, based on the *Two Insect Pieces*, was on the way is especially of interest (Moore 1993). Ranging from



Janet Craxton

the oboe's lowest note, B \flat (for the depths of Phaeton's plunge) to high f" for the last flicker of a bat's wing at the end of *Bacchus* (a semitone advance on the range

of the *Phantasy Quartet*), the oboe's characteristics are completely and remarkably understood. Britten makes it capture the dazzling allure of *Pan*, the expressive despair of *Niobe* and the beauty of *Narcissus* whilst also bringing energy and even danger into *Phaeton* and *Bacchus*. He asks the oboe to play exquisitely quietly (*Niobe* and *Narcissus* especially) and also raucously and brazenly (*Phaeton* and *Bacchus*). Sarah Francis reports that Britten asked Boughton what was difficult to play on the oboe and all that Boughton told him (a sharp to b trill, downward slurs etc.), he included. Britten obviously wanted to push the instrument to its limits. Note should be taken of the oboist, **Natalie Caine's** memory of Britten regretting that oboists seemed not to be able to play raucously enough in relation to her own rendition of the *Oration* of the Temporal Variations (Caine, no date)

Britten is renowned for his 'Mozartian' ability to compose music in his head and to develop highly detailed visual images for his work. Imogen Holst points out:

The search for the right notes keeps Britten working very hard for hour after hour and day after day..... he listens in his mind's ear to the way the notes he has written that morning are taking their place in the overall shape of the music. This shape may have been in his thoughts for many months before he began putting anything down on paper.
(Holst, 1966, 52).

Conversely, Colin Matthews' view is that 'Although Britten claimed that he would usually have everything in his head before committing himself to paper, the evidence from certain works makes it clear that this

was not always the case'.⁴ Given the busy schedule which Britten had in the spring and summer of 1951, the *Metamorphoses* could be seen to be one such work.

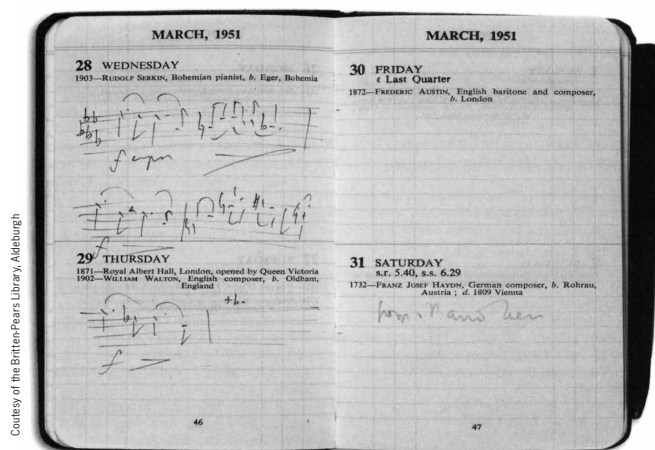
Britten's ability to visualise is described by Donald Mitchell in connection with *Billy Budd* (Mitchell 1993, 111-112). This accurate and vivid imagination surely places obligations on the interpreter of Britten's music. Nevertheless there is an ambiguity around Britten's visualisation no more apparent than in *Billy Budd*, where the 'surface' picture is subsumed within a much more profound musical 'meaning'. In the *Metamorphoses*, this leaves the oboist to handle such an ambiguity between simple depiction and more subtle musical and emotional realisation. Edwin Roxburgh, who studied the work with Joy Boughton, supports this view and feels that Boughton understood the sophistication of this ambiguity.⁵

It is true that Britten was always keen for his music to be played accurately. Boughton's advice to students points this out: 'Britten', Joy declared, 'knew what he was doing: it is all written down.....play what is there' (Francis 1994) Janet Craxton also reported this commitment to accuracy after her recording sessions of the *Metamorphoses* at the Snape Maltings, passed on to generations of her students in lessons.⁶ Even so, the music requires freedom of interpretation and for this reason, there are many questions to ask about the relationship between accuracy and licence.

But despite the clarity of Britten's writing and the concept behind the work as set out in the published edition, the *Metamorphoses* seem still to have mysteries and ambiguities which need exploration. As Mitchell and Keller point out, the six movements are inspired by characters in Greek legend from Publius

Ovidius Naso's great poem and are obviously depictions of these characters and the stories surrounding them. The characters are encapsulated in Britten's appended subtitles ('Pan, who played upon the reed-pipe which was Syrinx, his beloved'). But what the exact characters are in relation to the stories and why Britten chose them from the hundreds available in the Ovid classic poses some interesting questions about the work as a whole.

With these thoughts in mind, the first part of this study seeks to look at the musical text of the *Metamorphoses* and the two main sources of the printed edition, the original Fair Copy now



Benjamin Britten, 1951 Pocket Diary.

Doc

I Pan

Serp. morm

pp *f* *pp* *pp accel*

pp *f* *pp* *con sempre ad acc*

ff *pp* *ff*

comm. cant. but ma accel

pp *pp*

pp *accel* *pp*

II Phaethon

Volo intono

f *f* *f* *f*

pp *pp*

Benjamin Britten, Composition Sketch, *Six Metamorphoses after Ovid*

in the possession of the Paul Sacher Foundation in Geneva, and the Composition Sketch held by the Britten Library at the Red House in Aldeburgh. Both of these contain fascinating information on the composition

process and also give some leads to Britten's intended characterisation. A thorough discussion of the Ovid classic, the characters selected by Britten and how these are interpreted by oboists will be dealt with later.

Sufficient for now will be a close look at what Britten actually wrote.

