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## Concert recording 2018-04-24a

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## Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Johann Sebastian Bach is the most well-known of the 75 musicians that came out of his family since the year of his birth. J.S. Bach studied violin with his father and sang in choruses in his hometown of Eisenhach, Germany until the death of his mother and father in 1684 and 1685, respectively.<sup>1</sup> Johann Sebastian was taken in by his brother, 24-year-old Johann Christoph Bach, after the death of his parents. Christoph gave the young boy lessons in organ and keyboard improvisation, music composition, and the writing of chorales (hymns with multiple voice parts).<sup>2</sup>

Johann Sebastian received a tuition waiver to attend boarding school in Lüneburg, a city in Northern Germany, at the age of 15. He was named organist in the German cities of Arnstadt and Mühlhausen by the age of 17.<sup>3</sup> Bach began his production of an impressive volume of music and children during his time in these cities. He composed several of his defining works, including the *Magnificat*, and produced 18 children with two wives between the years of 1708 and 1723. The *Magnificat* was written for a Christmas service in 1723 in Liepzig, Germany, where Bach spent the remainder of his life.<sup>4</sup> Bach composed and directed church music, tutored his children, and taught unruly schoolboys in exchange for free education and room for his children during this 27-year period. Bach died of complications from eye surgery in 1750 that, sadly, he did not see coming.<sup>5</sup>

“Quia fecit mihi magna”, from *Magnificat*, BWV 243

The *Magnificat* is a tight, 25-minute church cantata with 12 movements that moves through text from the Gospel of Luke (1:46-55). The text of the *Magnificat* is Mary’s response to Elizabeth’s praise of her faith upon Mary’s disclosure that she was carrying Christ.<sup>6</sup>

### Quia fecit mihi magna

Quia fecit mihi magna,  
qui potens est,  
et sanctum nomen eius.

### For the Mighty One Has Done

For the Mighty One has done  
great things for me,  
and holy is His name.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Christoph Wolf, *Johann Sebastian Bach – The Learned Musician* (London: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2001), 76.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Translation by John Lackey.

“Schlummert ein”, from *Ich habe genug*, Cantata No. 82

*Ich habe genug*, or *I have enough*, covers texts from Malachi 3:1-4, and Simeon’s canticle from Luke 2:22-32. It was composed for solo bass voice (representative of Simeon, an old man) in Leipzig in 1727. An arrangement of the first aria, “Schlummert ein” was penned in 1730 for domestic use by Bach’s family; the transcription appears for soprano voice with an added flute part in Anna Magdalena Bach’s *Klavierbüchlein*.<sup>8</sup>

**Schlummert ein**

**Fall Asleep**

Schlummert ein, ihr matten Augen,  
Fallet sanft und selig zu!

Fall asleep, you weary eyes,  
close softly and pleasantly!

Welt, ich bleibe  
nicht mehr hier,

World, I will not remain  
here any longer.

Hab ich doch kein Teil an dir,  
Das der Seele könnte taugen.

I own no part of you  
that could matter to my soul.

Hier muß ich das Elend bauen,  
Aber dort, dort werd ich schauen  
Süßen Friede, stille Ruh.

Here, I must build up misery,  
but there, I will see  
sweet peace, quiet rest.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup>Translation by John Lackey.



## Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Johannes Brahms was known to be reserved, easily provoked to anger, loving of children and animals, resentful of sympathy, self-critical, and quietly, deeply expressive in composition and performance. In his late 20s, Brahms was engaged to Agathe von Siebold, who is described as a “dark-haired, intelligent beauty; a soprano who by all accounts had the voice of an angel.”<sup>9</sup> The engagement was broken off by Brahms, who wrote in a letter “I couldn’t bear to have in the house a woman who has the right to be kind to me, to comfort me when things go wrong.”<sup>10</sup> Brahms’ conflicted personality and general inability to express emotion without a musical outlet is reflected in his compositions, with many of his works (“Schicksalslied”, *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, *Vier ernste Gesänge*) featuring sections of cathartic, abrasive contrast that serve to place a veil over the violent emotional turbulence that rests just under the surface of his music.

