

paramyth

violin . clarinet . piano . computer

yannis kyriakides [088]

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Programme Notes

The 'Bluebeard' tale appears in many variations around the world, the central theme revolving around a bride who having recently married is subsequently tempted to discover a horrific secret behind the forbidden door. The most well known example is of course Bela Bartok's opera Duke Bluebeard's Castle, which takes its source from the French 17th century writer Charles Perrault. The fatal dangers of feminine curiosity have of course had other sources, Eve, Pandora, Psyche and Lot's wife are all examples of mythical women whose curiosity exacted dire consequences. What is peculiar in the bluebeard legend and what makes it an intriguing tale, is that the motive is never clear why Bluebeard entrust the bride with the key that will reveal his horrific past.

I was surprised to stumble on a Cypriot variation of this in a collection of oral folklore recordings made in Cyprus by the Peloponnesian Folklore Foundation. Under the title of 'To Parymithi tou Vasilea' (The King's Tale), a recording made in the late 70's of a woman from Potami, Athinoula Christou Kyriakou, tells the story of a king who under bizarre circumstances marries his daughter to satan, who takes her to his underground castle where she enters the 100th 'forbidden' room to find dead bodies and half eaten carcasses of animals. I have no idea how this variation of the story with its strange twists came to be told by this woman from Potami, there seem to be both mythological and Christian resonances in it. The tale follows the classic patterns of narrative, having discovered the room, she is subsequently saved by seven brothers, one of whom she marries in the end; they live happily ever after.

In the composition, I use the recording of her speaking voice, stretching out the vowels with computer synthesis until it seems that she is singing the story. The instruments accompany, amplify and elaborate this telling. Towards the middle of the piece her voice almost becomes frozen, the speed of delivery slows down to zero, at the point of the narrative where she opens the secret door. In my interpretation of the story I leave them just after this point where to comfort the young bride after this revelation, the devil dresses up in her father's and mother's clothes. It's an incomplete story but I found it a touching moment to leave the narrative unclosed, for musical purposes at least we do not need the cavalry to come to the rescue.

Performance Notes

The computer part is comprised of 68 fragments of audio which is triggered at the precise moments indicated in the score. There can be some live control of amplitude. This can be done by a dedicated laptop player, or triggered by one of the musicians. The sound is played back through full range stereo speakers in the auditorium. The instrumentalists should be amplified if possible, but can be done in certain halls without.

There are a few places where extended techniques are used in the instrumental parts:

1. The piano harmonics can be achieved by touching the string inside the piano at specific points. Thread or stickers can be used to mark the exact points of the necessary partials.
2. The clarinet multiphonics are approximately noted, the clarinetist is free to find an appropriate multiphonic that suits their particular instrument with the approximate resonances of the notated pitches.

Text:

Read by Athinoula Christou Kyriakou in Greek.

Translated by John Leatham

Once upon a time there was a king. A louse bit the king on the backside. He caught the louse and put it in a water-jar. He fed it on blood and the louse was well nourished. It became huge, filling the water jar to the brim. And the king took it out (he broke the jar and took it out) and he slaughtered it. He flayed it and hung the skin above the lintel of the door. He invited all the citizens to tell him of they knew what creature the skin belonged to, and the king said he would give the person who knew the hand of his loveliest daughter in marriage. And so the entire city, the towns and villages round about, the whole populace, gathered together. No one recognised the louse or the creature the skin belonged to.

But an outsider recognised it. The one we call Satan recognised it. And to him the king gave his daughter. He said to him: "May my loveliest daughter be worthy of you", giving her to the devil. But the king was unaware, for the devil had behaved towards him like a human being. The king didn't know he was satan. Step by step, Satan had put a distance of a hundred miles between himself and the royal city when he came upon a river a river like the Jordan that flows by the Holy Sepulchre, and it was in spate. So he lifted up the girl in his arms and carried her across the river. As they journeyed on he presented her with three beasts - camels we call them. He gave her three camels. Now the king, the girl's father, had given her a great store of provisions. As they journeyed further the devil grew hungry and ate the lot. He left only the girl untouched.

Once they were on their way again after crossing the river they put another hundred miles behind them. Then he told her: "I'll strike the ground here with my hand, and raise up a tower, beneath it is my home." He struck the ground with his hand, he raised up a tower, and they entered it from below, he and the girl. He says to her: "Here in this house are a hundred and one rooms, you may open one hundred of them, but the one you are not to open".

When the fiend had left and gone off hunting the girl went and opened up all the rooms and looked them over to see what they had inside. And she opened the 'other' room. She found different things there: the carcasses of animals, dead men - deceased folk, as we say, which he had devoured. The girl saw them and fell in a faint. There was a pool of water in the courtyard. The girl rolled over and over into the water, and that brought her to her senses and she climbed out. She felt unwell and went to lie down.

