

Giacomo Puccini
(1858 - 1924)

Crisantemi (1890)

for string quartet (or orchestra)

*arranged for Wind Quintet (Cor Anglais or
Oboe, Clarinet in A) by Toby Miller (2014)*



Puccini in 1906

Giacomo Puccini was born into a local musical dynasty in Lucca, on December 22, 1858. His father Michele was a composer, organist at the cathedral and teacher at the *Istituto Musicale*. Seventeen years older than his wife Albina, he died suddenly when Giacomo was barely five, leaving Albina, pregnant with her eighth surviving child, a widow at the age of only 34. Domenico Michele, known as Michele, was born three months later, a brother for Giacomo among a gaggle of sisters. So while eminently respectable, the family was not well off. Giacomo as the oldest boy received the 'Italian mamma' treatment and was reported as lazy, rebellious and disruptive at school, but showed musical talent. His mother then sent him to study first at the *Istituto Musicale* under his uncle, who was soon fed up with the boy, and then in 1880 to the Milan Conservatoire (meanwhile the daughters were to earn money as soon as they could). With the help of the composer Ponchielli, Giacomo eventually graduated, embarked on his first opera, and was soon joined by his brother Michele who began his studies at the Conservatoire.

Puccini wrote little music in genres other than opera, which was (as he himself said) the only form that suited him. The two themes of *Crisantemi* were both later used in Puccini's opera *Manon Lescaut*, which Puccini was working on during 1890, but which was not performed until February 1893. This was his first major success: before it, Puccini was very dependent on the personal patronage of the publisher Giulio Ricordi, who had granted Puccini a small monthly salary in 1884 after hearing his first opera *Le Villi*, and had stuck with him (despite opposition from the rest of his Board) after the failure in 1889 of his second, *Edgar*, which Ricordi had commissioned.

Dedicated 'to the memory of Amedeo of Savoy' who had died on 18 January 1890, and first performed apparently already on 26 January, *Crisantemi* was said by Puccini (in a letter written on 6 February to Michele, now emigrated to Argentina), to have been composed in a single night. Chrysanthemums are symbolic of memories and death in Italy. So it is possible that *Crisantemi* was issued from early 'work in progress' *Manon* themes, as a way both of providing something interim to his publisher, and perhaps also of capitalising on the public mood following the death of the popular Duke - who was considered by some, especially in the north, as the rightful ruler of all of Italy. I haven't found any evidence that Puccini was known personally to the Duke.

The piece is written like an operatic aria in ABA form, and the home key is C# minor. Relatively rare before the Romantic period, this key seems to have had dark associations. It was used several times by Chopin (he based his Fantaisie-Impromptu Op 66 on Beethoven's *Moonlight* sonata in the same key). The first few bars of Chopin's Prelude 'no. 25' lead to the same cadence as *Crisantemi*'s opening. Rachmaninov wrote his famous Prelude in this key just two years after Puccini's piece: it was used in Ngaio Marsh's novel *Overture to Death*. *Crisantemi*'s first theme is an expansion of its opening, which is in fact a 'closing' cadence: it both opens (bar 2) and closes the theme (bar 9) - a device first used by Haydn in the first movement of his so-called 'How do you do' quartet (Op 33 no 5). But the effect here is surely the perfect musical expression of a heavy sigh, enhanced by *rubato* à la Chopin. Even within this short instrumental piece it is a strongly recognizable 'tag': later, in the second half of the opera, it clearly functions as a Wagnerian *leitmotiv* symbolizing Manon's death. The second theme provides contrast - although still in the minor (F#), it has a more obviously operatic melody and accompaniment. After the return of the first theme, a short coda brings a final reminder of the second. Puccini's piece is well crafted and idiomatic for instruments, and does not look like the work of a single night. It has maintained a niche in the repertoire of both string quartet and string orchestra.

Crisantemi

arranged for Wind Quintet (Oboe or Cor Anglais) by Toby Miller

Puccini

Andante mesto ♩ = 60

Solo

dolce

rit.

a tempo

Flute

Oboe

Cor Anglais

Clarinet in A

Horn in F

Bassoon

The first system of the musical score for 'Crisantemi' is arranged for a wind quintet. It features five staves: Flute, Oboe, Cor Anglais, Clarinet in A, and Bassoon. The Flute part begins with a 'Solo' marking and a 'dolce' dynamic. The Oboe, Cor Anglais, and Bassoon parts have 'p' (piano) dynamics. The Clarinet in A part has a 'p' dynamic. The Horn in F part has a 'pp' (pianissimo) dynamic. The tempo is marked 'Andante mesto' with a quarter note equal to 60 beats per minute. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 3/4. The music is written in a single system with various dynamics and articulations.