THE COMPOSITION SKETCH

The Composition Sketch consists of three double sheets of 28-stave manuscript paper, written in pencil in Britten’s clear and firm handwriting. The pages are laid out as follows:

- 1r *Six Metamorphoses, Op 49*
Composition Sketch
- 1v blank
- 2r *Pan*
Phaeton (beginning)
- 2v *Phaeton* (remainder)
- 3r *Bacchus*
- 3v *Bacchus*
- 4r *Narcissus*
- 4v blank
- 5r *Arethusa* (beginning)
- 5v *Niobe*
Arethusa (remainder)
- 6r blank
- 6v blank

Imogen Holst’s view that much of the composing took place in Britten’s mind before putting the music on paper is born out by some of the movements which appear in an almost completed form. *Niobe*, especially, seems to be more-or-less ‘copied’ from an earlier source, most likely straight from the composer’s mind although we do have the short opening from Britten’s 1951 diary. Other movements, notably *Bacchus* and *Arethusa*, are less finished and include material, which is not eventually included in the final versions. Examples below are from the Sketch or Fair Copy in the following respective sections; those marked *a*, for instance *1a*, are from the published edition and are for comparison. Bar numbers relate to the Sketch, Fair Copy and Edition and occasionally differ. Material, which is crossed out or rejected, is un-numbered.

Pan

Pan is one of the more complete versions in the sketch but there are a number of intriguing differences, which could clarify some interpretative issues in this subtle and remarkable piece.

Firstly, Britten writes an accent under the opening *a*”, with a delayed diminuendo in the first bar:

Ex.1

Senza misura



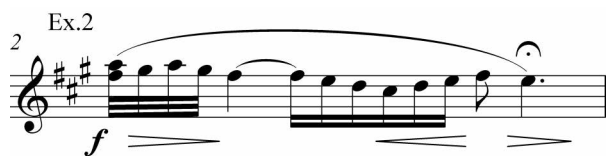
Ex.1a

Senza misura

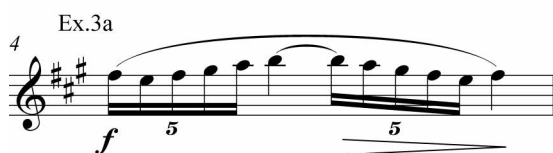
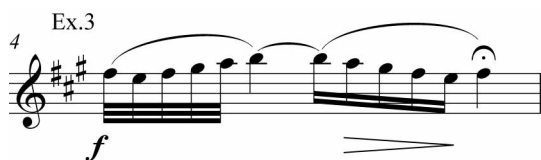


This could give weight to the view, reported by Janet Craxton, that Britten saw Pan as a frightening personality as well as the benign god of the woods and fields.

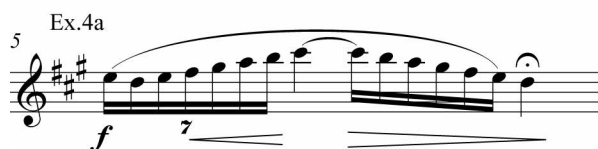
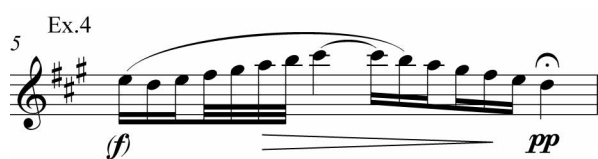
The trace of an *a* at the beginning of bar 2 shows Britten rejecting this figure as an ornament of the first bar in favour of an answering motif:



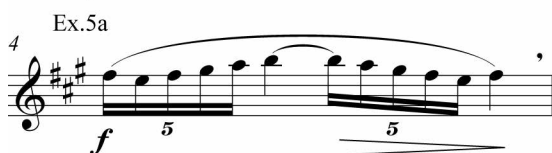
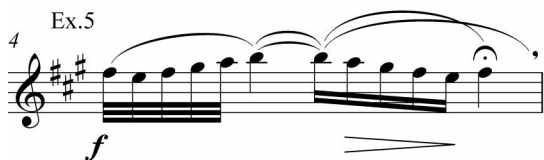
In bar 4, it looks as though Britten wrote the opening quintuplet over a faster motif with demisemiquavers in it. This he rejects, perhaps to enable the slide in bar 5 to grow out of the slower quintuplet:



What seems certain, though, is that he is retaining the quaver pulse to the end of this first section as there is a trace of a triplet motive at the end of bar 4, and a clear indication of a 3-4 split of the first beat and triplets in bar 5. Note should also be taken of the *pp* marked on the D at the end of this section.



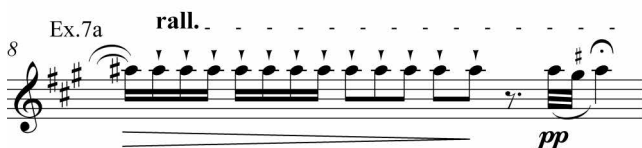
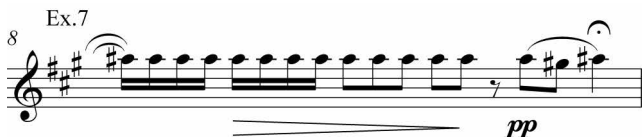
It could be argued that in arriving at his final version Britten does ask the performer to move from a quaver to a crotchet pulse in bar 4. The third beat of bar 4 is rubbed out and rewritten as a quintuplet in the Composition Sketch and the first beat is eventually rationalised to a semiquaver quintuplet in the edition. In Ex 5 the double slur at the end of the bar will account for the rubbed out notes.