Brahms composed *Vier ernste Gesänge* (*Four Serious Songs*) in 1896 during the final year of Clara Schumann’s life. Brahms’ had always been close with the Schumann family due to Robert Schumann’s encouragement of Brahms as a young composer, but their relationships intensified when Robert Schumann was committed to an asylum in 1854.<sup>11</sup> Clara Schumann was aided by Brahms in the financial and emotional care of her seven children, and, given the extraordinary circumstances, the pair fell in love. Their love never gave way to a relationship (perhaps out of respect for the late Robert Schumann, or Brahms’ own emotional constipation), but the pair remained close for the rest of their lives, rarely going more than a few weeks without seeing one another.<sup>12</sup> Clara’s battle with cancer was the impetus for the composition of *Vier ernste Gesänge*, “a pessimistic work dealing with the vanity of all earthly things and welcoming death as the healer of pain and weariness.”<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>William Dougherty, “Free But Alone”, <https://van-us.atavist.com/brahms-and-women>. (2016), accessed 17 April 2018.

<sup>10</sup>Karl Geiringer, Robert Simpson, “Johannes Brahms”, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Johannes-Brahms>. (2018), accessed 17 April 2018.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.



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**Denn es gehet dem Menschen wie dem Vieh;**  
wie dies stirbt,  
so stirbt er auch;  
und haben alle einerlei Odem;  
und der Mensch hat nichts mehr den das Vieh:  
denn es ist alles eitel.

Es fährt alles an einen Ort;  
es ist alles von Staub gemacht,  
und wird wieder zu Staub.

Wer weiß, ob der Geist des Menschen  
aufwärts fahre,  
und der Odem des Viehes unterwärts  
unter die Erde fahre?

Darum sahe ich, daß nichts bessers ist,  
den daß der Mensch fröhlich sei  
in seiner Arbeit,  
denn das ist sein Teil.

Denn wer will ihn dahin bringen,  
daß er sehe, was nach ihm  
geschehen wird?

**Ich wandte mich, und sahe an alle,**  
die Unrecht leiden unter der Sonne;  
Und siehe, da waren Tränen derer,  
Die Unrecht litten und hatten keinen Tröster,  
Und die ihnen Unrecht täten,  
waren zu mächtig,  
Daß sie keinen Tröster haben konnten.

Da lobte ich die Toten, die  
schon gestorben waren  
Mehr als die Lebendigen, die noch das Leben hatten;  
die noch das Leben hatten

Und der noch nicht ist, ist besser,  
als alle beide,  
Und des Bösen nicht inne wird,  
das unter der Sonne geschieht.

**One thing befalleth the beasts and the sons of men**

The beast must die,  
the man dieth also;  
And they share the same breath,  
And the man is not above the beast;  
all of this is vanity.

They go all to the same place,  
For they all are of the dust,  
and to dust they return.

Who knows if a man's spirit  
goes upward,  
and who knows if the spirit of the beast  
goes downward, into the earth?

I perceive that there is nothing better  
than a man that rejoices  
in his own works,  
for it is his lot.

For who wants to bring him there?  
Who wants to show him what will  
happen to him?

**So I returned, and considered all**  
the oppressions that are done under the sun;  
and beheld the tears of the oppressed,  
they had no comforter;  
and on the side of their oppressors  
was power;  
and they had no comforter.

And I praised the dead,  
who had already been  
deader than the oppressors who live,  
and continue to live.

Better is he than they  
which hath not yet been,  
who hath not seen the evil work  
that is done under the sun.



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**O Tod, wie bitter bist du**

Wenn an dich gedenket ein Mensch,  
Der gute Tage und genug hat  
Und ohne Sorge lebet;

Und dem es wohl geht in allen Dingen  
Und noch wohl essen mag!

O Tod, wie wohl tust du dem,  
du dem Dürftigen  
Der da schwach und alt ist,  
Der in allen Sorgen steckt,  
Und nichts Bessers zu hoffen,  
Noch zu erwarten hat!

