

Eduard de Boer

**Fünf Lieder
nach Texten Franz Kafkas**

**Five Songs
after Texts by Franz Kafka**

**Fassung für Bariton und Klavier
Version for Baritone and Piano**



Partitur – Score

opus 33
MUSIC

Introduction by the composer

Many stories of the famous writer Franz Kafka deal with the anxiety, alienation and powerlessness of an individual against a nonsensical, blind authority. His surreal stories have even resulted in the emergence of the word *Kafkaesque*, to describe the absurdity of what happens to such an individual and the hopelessness of his situation. For this song cycle, I searched Kafka's oeuvre for texts fitting the situation of a so-called *whistleblower*: an informant who exposes wrongdoing, mostly within the organisation where he or she is working, in the hope of stopping it.

I know what it feels like to be a whistleblower, as I have been one myself, in the 90s of the previous century. This had to do with the predecessor of the Dutch state fund which enabled me to write this composition. It was called *Fonds voor de Scheppende Toonkunst*, which roughly translates as *Fund for the Creation of Music*. Research and analysis of this fund's annual reports led me to the conclusion that the composers who received most of the (public) funding were largely the same ones as could be found in the management board and / or in the advisory committees. And on top of this, the composers in the board had a say in which composer would be asked to take part in the advisory committee to decide about the next round of applications. When my findings went public, I went through the ordeal that whistleblowers usually go through, and this isn't the place to go into detail about this. Suffice it to say that this experience resulted in compositions like the secular oratorio *Der Förderverein*, the third part of my choral song cycle *Cantica Aviditatis* and my 'conceptual experiment' *Bubbles*.

This story pales into insignificance compared to what happened to the dedicatee of [this version of] this composition, the 74 year old German / British mathematician and human rights campaigner Sabine McNeill, who at this moment is imprisoned for exposing systemic child abuse within the U.K. She can be viewed on Youtube, speaking in the EU Parliament about this theme (search terms: Forced Adoption Exposed EU Parliament).

That systemic child abuse and child trafficking is rampant, not just in the U.K., but all over the globe, especially within circles of the highest power, is something that few people want to know or even think about. Most people prefer to look the other way. A few years ago, I came to the conclusion that, being a composer, I can contribute to spreading awareness of this phenomenon by writing compositions about it. So far, however, such compositions have hardly been performed or not at all. But never mind, this composition is the next one in the series. And helping spread awareness about these abhorrent practices is necessary in order to make them stop.

In the preface to the score of *Coming to Light*, one of these earlier compositions, I added a number of Youtube links to prove my point. However, more and more of the Youtube films in question are now being taken down – only to be replaced by more and more new ones, by the way – rendering the links I provided useless. All the more happy am I with the foundation in 2015 of the International Tribunal for Natural Justice I.T.N.J., a judicial commission of inquiry into human trafficking and child sex abuse. I invite everyone who wants to know more about (the depth of) this rabbit hole simply to search for ITNJ on Youtube and experience the cumulative effect of the large and growing number of testimonies.

To return to this song cycle, it describes various occurrences that may happen to a whistleblower and his / her ensuing states of mind:

I. Die Verhaftung (The Arrest). A whistleblower may be arrested, on sometimes trumped-up charges. The text is from the beginning of Kafka's famous novel *Der Prozess (The Trial)* and the absurdity of the conversation is underlined by the bizarre waltz that follows it.

II: Gruppenverhalten (Group Behaviour). In many cases, a whistleblower is fired, while his / her colleagues prefer to look the other way. I took the liberty to 'borrow' the *Leitmotiv* of the 'small evil' from Prokofiev's opera *The Fiery Angel* to depict the usurper helmsman.

III. Erlösung in einem Traum (Salvation in a Dream) is about yearning for death, under the pressure of the circumstances.

IV. Weg von hier! (Away from here!) in this musical setting is about the urge to fly from the circumstances that blowing a whistle can bring about. This song is followed by a postlude depicting a thunderstorm, not unlike the one that Shakespeare described so beautifully in his play *King Lear*.

V. Nach dem Gewitter (After the Thunderstorm). I couldn't resist the temptation to end this cycle on a positive note, with a musical setting of the only positive and self-asserting text that I could find in Kafka's oeuvre – admittedly the short story where this text has been taken from ends with the collapse of the protagonist's exuberant feeling, but Kafka did write these lines nonetheless – as I feel that we are living in times of transformation, where human consciousness is gradually growing and ever more is coming to light. May the endeavours of Sabine McNeill and many others contribute to this expansion, and may also this little musical offering help with this.