It is generally accepted that a quaver pulse is intended for the opening of the second section. It is interesting, though, that, in the Composition Sketch, Britten asks for an *accelerando* in the first bar of this section which is delayed to bar 7 in the printed edition. Britten probably made this change to ensure that the section started calmly enough. With this change in place he is also able to shorten the final crotchet a' to a quaver. But the early version is an important signal towards the constant ebb and flow of the pulse in this piece. This 'ping-pong ball rhythm' is the key to the performance of the piece.

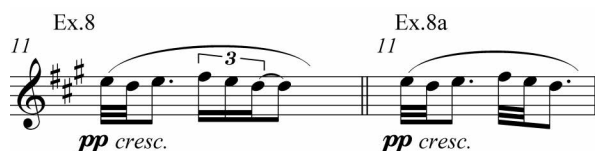


An important detail to note at the end of this middle section is the slower mordent onto the final a#, following a more rapid diminuendo.

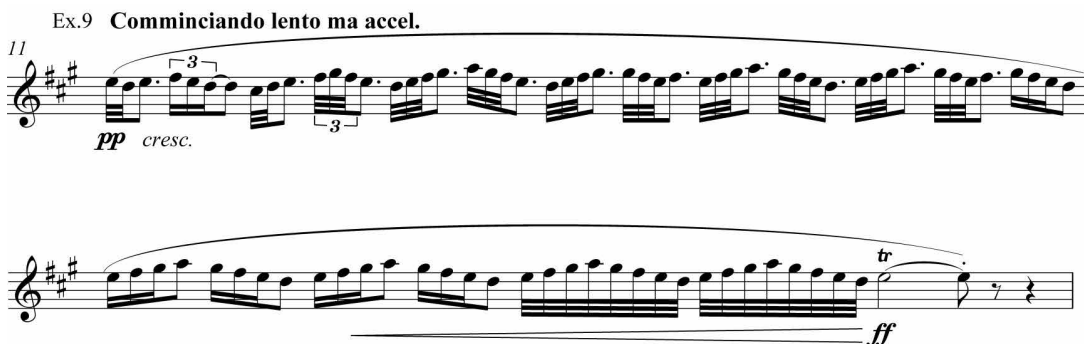


A *fortissimo* at the recapitulation in bar 9 seems to have been rejected in favour of a *forte*, probably to allow for a greater climax at the end of the work. Had Britten retained this dynamic, the *c[♯]* in this bar would have been highlighted in keeping with Cook's a-c[♯]-d framework for the piece (Cook 1987). In this same bar, Britten tried out a more flamboyant resolution to the phrase, but rubbed these notes out in favour of the falling scale (cf bar 5). The answering phrase of bar 10 brilliantly mirrors the penultimate phrase of the opening section (bar 4) thus setting up the long melisma and the final bars. This answering phrase has a very marked diminuendo in the Composition Sketch giving visual emphasis to the need for a real sense of silence before the *Lento ma subito accel.* Most interestingly, Britten also wrote the word *Cominciando* (starting....slow but suddenly getting faster) before *Lento* emphasising the drama of this moment. But he drops this word in the Fair Copy.

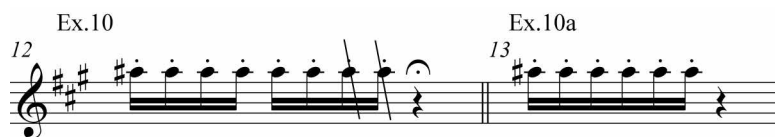
A further clue that the composer saw the *accelerando* of this section as beginning from a very still point is provided by the sketch version of bar 11:



The slow triplet on the second beat gives the opening of the phrase a much more poised and held-back feel than in the final form. In the melisma, group 7 is written as a triplet and dotted quaver and there are two crossed-out figures simply showing the composer trying and rejecting different turns of the phrase. Furthermore, the double value semiquavers begin a beat earlier in group 13; could these relate to the triplet mark which Britten uses in group 2? Lastly, the final trill lacks the acciaccatura *d'* – a small but interesting detail:



Two other rhythmic matters are of significance to the performer. In bar 12, Britten writes eight semiquavers in two groups of four and then 'crosses out' the final two:



The eight semiquaver version would require the performer to retain a crotchet pulse, albeit with some licence to relax the tempo. The six semiquaver version, however, surely asks the performer to revert to a quaver pulse, reminiscent of the middle section. The divided crotchet beat after the pause in bar 13 would support the idea that the performer begins this penultimate bar, feeling quavers. Notice the *accelerando* in the Sketch in this bar.



Finally, the trace of a quaver rest before the three-note *coup-de-grace* and its rejection in favour of a comma gives credence to the idea that the use of the comma throughout could represent a downbeat or an upbeat and of course could be interpreted in varying lengths during the piece. Here, the comma (like the erased rest) is arguably on the beat and very short.

Phaeton

The Composition Sketch of *Phaeton* is striking in the differences of phrasing throughout based on the opening:



The slurs and lack of accents give an effect which clearly was not biting or energetic enough for Britten. Nonetheless the slurs do show us something about the rhythmic drive of the music and perhaps the need to avoid an over-dry approach to the articulation. The asymmetric bar lengths come over more obviously in this version as a result of the slurs. Notice the *Vivo ritmico* marking, remembering that the printed metronome marks of the modern edition are still nearly twenty years away. (see below, Metronome marks)

A lower start to bar 5 and two extra beats to bar 10 are crossed out in favour of the final version. These notes are difficult to read but could be:



In bar 9, the first beat has been added on to the front of the line with a handwritten extended staff showing that this beat could have been an afterthought. The fact that the second and third quavers of this beat are slurred is an added complexity here:

Ex.3

A musical staff in 2/4 time showing a single-measure rest. The rest is marked with a fermata and a forte (*f*) dynamic. The staff is labeled 'Ex.3' and '9'.