**Wenn ich mit Menschen  
und mit Engelzungen redete,**  
und hätte der Liebe nicht,  
so wär ich ein tönend Erz,  
oder eine klingende Schelle.

Und wenn ich weissagen könnte und wüßte alle  
Geheimnisse und alle Erkenntnis,  
und hätte allen Glauben,  
also, daß ich Berge versetzte,  
und hätte der Liebe nicht, so wäre ich nichts.

Und wenn ich alle meine  
Habe den Armen gäbe,  
und ließe meinen Leib Brennen  
und hätte der Liebe nicht,  
so wäre mir's nichts nütze.

Wir sehen jetzt durch einen  
Spiegel in einem dunklen Wort,  
dann aber von Angesicht zu Angesichte.  
Jetzt erkenne ich's stückweise;  
dann aber werde ichs erkennen,  
gleichwie ich erkannt bin.

Nun aber bleibet  
Glaube, Hoffnung, Liebe, diese drei;  
aber die Liebe ist die größte unter ihnen.

**O death, how bitter is the**  
remembrance of thee to a man  
that lives at rest in his possessions,  
to the man that hath nothing and is vexed by him,

and that hath prosperity in all things;  
yea, to him that is still able to receive meat!

O death, acceptable is thy sentence  
unto the downtrodden;  
those whose strength have failed them  
and are vexed with all things;  
and to them that despair,  
and have lost patience!

**Though I speak with the tongues  
of men and angels,**  
I have no love;  
I have become as sounding brass,  
or a tinkling cymbal.

And though I may have gifts of prophecy,  
and can understand mysteries,  
and have knowledge,  
and can move mountains,  
without love, I am nothing.

And though I bestow all my gifts  
to feed the poor,  
and though I give my body to be burned,  
without love, it gives me nothing.

We now see through a  
mirror into a dark world;  
but, we see it face to face.  
Now I know in part;  
but I shall know even more  
as I learn to know myself.

Now, I will abide  
in faith, hope, and love; these three;  
but, the greatest of these is love.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup>Translation by John Lackey.



**Gabriel Faure (1845-1924) and Paul Verlaine (1844-1896)**

Paul Verlaine was convicted of the attempted assassination of his lover, and fellow poet, Arthur Rimbaud on October 25<sup>th</sup>, 1873. After an alcohol-fueled romp through the French quarter of Soho, the men began to fight; Verlaine pulled his pistol and fired two rounds, one of which struck Rimbaud in the wrist. Rimbaud did not press charges against Verlaine, but Verlaine's participation in the Commune of Paris (Paris' insurrection against the French government in 1871) coupled with prejudices against homosexuality earned him 555 nights in cell 252 of the Mons' city prison.<sup>15</sup> Prison destroyed the will of many of Verlaine's contemporaries, including Oscar Wilde, but Verlaine's forced years of abstinence enabled him to write what many critics believe to be his finest works, including the "d'une prison" that would later be set by both Gabriel Faure and Reynaldo Hahn.<sup>16</sup>

Gabriel Faure's talent as a musician was identified at an early age, supposedly by a blind old woman who happened to be passing by the chapel where Faure spent his time practicing.<sup>17</sup> At the age of nine, Faure was pursued by a member of the National Assembly of France, Dufaur de Saubiac; he was able to persuade Faure's father to send him to boarding school at the École de Musique Classique et Religieuse (School of Classical and Religious Music), where Faure was able to hone his musical abilities.<sup>18</sup>

Upon graduation from boarding school, Faure was unceremoniously fired from his first position as choirmaster and organist at the Church of Saint-Sauveur in Rennes, a city in the northwest of France, for showing up to the morning service in his evening wear for an all-night ball.<sup>19</sup> He briefly held an assistant organist position in northern Paris before volunteering for military service in the Franco-Prussian war, where he saw action in multiple engagements, including the Siege of Paris. Faure was known to be a cheerful young man<sup>20</sup>, but a lack of success and some failed relationships (including a failed engagement) led him into several bouts of depression in the middling years of his life. "Prison" was composed by Faure during this rough patch, in the year of 1894.