The fiend returned from his hunting and went and found her in bed. He asked her: "What's the matter my girl?, Would you like to see your mother and your father ?". The girl answered him and said: "Yes". The fiend went off and dressed himself in robes the king wore. And he pretended to her he was the king, her father. "And now", he asked her, "do you want your mother ?" She answered him: "Yes, I want her". He went and put on another dress, one of the queen's. He pretended to her he was her mother. Well, the girl now realized it was neither her mother nor her father. That much she understood.

She had a pair of white pigeons her father had given her. She sat down and wrote three words, a short letter, and bound it to one of the pigeon's legs, and released the pigeon into the air. She released the pigeon in the courtyard, and it flew to the king's palace. It went and found him.

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score in C

♩ = 60

violin

clarinet in A

piano

computer

1 mia fora kai ena kairo ieshen ena vasilea

9

vi

cl

pn

cp

2 ton dha '

The musical score for 'Ka se mia ftyra' is presented for four instruments: Violin I (vi), Clarinet (cl), Piano (pn), and Cello/Double Bass (cp). The score is in 3/4 time and includes dynamic markings such as *mp*, *mf*, and *f*. The Violin I part features a melodic line with a crescendo and decrescendo. The Clarinet part provides harmonic support with a similar melodic contour. The Piano part includes a bass line with a prominent *f* dynamic. The Cello/Double Bass part is marked with a *3* in a box, indicating a triplet or a specific rhythmic pattern.

23

vi

23

cl

23

pn

23

cp

23

4

pano sto meri
tin evale mesa stin kouza

30

vi

pp

p

mp

mf

cl

p

mp

mf

pn

p

p

mp

mf

Leo.

cp

30

5

potisen yaima kai dhrethiken

37

vi

f

cl

f

pn

f

Leo.

cp

37

6

ishia me to stoma tis kouzas

42 sul pont

vi *mf* *subito mp* *p*

cl *mf* *subito mp* *p*

pn *mf* *mp* *p*

cp 42 $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

48

vi *mf* *f*

cl *mf* *f*

pn *mf* *f*

cp 48 7 kai tin evkalen $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{5}{8}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

54

vi *mf* *f* sul pont

cl *mf* *f*

pn *subito p* *mf* *f*

cp 54 8 tin esfaxe
kai ekremase tin petsa

61

vi *p* *mf* *f* *8va*

cl *subito p* *f*

pn *subito p* *mf* *f*

cp 61 9 meta, den tin egnorise kanenas
meta, esynachtin | poli ouli

vi

cl

pn

cp

ta horia konta ola
o basiliat tin ftyra tin petsa

Violin (vi) part, measures 77-80. The melody is in G major, starting with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a half note C5. The dynamics are *ff*, *f*, and *mf*.

Clarinet (cl) part, measures 77-80. The melody is in G major, starting with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a half note C5. The dynamics are *f* and *mf*.

Piano (pn) part, measures 77-80. The left hand plays a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a half note C5. The right hand plays a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a half note C5. The dynamics are *ff*, *f*, and *mf*.

Cello/Double Bass (cp) part, measures 77-80. The part is mostly silent, with a few notes in the right hand. The lyrics "tin egnorise enas exo pou dhame" are written below the part.

83

vi

mf

mp

cl

mp *mf* *f* *mf* *mp*

pn

mf *mp*

* *Rea.* *

cp

83

12 pou legoume

13 satanas

87

vi

cl

pn

p

Rea. *

8th hrm

8^{vb} *mf*

cp

87

93

vi

mf

f

cl

mf

f

mf

pn

mf

f

mf

cp

14

che tou tin edhoke
en tz'exeren o vasileas omos

15

lali tou halalin sou i kori mou

8vb

Rea

*

Rea

*

2/4

3/4

3/8

2/4

99

sul pont

vi

mp

subito p

cl

mp

subito p

pp

pn

mp

p

pp

cp

2/4

3/8

3/4

4/4

Rea

*

104

vi *pp*

cl

pn 104 8th hrm *mp*

cp 104 16 17 [CHOIR 1 : JOURNEY] sine slide 2 octaves

114

vi *mp*

cl 114

pn 1148 114

cp 114

Violin I (vi) and Clarinet (cl) parts feature melodic lines with slurs and ties. The Piano (pn) part includes a section labeled "spread chords where necessary" with complex chordal textures. The Cello/Double Bass (cp) part is a single-line bass line.

Violin I (vi): Measures 136-145. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes with various accidentals (sharps, naturals, flats).

Clarinet (cl): Measures 136-145. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes with various accidentals (sharps, naturals, flats).