In the Sketch, bars 11 and 12 seem to lack a bar line between them:

[illegible]

Ex.4a

ff

More interesting is the rather hazy end to the first section which looks like this:

Ex.5

18

ppp

18 Ex.5a



The musical notation for Ex.5a is a single staff with a treble clef. It contains a sequence of notes: a quarter note G4, an eighth rest, a quarter note A4, an eighth rest, a quarter note B4, an eighth rest, and a quarter note C5 with a fermata.

The first two slurred beats are crossed out and do not survive but give a lead to the composer's invention in relation to the last line of the piece. The extended ending is unclear, but again provides an intriguing possible link to the middle section.

The middle section is slurred as we all know it but there is a whole line of material crossed out from bar 22:

22 Ex.6

pp

Where the music of *Pan* seems almost complete in the sketch, we see here Britten making decisions about the length and shape of this middle section, favouring the economical and finely balanced final version. It is exhilarating to see the composer's logic at work.

The final section has no *agitato* marking. This, with the racier phrasing might suggest a faster tempo for the whole piece (cf the later metronome marks).

Some rubbing out in bar 30 continues the feeling of Britten revising as he goes here, though a $d\sharp$ second note as Phaeton hits the water is probably an error, but note the unslurred crotchets. It is worth writing out this section from the Sketch to show Britten's original intentions:

27 Ex.7

ff espress. *lunga* *lunga*

The double $f\sharp$ in the final bar is clear but does not survive and Britten writes a double pause (as though two bars) before the final phrase. Not necessary, he eventually decides, but we must give time for this mythical catastrophe to sink in before all is gone in a puff of wind!

Finally, Britten writes a first version of the last line and then crosses it out. The three-note ending is reminiscent of the end of *Pan*, perhaps.

Ex.8

ppp *ppp* >

Bacchus

The next movement in the sketch is *Bacchus* although it is marked 4. This could be because Britten already had a near-perfect version of *Niobe* in his head and was using the sketch to work on the less finished movements. It could also be that he was following the sequence of stories in the *Everyman* edition of the *Metamorphoses* that he appeared to use (Golding 1943; Caird 2006). Certainly, *Bacchus* is very incomplete in the sketch and there is much rejected material which can illuminate the final version.

Firstly, Britten begins with a sixteen-bar opening for *Bacchus* in D major:

Ex.1
Allo pesante

This may have been rejected because he realised the key would pre-empt the D major of *Arethusa* in the overall key scheme. The fact that the tonality is being worked out in this way is really significant as we see Britten making an important structural decision even with much of the material already created.

The F major opening is then fully stated with one small difference in that there is a comma rather than a pause at the end of bar 5. The F major tonality seems much 'righter' for this piece and is arguably a delayed resolution of the C7 chords in *Phaeton*. The crossed out second idea, gives an intriguing alternative version for the second section and a possible reference to *Billy Budd*:

Ex.2


Ex.3 *Billy Budd* Act I

The second section in the Sketch is similar to the printed edition with some minor differences, but note the dot on the first a” which clears up one small anomaly from the final version:

Ex.4

Più vivace

15



Ex.4a

Più vivo

15



The third section gives us an extra beat in bar 29 which is later removed:

Ex.5

29



The fourth section, lacking the final direction *Con moto*, consists of a considerable amount of material which can be laid out as follows:

Ex.i



Ex.ii



Ex.iii



Ex.iv

Ex. iv

The musical score for Example iv consists of three staves of music in G major. The first staff contains measures 1-4, the second staff contains measures 5-8, and the third staff contains measures 9-12. The music includes various dynamics (fz, p), articulation (accents), and phrasing slurs.