<sup>15</sup>J Berrie Jones, *Gabriel Fauré – A Life in Letters* (London: B.T. Batsford Ltd.), 40.

<sup>16</sup>Hahn, Reynaldo. "d'une prison" (1922). *Composer's Score*.

<sup>17</sup>Jones, *Gabriel Faure*, 56.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.



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Prison

Le ciel est, par-dessus le toit,  
Si bleu, si calme.  
Un arbre, par-dessus le toit,  
Berce sa palme.

La cloche, dans le ciel qu'on voit,  
Doucement tinte.  
Un oiseau sur l'arbre qu'on voit,  
Chante sa plainte.

Mon Dieu, mon Dieu.  
La vie est là,  
Simple et tranquille.  
Cette paisible rumeur-là  
Vient de la ville.

Qu'as-tu fait,  
ô toi que voilà  
Pleurant sans cesse,

Dis, qu'as-tu fait,  
toi que voilà,  
De ta jeunesse?

Prison

The sky above the roof,  
is so blue, so calm.  
A tree, above the roof,  
rocks its bough.

The bell in the sky that one sees,  
tolls quietly.  
A bird on the tree that one sees,  
sings its lament.

My God, my God.  
That is life,  
simple and quiet.  
That restful murmuring there  
comes from the town.

What have you done,  
Oh, you there,  
weeping unceasingly.

Tell me, what have you done,  
you there,  
with your youth?<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Translation by David Malis.



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**Morten Lauridsen (b. 1943)**

Morten Lauridsen has established himself as one of America's preeminent composers of choral music with five Grammy nominations, the awarding of the National Medal of Arts from President Bush in 2007, and honorary doctorates from Whitman College, Oklahoma State University, Westminster Choir College and King's College, University of Aberdeen, Scotland. He has held a tenured position at the University of Southern California for over 40 years and has held residencies at 70 universities nationwide. Lauridsen was a Forest Service firefighter in an isolated area near Mt. St. Helens before his tenure at USC; now, Lauridsen maintains an island residence off the coast of Washington, where he composes in the summers.

Lauridsen's musical styles range from the eclectic and abstract (*Mid-Winter Songs*) to deep spiritual resolution and profundity ("O Magnum Mysterium") to sensitive, lyrical settings ("Dirat-on") of poetry. His musical style is unified through consistent use of flowing lyricism and effective motifs used in the melody and harmony of his writing. Conductor and musicologist Nick Strimple describes Lauridsen as "the only American composer in history who can be called a mystic, (whose) probing, serene work contains an elusive and indefinable ingredient which leaves the impression that all the questions have been answered. From 1993 Lauridsen's music rapidly increased in international popularity, and by century's end he had eclipsed Randall Thompson as the most frequently performed American choral composer."<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> <http://www.mortenlauridsen.net/MortenLauridsen.html>



“Dirait-on”, by Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926)

Rilke’s “Dirait-on” makes use of alliteration and elision to create a symbolic representation of the subject’s own self-caressing nature. It is intensely sensual and bittersweet to behold – to see and be in proximity to so much beauty, yet never being able to experience it or be close to it. The inwardly focused poetry is matched beautifully by Lauridsen’s sentimental verses. A simple chord progression, gentle dissonances, and a clear, repetitive melody allow Rilke’s prose to remain the focus of the work. A bittersweet release and far-away admiration are communicated by the tuneful refrain.

**Dirait-on**

Abandon entouré d'abandon,  
tendresse touchant aux tendresses  
C'est ton intérieur  
qui sans cesse se caresse,  
dirait-on;  
se caresse en soi-même,  
par son propre reflet éclairé.  
Ainsi tu inventes le theme  
du Narcisse exaucé.