Piano (pn): Measures 136-145. The piano part features chords and single notes, including some triplets in measures 136 and 137.

Cello/Double Bass (cp): Measures 136-145. The part is mostly rests, with a single note in measure 136.

vi 147

cl 147

pn 147

cp 147

vi 158

cl 158

pn 158

cp 158

169

vi

cl

pn

5th hrm

cp

18 lipon, lali tis dhame tha fatshiso to sheri

177

vi

cl

pn

mp

mf

f

cp

mou, na sikoso pyrkon

184

vi *f* *ff* *ff* *mf* <

cl *f* *f* *mf* <

pn *f* *mf* *f* *8va* *mf* <

cp 184 *19* che poukato en to spiti mou

190

vi *f* *ff*

cl *f* *mf*

pn *f* *mf*

cp 190 *20* Lali tis, dhame afton to spiti ine ekaton mia kamari

* Reo *

196

vi *f* *ff* moving to sul pont gliss on IV

cl *ff*

pn *ff* 8va

cp 196 21 tes ekaton na tes anixis, tin mia na men tin anixis 22 D drone cluster

205

vi sul pont

cl multiphonic around these notes

pn 7th hrm 6th hrm 8va

cp 205 [CHOIR 2: ROOMS] 23 24 25 26 27 28

215 natural harmonics (in 1st position)

vi *f*

215 multiphonic around these notes

cl *f*

215 random partials from 10th up

pn *f*

cp 215 29 30

219

vi

219

cl

219

pn

cp 219 31 32 33

vi 223

cl 223

pn 223

cp 223

vi 227

cl 227

pn 227

cp 227

vi

cl

p

cp

v|

cl

p

cp

vi 233 6 12 12

cl 233

pn 233 8va

cp 233 39

vi 235 12 6

cl 235

pn 235

cp 235 40

vi 237

cl 237

pn 237

cp 237

41 42

8va

8vb

vi 239

cl 239

pn 239

cp 239

43

12 6 12

* Ped.

vi 241 6 12 12

cl 241

pn 241 8va

cp 241 44

vi 243 12

cl 243

pn 243 Red.

cp 243 45

vi 245

cl 245

pn 245

cp 245

46 47

8va

8vb

Rea

12 6

vi 247

cl 247

pn 247

cp 247

48

6 12 6

8vb

Rea

6 12 6

vi 249 12 6 12

cl 249

pn 249

cp 249 49

vi 251 12

cl 251

pn 251

cp 251 50 Red. *

vi 253 *12* *12*

cl 253 *#b* *v*

pn 253 random harmonics from 10th upwards

cp 253 *4/4* *51*

8^{vb}

vi 254

cl 254

pn 254 *mf* *mp*

cp 254 *(8^{vb})* *52* *53* *54* *55* *56* *57* *58*

(8^{vb})

vi

263

cl

263

pn

263

cp

[UNVOICED: DISGUISES]

59 60 61 62

vi

272

cl

272

pn

272

cp

272

63 64

vi 281 *pp*

cl 281 *pp*

pn 281/8 *pp*

cp 281 65 66 ishen thko pezounia aspra

vi 290 *pp*

cl 290 *pp*

pn 290/8

cp 290 67 epiasen tse egrapsen tria logia

299

vi

pp

299

cl

pp

299

pn

299

cp

68

che enan grammatoui che edisen to pa sto poin tou
che exapolisen to pezouni efkalen to

306

vi

ppp

306

cl

ppp

306

pn

7th hrm

8^{vb}

pp

306

cp

69

epien ch'ivren to

314

vi

314

cl

314

pn

314

cp

The musical score for measures 314-318 is as follows:

- Violin I (vi):** Treble clef. Measure 314: half note G4, half note A4. Measure 315: whole rest. Measure 316: whole rest. Measure 317: half note G4, half note A4. Measure 318: whole rest.
- Clarinet (cl):** Treble clef. Measure 314: half note F#4, half note G#4. Measure 315: half note A#4, half note B4. Measure 316: half note C5, half note D5. Measure 317: half note E5, half note F#5. Measure 318: whole rest.
- Piano (pn):** Treble and Bass clefs. Measure 314: Treble (half note G4, half note A4), Bass (half note F#3, half note G#3). Measure 315: Treble (half note A4, half note B4), Bass (half note G#3, half note A4). Measure 316: Treble (half note B4, half note C5), Bass (half note A4, half note B4). Measure 317: Treble (half note C5, half note D5), Bass (half note B4, half note C5). Measure 318: Treble (half note D5, half note E5), Bass (half note C5, half note D5).
- Cello/Double Bass (cp):** Bass clef. Measure 314: whole note F#3. Measure 315: whole note G#3. Measure 316: whole note A4. Measure 317: whole note B4. Measure 318: whole note C5.