Ex.v

Ex.v

fz *p* *fz* *p* *fz* *p*

Ex.vi

Example 1 shows a melodic line in G major. The notes are G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F#3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2, G2, F#2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F#1, E1, D1, C1, B0, A0, G0, F#0, E0, D0, C0, B-1, A-1, G-1, F#-1, E-1, D-1, C-1, B-2, A-2, G-2, F#-2, E-2, D-2, C-2, B-3, A-3, G-3, F#-3, E-3, D-3, C-3, B-4, A-4, G-4, F#-4, E-4, D-4, C-4, B-5, A-5, G-5, F#-5, E-5, D-5, C-5, B-6, A-6, G-6, F#-6, E-6, D-6, C-6, B-7, A-7, G-7, F#-7, E-7, D-7, C-7, B-8, A-8, G-8, F#-8, E-8, D-8, C-8, B-9, A-9, G-9, F#-9, E-9, D-9, C-9, B-10, A-10, G-10, F#-10, E-10, D-10, C-10, B-11, A-11, G-11, F#-11, E-11, D-11, C-11, B-12, A-12, G-12, F#-12, E-12, D-12, C-12, B-13, A-13, G-13, F#-13, E-13, D-13, C-13, B-14, A-14, G-14, F#-14, E-14, D-14, C-14, B-15, A-15, G-15, F#-15, E-15, D-15, C-15, B-16, A-16, G-16, F#-16, E-16, D-16, C-16, B-17, A-17, G-17, F#-17, E-17, D-17, C-17, B-18, A-18, G-18, F#-18, E-18, D-18, C-18, B-19, A-19, G-19, F#-19, E-19, D-19, C-19, B-20, A-20, G-20, F#-20, E-20, D-20, C-20, B-21, A-21, G-21, F#-21, E-21, D-21, C-21, B-22, A-22, G-22, F#-22, E-22, D-22, C-22, B-23, A-23, G-23, F#-23, E-23, D-23, C-23, B-24, A-24, G-24, F#-24, E-24, D-24, C-24, B-25, A-25, G-25, F#-25, E-25, D-25, C-25, B-26, A-26, G-26, F#-26, E-26, D-26, C-26, B-27, A-27, G-27, F#-27, E-27, D-27, C-27, B-28, A-28, G-28, F#-28, E-28, D-28, C-28, B-29, A-29, G-29, F#-29, E-29, D-29, C-29, B-30, A-30, G-30, F#-30, E-30, D-30, C-30, B-31, A-31, G-31, F#-31, E-31, D-31, C-31, B-32, A-32, G-32, F#-32, E-32, D-32, C-32, B-33, A-33, G-33, F#-33, E-33, D-33, C-33, B-34, A-34, G-34, F#-34, E-34, D-34, C-34, B-35, A-35, G-35, F#-35, E-35, D-35, C-35, B-36, A-36, G-36, F#-36, E-36, D-36, C-36, B-37, A-37, G-37, F#-37, E-37, D-37, C-37, B-38, A-38, G-38, F#-38, E-38, D-38, C-38, B-39, A-39, G-39, F#-39, E-39, D-39, C-39, B-40, A-40, G-40, F#-40, E-40, D-40, C-40, B-41, A-41, G-41, F#-41, E-41, D-41, C-41, B-42, A-42, G-42, F#-42, E-42, D-42, C-42, B-43, A-43, G-43, F#-43, E-43, D-43, C-43, B-44, A-44, G-44, F#-44, E-44, D-44, C-44, B-45, A-45, G-45, F#-45, E-45, D-45, C-45, B-46, A-46, G-46, F#-46, E-46, D-46, C-46, B-47, A-47, G-47, F#-47, E-47, D-47, C-47, B-48, A-48, G-48, F#-48, E-48, D-48, C-48, B-49, A-49, G-49, F#-49, E-49, D-49, C-49, B-50, A-50, G-50, F#-50, E-50, D-50, C-50, B-51, A-51, G-51, F#-51, E-51, D-51, C-51, B-52, A-52, G-52, F#-52, E-52, D-52, C-52, B-53, A-53, G-53, F#-53, E-53, D-53, C-53, B-54, A-54, G-54, F#-54, E-54, D-54, C-54, B-55, A-55, G-55, F#-55, E-55, D-55, C-55, B-56, A-56, G-56, F#-56, E-56, D-56, C-56, B-57, A-57, G-57, F#-57, E-57, D-57, C-57, B-58, A-58, G-58, F#-58, E-58, D-58, C-58, B-59, A-59, G-59, F#-59, E-59, D-59, C-59, B-60, A-60, G-60, F#-60, E-60, D-60, C-60, B-61, A-61, G-61, F#-61, E-61, D-61, C-61, B-62, A-62, G-62, F#-62, E-62, D-62, C-62, B-63, A-63, G-63, F#-63, E-63, D-63, C-63, B-64, A-64, G-64, F#-64, E-64, D-64, C-64, B-65, A-65, G-65, F#-65, E-65, D-65, C-65, B-66, A-66, G-66, F#-66, E-66, D-66, C-66, B-67, A-67, G-67, F#-67, E-67, D-67, C-67, B-68, A-68, G-68, F#-68, E-68, D-68, C-68, B-69, A-69, G-69, F#-69, E-69, D-69, C-69, B-70, A-70, G-70, F#-70, E-70, D-70, C-70, B-71, A-71, G-71, F#-71, E-71, D-71, C-71, B-72, A-72, G-72, F#-72, E-72, D-72, C-72, B-73, A-73, G-73, F#-73, E-73, D-73, C-73, B-74, A-74, G-74, F#-74, E-74, D-74, C-74, B-75, A-75, G-75, F#-75, E-75, D-75, C-75, B-76, A-76, G-76, F#-76, E-76, D-76, C-76, B-77, A-77, G-77, F#-77, E-77, D-77, C-77, B-78, A-78, G-78, F#-78, E-78, D-78, C-78, B-79, A-79, G-79, F#-79, E-79, D-79, C-79, B-80, A-80, G-80, F#-80, E-80, D-80, C-80, B-81, A-81, G-81, F#-81, E-81, D-81, C-81, B-82, A-82, G-82, F#-82, E-82, D-82, C-82, B-83, A-83, G-83, F#-83, E-83, D-83, C-83, B-84, A-84, G-84, F#-84, E-84, D-84, C-84, B-85, A-85, G-85, F#-85, E-85, D-85, C-85, B-86, A-86, G-86, F#-86, E-86, D-86, C-86, B-87, A-87, G-87, F#-87, E-87, D-87, C-87, B-88, A-88, G-88, F#-88, E-88, D-88, C-88, B-89, A-89, G-89, F#-89, E-89, D-89, C-89, B-90, A-90, G-90, F#-90, E-90, D-90, C-90, B-91, A-91, G-91, F#-91, E-91, D-91, C-91, B-92, A-92, G-92, F#-92, E-92, D-92, C-92, B-93, A-93, G-93, F#-93, E-93, D-93, C-93, B-94, A-94, G-94, F#-94, E-94, D-94, C-94, B-95, A-95, G-95, F#-95, E-95, D-95, C-95, B-96, A-96, G-96, F#-96, E-96, D-96, C-96, B-97, A-97, G-97, F#-97, E-97, D-97, C-97, B-98, A-98, G-98, F#-98, E-98, D-98, C-98, B-99, A-99, G-99, F#-99, E-99, D-99, C-99, B-100, A-100, G-100, F#-100, E-100, D-100, C-100, B-101, A-101, G-101, F#-101, E-101, D-101, C-101, B-102, A-102, G-102, F#-102, E-102, D-102, C-102, B-103, A-103, G-103, F#-103, E-103, D-103, C-103, B-104, A-104, G-104, F#-104, E-104, D-104, C-104, B-105, A-105, G-105, F#-105, E-105, D-105, C-105, B-106, A-106, G-106, F#-106, E-106, D-106, C-106, B-107, A-107, G-107, F#-107, E-107, D-107, C-107, B-108, A-108, G-108, F#-108, E-108, D-108, C-108, B-109, A-109, G-109, F#-109, E-109, D-109, C