**So They Say**

Wildness surrounding wildness,  
Tenderness touching tenderness,  
It is your own core  
that you ceaselessly caress,  
so they say;  
It is your own center that you caress,  
your own reflection gives you light.  
And in this way,  
you show us how Narcissus is redeemed...<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Translation from: [bostonchoral.org/wp.../Lauridsen---Chanson-des-roses-IPA.docx](http://bostonchoral.org/wp.../Lauridsen---Chanson-des-roses-IPA.docx). Accessed April 17, 2018.

“Dover Beach” by Matthew Arnold

The speaker and his lover taking in the sights and cliffs of Dover from a window. He breathes in the salt air, and the full moon, and the landing battlements from Dover's white cliffs. His lover comes to the window with him to enjoy the scene. There is one element out of balance: a stepping stone from the pebbles on the beach as they get down back and forth by the tide. It suggests an increasing melancholy to him.

He is reminded of the Greek tragic dramatist Sophocles, who had heard a rumor about the Argonauts' son. He had thought it to be the constant ebb and flow of humanity's misery. The narrator's thoughts turn to the emptying sea of faith as he perceives the warning strength of religion's unifying message. Now, there only remains the "night-whisper" down the vast, empty beach and solid shapes of the world.

In a desperate bid, he calls out for love, begging that they remain true to each other to give meaning to his life. The world, although as beautiful as the beach they observe, offers no joy, or love, or light, or certainty, or peace, or help for pain. Instead, he only sees a battlefield in the darkest night, with soldiers visibly firing at each other in a dark place, unable to distinguish friend from foe.



### Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

Samuel Barber began composing at the tender age of 6 years old, with his first composition, "Sadness", completed at the age of 7.<sup>24</sup> Barber began lessons at the Curtis School of Music at age 14, and ultimately attended the university, where he was a "triple threat" in piano, composition, and voice. Barber composed *Dover Beach* during his time at Curtis when he was 21 years old. Barber had considerable ability as a baritone recitalist and made the debut recording of *Dover Beach* himself.<sup>25</sup>

Barber's melancholy, introverted nature lent itself to the pessimistic viewpoint of Matthew Arnold's *Dover Beach*. He grew up with a well-educated, comfortable family, with his mother and aunt, a leading Metropolitan soprano, supplying him with quality music and literature throughout his childhood.<sup>26</sup> Barber was known to have two wildly different sides of his personality; he could be "resourcefully annoying to his enemies...a fantastic conversationalist with a waspish tongue...Often, he was with you and yet he was not; even so, he always managed to be polite and considerate".<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Donal Henahan, *Samuel Barber, Composer, Dead: Twice Winner of Pulitzer Prize* (New York: The New York Times), 50.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Paul Wittke, "Samuel Barber: An Improvisatory Portrait,"

<http://www.musicalesclassical.com/composer/long-bio/Samuel-Barber> (1994), accessed April 17, 2018.

### "Dover Beach" by Matthew Arnold

The speaker and his lover taking in the straits and cliffs of Dover from a window. He breathes in the still sea, and the full moon, and the dancing reflections from Dover's white cliffs. His lover comes to the window with him to enjoy the scene. There is one element out of balance; a rasping groan from the pebbles on the beach as they are drawn back and forth by the tide. It suggests an inexorable, insistent melancholy to him.

He is reminded of the Greek tragic dramatist, Sophocles, who had heard a similar sound near the Aegean Sea. He had thought it to be the constant ebb and flow of humanity's misery. The narrator's thoughts turn to the emptying Sea of Faith as he perceives the waning strength of religion's unifying message. Now, there only remains the "night-wind, down the vast edges drear and naked shingles of the world".

In a desperate bid, he cries out his love, begging that they remain true to each other to give meaning to his life. The world, although as beautiful as the beach they observe, offers no joy, or love, or light, or certitude, or peace, or help for pain. Instead, he only sees a battlefield in the darkest night, with soldiers wildly firing at shadows in a dark plain, unable to distinguish friend from foe.