5

rall.

a tempo

rit.

The second system of the musical score for 'Crisantemi' continues the arrangement for the wind quintet. It features five staves: Flute, Oboe, Cor Anglais, Clarinet in A, and Bassoon. The Flute part has a 'rall.' (rallentando) marking. The Oboe, Cor Anglais, and Bassoon parts have 'pp' (pianissimo) dynamics. The Clarinet in A part has a 'p' (piano) dynamic. The Horn in F part has a 'pp' dynamic. The tempo is marked 'a tempo' and 'rit.' (ritardando). The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 3/4. The music is written in a single system with various dynamics and articulations.

9 **a tempo** **rit.** **a tempo** **accel.**

p *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp* *p* *pp*

14 **rit.** **rall.** (lead) **a tempo** **rit.**

pp *ppp* *ppp* *pp* *pp* *ppp* *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp*

18

a tempo

rit.

a tempo

poco affretando

Musical score for measures 18-22. The score is in 3/4 time. Measures 18-20 are marked *a tempo*. Measure 21 is marked *rit.*. Measure 22 is marked *a tempo*. Measures 23-25 are marked *poco affretando*. The score features a piano (*p*) and piano-piano (*pp*) dynamic range. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The instrumentation includes a flute (Fl), a clarinet in A (Cl A), a bassoon (Bn), a horn in C (CA), a trumpet in C (Tr), and a trombone (Tbn).

23

allargando

sostenuto

a tempo

Bn solo

trattenuto

Musical score for measures 23-27. The score is in 3/4 time. Measures 23-25 are marked *allargando*. Measures 26-27 are marked *sostenuto*. Measures 28-30 are marked *a tempo*. Measures 31-33 are marked *trattenuto*. The score features a piano (*p*) and piano-piano (*pp*) dynamic range. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The instrumentation includes a flute (Fl), a clarinet in A (Cl A), a bassoon (Bn), a horn in C (CA), a trumpet in C (Tr), and a trombone (Tbn).

A a tempo

con molta espressione

Violin I: *mp*

Violin II: *f* *pp* [pizz.], with Bn *pp*

Viola: *f* *pp* [pizz.], with Bn *pp*

Cello: *f* *pp* *pp*

Double Bass: *f* *pp* [pizz.], with Ob/CA *p*

Violin I: *pp*

Violin II: *pp*

Viola: *pp*

Cello: *pp*

Double Bass: *pp*

36

pp 3

ppp

ppp

pp 3

pp

pp

39

3

[arco]

mf

[arco]

mf

3

[arco] solo

p

Musical score for measures 42-45. The score includes parts for Clarinet (Cl), Flute (Fl), Horn (Hn), and strings. Dynamics range from *mf* to *mp*. Performance instructions include *con molta espressione*.

Musical score for measures 46-49. The score includes parts for strings and woodwinds. Dynamics range from *p* to *pp*. Performance instructions include *con molta espressione (w Ob/CA)*.

49

This musical score is for the 'The Swan' movement from the Suite for Piano, Op. 20, by Camille Saint-Saëns. It is arranged for piano and celesta. The piano part is written for the right hand in treble clef and the left hand in bass clef, both in the key of D major. The celesta part is written in treble clef in the key of B-flat major. The tempo is marked 'Andante' and the time signature is 3/8. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings like *pp* and *ppp*. The piano part features a prominent triplet melody in the right hand and a supporting bass line in the left hand. The celesta part provides a delicate, bell-like accompaniment.

52

The image shows a musical score for a song titled "The Rose Tree". The score is written for a voice and piano. It consists of two systems of music. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is 3/4. The vocal line is in treble clef. The piano accompaniment consists of three staves: the top two are in treble clef and the bottom is in bass clef. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like "pp" and "p".

55

56

57

58

59

p

f

f

f

p

(3)

(4)

f

p

60

61

62

63

64

p

mf

pp

mf

pp

mf

p

pp

mf

p

B

Tempo 1 ♩ = 60

66

p

p

70

p

pp

pp

pp

p

pp

pp

pp

p

mp

p

74

poco accel.

rit.

pp

pp

ppp

ppp

ppp

ppp

pp

pp

78

p

pp

pp

pp

pp

pp

pp

pp

p

pp

p

pp

p

12

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