Ex.vii

EX.VII

The musical notation consists of two staves. The first staff contains a continuous sequence of eighth notes, starting with a G4, followed by A4, Bb4, and C5, then descending to Bb4, A4, G4, and F4. The second staff contains a sequence of eighth notes (G4, A4, Bb4, C5, Bb4, A4, G4, F4) followed by a quarter note marked with a question mark, which is a G4.

Ex.viii

Tempo I

f *ff* *p* *ff* *p*

Ex.ix

ff *pp*

Ex.x

pp

These sketches work on the material for the 'spinning wheel' effect (Caird 2006) with (i), (ii) and (vii) yielding recognisable patterns though by no means finished. (iii) and (vi) deal with the recapitulation of the opening motif, whilst (iv) and (v) play with the minim pause and arpeggio 'bat' idea Britten eventually sets out this section more or less notatim in (viii) with two improvements to the ending (ix and x). NB: examples ii – vii are crossed out in the Sketch.

The sketch of *Bacchus* represents 'work in progress' and comparison of this with the final autograph will demonstrate the extent to which Britten organised his thinking away from the page.

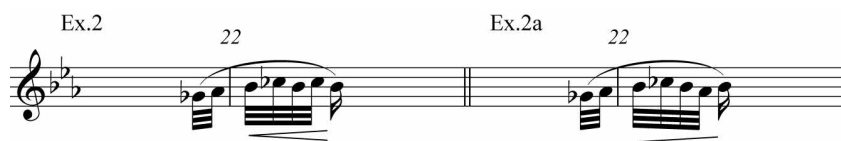
Narcissus

Marked *Lento* only, *Narcissus* appears fairly complete in the Composition Sketch. Interesting differences are:

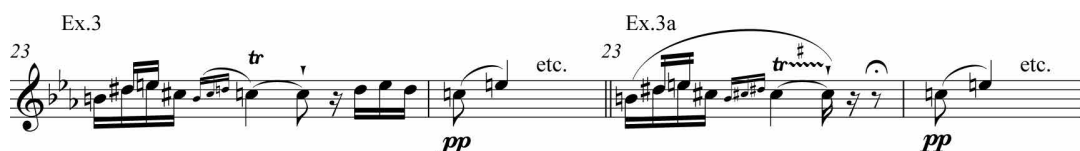
- Bar 7 $g\flat$ crossed out
- Bar 9 extra quaver a flat' and added upbeat in turquoise ink:



- Bar 17 no tie on the $e\sharp$
- Bar 22 two $c\flat$ s (see Fair Copy, below):



- Bar 23 a $c\sharp$ trill following a group of three semiquavers.
- Then three upbeat semiquavers into the final sections:



This $c\sharp$ will have been rejected as too much of an arrival before the final section in C.

After a line of crossed out material :



the last two bars in this Sketch version are of real interest:



Here, the diminuendo is missing at the end of bar 28 and the extra three quavers lengthen the end and keep the 6/8 pulse going. By cutting these beats, Britten arrives at a 9/8 bar as in the printed edition. Could this have been a sop to the breath control of oboists?

Niobe

Written neatly and compactly at the top of *Arethusa's* second page, *Niobe* is the most completely perfect movement in this sketch. Whether Britten had completed an earlier version and simply copied it out is not known, although the diary entry indicates that he had made a start in March 1951. The only substantive point of comment is that Britten omits bars 20 and 21 at the beginning of the last section, writing them separately below with an insertion arrow. The final phrase, *senza espressione*, he writes with an added two bars, again omitting these for the shorter and arguably more breathable version of the edition.



Other details are:

- Bar 4 the *diminuendo* is continuous into bar 5
- Bar 13 *mp* rubbed out
- Bar 16 there is a *crescendo* over one beat to the top \flat
- Bar 17 no *animando* is marked (n.b Joy Boughton's 1952 broadcast has quite a marked *animando*)
- Bar 19 begins with a *diminuendo*
- Bar 20 has a *rallentando* marked
- Bar 24 crossed out illegible notes on second beat leaving a 3/2 bar for the edition.

Arethusa

The Composition Sketch of *Arethusa* begins with three crossed out false starts which have an interesting variant for bars 6 and 7 in the first;



and another one for bars 5 and 6 in the third:



It is then more or less possible to reconstruct the final version from the Sketch. The opening section is written out as is but it should be noted that the ending is reconsidered in the Fair Copy with some ambiguities to resolve (see below).