**“Non piu andrai” from *Le nozze di Figaro* (1756-1791)**

This aria takes place at the end of the first act of Mozart’s comedic jewel *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Cherubino, a pageboy, has been discovered by his Count, Count Almaviva, in the quarters of Susanna, a servant of the Count. Count Almaviva suspects Cherubino of propositioning his wife, Countess Rosina. Despite the accuracy of his musings, the Count is unable to directly confront Cherubino because he is only in Susanna’s quarters to court her. As a roundabout punishment, the Count promotes Cherubino to an officer in his regiment, and orders him to join with the group in the distant city of Seville. Figaro, who is engaged to Susanna, sings this aria to Cherubino to tease and educate him about his newfound future, which is in stark contrast to the easy, flirtatious life Cherubino has lived up to this point.

**Non più andrai,**

farfallone amoroso,  
Notte e giorno d'intorno girando,  
Delle belle turbando, il riposo  
Narcisetto, Adoncino d'amor.

**You won't go anymore,**

amorous butterfly,  
Fluttering around night and day,  
Disturbing beauties during their rest  
You little Narcissus and Adonis of love.

Non piu avrai

questi bei penacchini,  
Quel cappello leggiero e galante,  
Quella chioma, quell'aria brillante,  
Quel vermiglio donnesco color!

You will no longer have  
these beautiful little stores,  
That light and gallant hat,  
That hair, that bright aroma,  
That womanish vermilion color!

Fra guerrieri, poffar Bacco!

Gran mustacchi, stretto sacco,  
Schioppo in spalla, sciabla al fianco,  
Collo dritto, muso franco,  
Un gran casco, o un gran turbante,  
Molto onor, poco contantè.

You'll be among soldiers, by Bacchus!  
A huge moustache, a little knapsack,  
Gun holstered, sword at your side  
Neck straight, nose out,  
A big helmet, or a grand turban,  
A lot of honour, very little pay...

Ed in vece del fandango

Una marcia per il fango.  
Per montagne, per valloni,  
Con le nevi, e i solioni,  
Al concerto di tromboni,  
Di bombarde, di cannoni,  
Che le palle in tutti i tuoni,  
All'orecchio fan fischiar.

And in place of the dance  
A march through the mud.  
Over mountains, through valleys,  
With snow, and sun,  
To the music of trumpets,  
Of bombs, and of cannons,  
Which, at every boom,  
Will make bullets whistle past your ear.

Cherubino, alla vittoria!

Alla gloria militar!

Cherubino, onward to victory!

For military glory!<sup>28</sup>

<sup>28</sup>Translation by John Lackey.



W.S. Gilbert (1836-1911), Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900),  
and *Pirates of Penzance*

Gilbert and Sullivan were a librettist (dialogue/lyric writer) and composer, respectively, that collaborated on fourteen English comic operas during their 25-year partnership<sup>29</sup>. Both men were from military families<sup>30</sup>, which must have contributed to the over-the-top satirical style that led to the success of three of their most prominent works: *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *The Mikado* and *The Pirates of Penzance*. Gilbert developed a unique style of “outrageous circumstances followed through to their logical conclusion”<sup>31</sup> in which pirates are noblemen, fairies are a casual part of the life of the English aristocracy, and a misplaced flirtation can earn a hefty jail sentence.

At the top of *The Pirates of Penzance*, we are introduced to Frederic, an apprentice to a group of kind-hearted pirates. Frederic shocks the band of pirates when he announces he plans to leave the pirating business for good. The young man was mistakenly indentured to the group due to his nursemaid’s poor hearing (quite a difference between “pilots” and “pirates”), but his strong sense of duty demanded that he complete his apprenticeship with them. Frederic has fallen in love with the pirate’s work-maid, Ruth (the only woman he has ever seen), and aims to leave the group with her. Frederic’s sense of military duty would demand that he hunt down and destroy the pirates after leaving them; filled with guilt, he implores the members of the group to come with him and abandon piracy for good. “O, better far to live and die” is the Pirate King’s response to Frederic. It is his belief that the pirate’s life lacks respectability, but possesses the honesty and freedom lacking in the work of a “true” monarch.

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<sup>29</sup>Ivan Hewitt, “The Magic of Gilbert and Sullivan”, *The Telegraph*. London: Telegraph Media Group. 2009.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.