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ABSTRACT

Igor Stravinsky's collaborations with contemporaries including Picasso, Nijinsky, and Cocteau are well documented. Less familiar, however, are the anachronistic "collaborations" suggested in one short movement Stravinsky wrote in 1918, and involving the Germans Luther and Bach, the Swiss Ramuz, the Russian Stravinsky, and the American Kurt Vonnegut Jr.

"Grand Choral," the penultimate movement of Stravinsky's *l'Histoire du Soldat*—written in 1918—provides a key to unlocking the mysteries of construction, ideology, and by extension, performance of the work. "Grand Choral" parodies J.S. Bach's Cantata 80 (1715) which, in its turn, is based on Martin Luther's 1529 hymn, "Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott." C.F. Ramuz, Stravinsky's original collaborator on *l'Histoire du Soldat*, based his libretto on a Russian folk tale, but in 1993, Vonnegut wrote a new text to accompany Stravinsky's music, a text inspired by the true story of Private Eddie Slovik, the last American soldier executed for desertion. In essence, Vonnegut collaborates with Stravinsky in a posthumous sense, as Stravinsky does with Bach and Bach with Luther. Vonnegut and Stravinsky each write themselves into an existing work, giving it contemporary meaning and a new poignancy.

The principal aim of my paper is to document the process by which I studied and conducted *l'Histoire du Soldat* with one libretto by Ramuz and another by Vonnegut. In the paper, I will first examine the historical context in which each of the "collaborators" contributed to *l'Histoire du Soldat*. I will also present an analysis of "Grand Choral" with regard to the source material by Luther and Bach. Finally, I will document the process and findings of my study, rehearsal, and performance of each of the two versions of *l'Histoire du Soldat* which I conducted on March 31, 2009 in Quance Theatre, on the campus of the University of Saskatchewan with a full cast of musicians, dancers and actors.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PERMISSION TO USE	i
ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF MUSICAL EXAMPLES	vii
1. INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Definitions	2
1.2.1 Chamber Musical and Chamber Theatre	2
1.2.2 Théâtre Ambulant	3
1.2.3 “Cut-and-paste”	3
2. OBJECTIVES	
2.1 Creating Authentic Performances	4
2.2 Gaining Conducting Skills	5
2.3 Analysis and Comparison of Two Libretti: Ramuz & Vonnegut	6
2.4 Exploring the Bond Between Music and Action	6
2.5 Stravinsky and the Wind Orchestra	7
3. HISTORICAL CONTEXT	
3.1 Stravinsky and the Theatre	9
3.1.1 Context and Background of <i>l’Histoire du Soldat</i>	10
3.1.2 The Wars	11
3.2 Stravinsky’s “Anachronistic” Collaborations	12
3.2.1 Martin Luther and J.S. Bach	14
3.2.2 Charles-Ferdinand Ramuz	15
3.2.3 Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.	16

4.	ANALYSIS OF “GRAND CHORAL”	19
4.1	The Chorale	19
4.2	Vonnegut and Stravinsky Unite	20
5.	PROCESS AND PERFORMANCE	26
5.1	Score Study and Rehearsal	26
5.1.1	Score Analysis	26
5.1.2	Research	27
5.1.3	Rehearsal	28
5.2	Roles of the Personnel	29
5.2.1	Conductor	29
5.2.2	Producer, Designer, Wardrobe Coordinator, and Publicist	30
5.2.3	Stage Manager and Transcriber	30
5.2.4	Stage Director	31
5.2.5	Choreographer	32
5.2.6	Assistant Directors	32
5.2.7	Actors, Dancers, and Musicians	33
6.	CONDUCTING <i>L’HISTOIRE DU SOLDAT</i> WITH TWO LIBRETTI	34
6.1	The “Superobjective”	34
6.2	The Role of the Conductor	35
6.2.1	Tempo and Rhythm	35
6.2.2	Embodying Style	37
6.2.3	Balance, Timbre, and Characterization	37
6.3	Specific Conducting Issues in the Movements	38
6.3.1	Part One “Marche du Soldat”	38
6.3.2	“Musique de la 1ère scène”	40

6.3.3	“Musique de la 2ème scène”	41
6.3.4	“Musique de la 3ème scène”	41
6.3.5	Part Two “Marche du Soldat”	42
6.3.6	“Marche Royal”	43
6.3.7	“Petit Concert”	43
6.3.8	“Trois Danses”	45
6.3.9	“Danse du Diable”	46
6.3.10	“Petit Choral”	46
6.3.11	“Couplet du Diable”	47
6.3.12	“Grand Choral”	47
6.3.13	“Marche Triomphale du Diable”	48
7.	CONCLUSION	49
7.1	The Results	49
7.1.1	Structural Considerations	49
7.1.2	Performance Issues	49
7.2	Summation	50
	APPENDIX A: Recital Programme	52
	APPENDIX B: Recital Poster	56
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	57

LIST OF MUSICAL EXAMPLES

Example 1	How The Parties Intersected With Each Other	13
Example 2	“Ein’ feste Burg ist unser Gott” (Word-For-Word Translation)	14
Example 3	“Grand Choral” With Implied Textual Underlay	22