The central section initially has only two phrases prior to the *Animando*. The first is as in the printed edition but with a long crescendo from *pp* to the third bar and then a similar diminuendo. These bars are bracketed with a question mark. The second phrase appears to be identical with the final version though some notes are very indistinct. A third phrase is written at the end of the movement as an afterthought:



The final section of the sketch is, with one exception, in keeping with the final edition, although Britten begins at the second bar here and inserts the first as an afterthought. The exception relates to bars 10 and 11 of this section (bars 71 and 72 of the edition) where the following bars are inserted in place of the repeated figure finally arrived at. The words 'from the beginning' are written over these bars with a bracket:



THE FAIR COPY

Written in ink, the autograph score contains far fewer surprises but nonetheless repays investigation. Dedicated with the words "For JB to play on the Meare" and dated June 14, 1951, we are reminded of the reason for the work, an open air concert with madrigals and a chance for Britten to explore the inspiration of Ovid's natural world. Sarah Francis makes the point that the subtitles are written in Joy Boughton's handwriting with the words on the first page: 'Before each piece – Inscription – '. Could these subtitles or inscriptions have been co-authored by Boughton?

Pencil markings seem to indicate that this score was used at the time of the first performance. These include breath marks for the oboist in *Pan* and *Narcissus* and the tell-tale o for a 'forked f' putting these marks down as Boughton's own.

Interesting features of this score are:

Pan

who played upon the reed-pipe which was Syrinx, his beloved

The opening bar has crossing out and the third comma is a large one giving support to the variability of the lengths of these.

Phaeton

Who rode the chariot of the sun for 1 day & was hurled into the river Padus by a thunderbolt

The main point here is that the existing articulation is now in place with no slurs to be seen. The crossed-out accent on the third beat weakens the argument that Britten forgot to put an accent here. Nevertheless, this is the only instance of a missing third beat accent (cf bar 6):



There is still no *agitato* for the third section. The 2 + 1 slurs are here still and in bar 32, the quavers are slurred 3 + 2 with a further slur over all five at the beginning of the bar.

Niobe

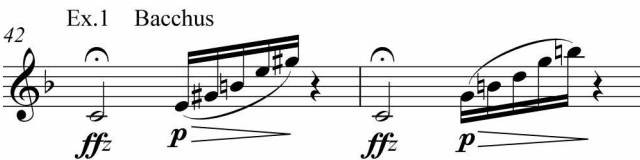
(who) lamenting the death of her 14 children, was turned into a mountain

Lacks the 'who' in the subtitle. The two extra bars are still in the final phrase showing this is a last-minute rejection, maybe based on Joy Boughton's performance. Certainly there are in and out breath marks from her in these final phrases!

Bacchus

at whose feasts is heard the noise of giggling women's tattling tongues & shouting out of boys

Apart from a pair of missing slurs (p5, line 2, bar 1), this version is now as we know it until the last section. The words, *Con moto*, are still absent and when we arrive at the first long low C, extra notes are still in the *arpeggios*:



Two beats of semiquavers are also inserted engagingly in the flourish before the final C:



Narcissus

who fell in love with his own image and became a flower

Here everything is in order but for three main details of interest. Firstly, Britten corrects the two-note pattern of Narcissus' image in bar 22, replacing the second $c\flat$ with an $a\flat$:



Some players, Gordon Hunt included, have re-corrected their readings to maintain the familiar pattern. (Hunt, 1997) Certainly Britten does seem to have been undecided on this small but significant point, only arriving at the printed version at a late stage.

Secondly, an interesting feature relates to the demisemiquaver patterns in bar 22. These are consistent in both the Composition Sketch and the Fair Copy but have been 'clarified' in the most recent impression.

Thirdly, the continued extra beats in the penultimate bar retaining the 6/8 pulse, but then crossed out:



It should be noted that breath marks indicate further that Joy Boughton used this score for the performance.

Arethusa

flying from the love of Alpheus, the river god, was turned into a fountain

Apart from the water damage referred to on the front sheet of the Fair Copy, the opening of *Arethusa* appears to be as in the final version. But the alternative ending to the first section now makes its first appearance possibly as a result of work with Joy Boughton. The printed ending which is in place in the Sketch is now crossed out in favour of the alternative with a large cross mark next to it. The last four bars of this section are also written out again at the end of the piece with no slurs (probably for note accuracy).

The inclusion of this new ending is puzzling as the first ending alternative is re-instated in the printed edition with the alternative printed at the bottom of the page, again with a cross sign. It should be assumed that Britten felt the alternative ending to be too final and too much like the end of the work to be his choice, but still left the option in

for the performer. One wonders how many times this ending is ever performed.

The middle section of *Arethusa* reaches its final state but with a correction in the final bar of the second phrase and with the entire third phrase appearing as an insertion and written at the bottom of the page. It seems that this section was settled only at the last minute.

METRONOME MARKS

The first edition of the *Metamorphoses* contains no metronome marks and it is a matter of great interest as to what speeds the composer intended. Apart from recordings, beginning with Joy Boughton's in 1952, there is no early available evidence. However, a letter from Britten to Friedrich Krebs, dated 26 July 1957 (Britten 1957), containing some fascinating information on Britten's views of the characters and the music, states: 'In case it is useful to you I append a list of rough metronome marks.' The Britten-Pears Library has a copy of this letter but no metronome marks. It goes without saying that these marks, if found, would be of considerable importance in understanding Britten's views on tempi. A further correspondence between Britten and Boosey and Hawkes (Britten 1965) containing a list of metronome marks identical with the 1968 reprint indicates that, in that year, a 'reprint has gone without metronome marks etc.'

Edwin Roxburgh makes the point that, while the tempi of these pieces are bound to fluctuate in performance, a basic tempo was intended by the composer. Joy Boughton, in working with him, likened this to the difference between the rhythm of a written poem as opposed to a recited performance. This latter might be rhythmically free but nonetheless would have an underlying rhythmic discipline.⁷ Neil Black also studied the work with Joy Boughton and supports this argument, remembering Boughton's disciplined approach and adherence to detail. He also performed regularly with the composer and recalls Britten's idealistic standards and precision with metronome marks.⁸

In 1968, Boosey and Hawkes brought out a second impression of the *Metamorphoses* with the added metronome markings from the composer. It is thought that Britten had become concerned by what he considered to be 'wayward' interpretations and this

led him to their introduction. But he had by then also heard some remarkable performers playing the pieces and these could have encouraged some of the tempi he put down. For example, Britten was apparently astonished by the technical and musical expertise of Heinz Holliger whose playing could have argued a case for the tempi in *Phaeton* and *Bacchus* for example.

It should be noted, too, that on 1 March 1976, Britten wrote a letter to Janet Craxton having heard the tapes for the recording of the *Metamorphoses* that she did with him at Snape: 'As I thought all along, my choice of you to record these two pieces was an excellent one and, I can tell you that I was delighted with what I heard' (Britten 1976). An undated Christmas card to her also says 'I loved your metamorphoses at the proms. Thank you!'

Some misunderstandings in performers' readings of the demisemiquaver patterns (which could be read as *tremoli*) leading to the metamorphic trill in bar 23 of *Narcissus* may have lead to the typographical clarification of this bar in the 1968 impression. Also added was an explanatory note that the music was a visual pun on reflection (Britten 1968).

The tempi will be discussed in detail in due course. For now it is interesting to note the 1968 tempi against Joy Boughton's original recording. It should be said that these tempi can only be approximate due to the natural fluctuation of tempo. Nonetheless they are indicative.

	EDITION	BOUGHTON
<i>Pan</i> :	quaver = approx.138	quaver = c.100
<i>Phaeton</i> :	dotted crotchet = 152	dotted crotchet = c. 132
<i>Niobe</i> :	crotchet = 60	quaver = c. 92
<i>Bacchus</i> :	1. crotchet = 112 2. crotchet = 120 3 crotchet = 132	crotchet = c. 96 crotchet =c.112 crotchet = c.112 +
<i>Narcissus</i> :	quaver = 84	quaver = c. 80
<i>Arethusa</i> :	quaver = 152	quaver = c. 84

CONCLUSION

It has to be assumed that Britten was happy with the printed edition of the *Metamorphoses* as he made no attempt to change anything in the 25 years after publication, save for the minor changes to the 1968 impression. However, there are details in these two sources which can help the performer

with interpretation. One might be tempted to try a performance with the extra notes in *Niobe* and *Narcissus* or with the added arpeggio notes in *Bacchus*. It would certainly repay practising *Phaeton* with Britten's original slurs and the patterns that he tries for the *Con moto* section of *Bacchus* might lead to a new interpretation of this section. Working through the Sketch does give the performer a remarkable feeling for the music itself. In many cases, a rejected phrase does underpin why the composer chose his final answer.

The circumstances surrounding the composition and first performance of the work may never be fully clarified though it is hoped that more information may emerge in the future. When did Britten begin thinking about the *Metamorphoses*? What led him to the idea? Was there a connection between this work and others written around that time, notably *Billy Budd* and the new edition of *Dido and Aeneas*? What was Joy Boughton's role? These and other questions remain. It is hoped, at least, that this essay goes some way to starting the debate.

With these thoughts in mind, discussion will continue on this great little work in my next article, a consideration of the connection with *Billy Budd*, the influence of Ovid and how the characters themselves fired the inspiration of the composer and, in turn, the inspirations of generations of performers. ♦

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NOTES

- 1 As reported by Sarah Francis (personal communication).
- 2 E mail to George Caird (personal communication)
- 3 Email to George Caird (personal communication)
- 4 Email to George Caird (personal communication)
- 5 As reported to George Caird (personal communication)
- 6 As reported to George Caird (personal communication)
- 7 As reported to George Caird (personal communication)
- 8 As reported to George Caird (personal communication)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to Boosey and Hawkes Publications Ltd. for permission to publish extracts from the edition of *Six Metamorphoses after Ovid*, Op. 49, to the Britten-Pears Library, Aldeburgh for permission to publish extracts from the *Composition Sketch* and Britten's 1951 pocket diary and to the Paul Sacher Foundation for permission to publish extracts from the *Fair Copy*.

Thanks to Robert Allan, Nancy Ambrose King, Neil Black, Ian Boughton, Nick Clark, Jane Craxton, Michael Craxton, Mervyn Cooke, Andrea Cox, Clive Fairbairn, Sarah Francis, Chris Grogan, Steve Halfyard, Angela Heap, Norma Hooks, Gordon Hunt, Peter Johnson, Janice Knight, Lesley Knowles, Colin Matthews, Felix Meyer, Donald Mitchell, Robin Moore-Ede, Stephen Powell, Philip Reed, Edwin Roxburgh, Jane Salmon, Dan Stolper and Richard Weigall for support and advice.

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Photo on page 1 courtesy of the Britten-Pears Library, Aldeburgh.

George Caird's article "Benjamin Britten and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*" will follow in the next edition of *The Double Reed*.