Texts and Translation

<p>I. Die Verhaftung</p> <p>Eines Morgens klopfte es und ein Mann trat in die Wohnung Josef K.'s ein.</p> <p>»Wer sind Sie?« fragte K. Der Mann aber ging über die Frage hinweg. »Sie sind verhaftet« sagte er.</p> <p>»Und warum denn?« fragte K. »Ich bin nicht dazu bestellt, Ihnen das zu sagen« erwiderte der Mann.</p> <p>»Wie kann ich denn verhaftet sein? Und gar auf diese Weise?« »Solche Fragen beantworte ich nicht.«</p> <p>»Zeigen Sie mir dann wenigstens den Haftbefehl« sagte K. »Was kümmert mir denn der?« rief der Mann, »Was kümmert mir denn der?«</p>	<p>I. The Arrest</p> <p>One morning there was a knocking at the door and a man entered Josef K.'s apartment.</p> <p>»Who are you?« K. asked. The man, however, didn't heed the question. »You are under arrest« he said.</p> <p>»And why then?« K. asked. »I wasn't summoned to tell you that« replied the man.</p> <p>»How can I be arrested? And even in such a way?« »I do not answer such questions.«</p> <p>»Then at least show me the arrest warrant« K. said. »What do I care about that?« the man cried, »What do I care?«</p>
<p>II. Gruppenverhalten</p> <p>»Bin ich nicht Steuerermann?« rief ich. Ich war am Steuer gestanden in der dunklen Nacht, und nun war ein Mann gekommen und wollte mich beiseiteschieben.</p> <p>Und da ich nicht wich, setzte er mir den Fuß auf die Brust und trat mich langsam nieder, während ich noch immer an den Stäben des Steuerrades hing und beim Niederfallen es ganz herumriss.</p> <p>Da aber fasste es der Mann und brachte es in Ordnung. Mich aber stieß er weg.</p> <p>Doch ich besann mich bald, lief zu der Luke, die in den Mannschaftsraum führte und rief: »Mannschaft! Kameraden! Kommt schnell! Ein Fremder hat mich vom Steuer vertrieben!«</p> <p>Langsam kamen sie, stiegen auf aus der Schiffstreppe. »Bin ich der Steuerermann?« fragte ich. Sie nickten, aber Blicke hatten sie nur für den Fremden.</p> <p>Im Halbkreis standen sie um ihn herum und, als er befehlend sagte: »Stört mich nicht«, sammelten sie sich, nickten mir zu und zogen wieder die Schiffstreppe hinab.</p>	<p>II. Group Behaviour</p> <p>»Aren't I the helmsman?« I cried. I was standing at the steering wheel in the dark night, and now a man had come and he wanted to push me aside.</p> <p>En since I didn't budge, he put his foot on my breast and slowly pushed me down, while I was still hanging at the spokes of the steering wheel and completely toppled it while falling.</p> <p>But the man took it and fixed it. Me, however, he pushed away.</p> <p>But I soon came to my senses, went to the hatch leading to the crew compartment and shouted: »Men! Comrades! Come quickly! A stranger has me driven me away from the steering wheel!«</p> <p>Slowly they came, ascended out of the ship's stairwell. »Am I the helmsman here?« I cried. They nodded, but had only eyes for the stranger.</p> <p>I a semicircle they stood around him and when he said in a commanding voice: »Don't disturb me«, they gathered, gave me a nod and descended along the ship's stairs..</p>

<p>III. Erlösung in einem Traum</p> <p>Josef K. träumte:</p> <p>Es war ein schöner Tag und K. wollte spazierengehen. Kaum aber hatte er zwei Schritte gemacht, war er schon auf dem Friedhof.</p> <p>Er glitt über einen Weg in schwebender Haltung. Schon von der Ferne faßte er einen frisch aufgeworfenen Grabhügel ins Auge. Dieser Grabhügel übte eine Verlockung auf ihn aus. Es war, als herrsche dort viel Jubel.</p> <p>Plötzlich sah er den gleichen Grabhügel neben sich am Weg. Er sprang eilig ins Gras, schwankte und fiel ins Knie.</p> <p>Sofort trat aus einem Gebüsch ein Mann hervor. In der Hand hielt er einen Bleistift, mit dem er oben auf dem Grabstein ansetzte. Er schrieb: »Hier ruht-«. Dann sah er nach K. zurück.</p> <p>Daraufhin setzte der Mann wieder zum Weiterschreiben an, aber er konnte nicht. Es bestand irgendein Hindernis.</p> <p>Er ließ den Bleistift sinken und drehte sich wieder nach K. um. K. merkte, daß er in großer Verlegenheit war, aber die Ursache dessen nicht sagen konnte.</p> <p>Auch K. geriet dadurch in Verlegenheit. Sie wechselten hilflose Blicke. K. war untröstlich über die Lage des Künstlers und er begann zu weinen.</p> <p>Dann entschloß sich der Künstler, da er keinen andern Ausweg fand, dennoch zum Weiterschreiben.</p> <p>Blaß und unsicher zog sich der Strich hin. Sehr groß jedoch wurde der Buchstabe. Es war ein J.</p> <p>Endlich verstand ihn K. Mit allen Fingern grub er in die Erde, die fast keinen Widerstand leistete.</p> <p>Alles schien vorbereitet, nur zum Schein war eine dünne Erdkruste aufgerichtet. Gleich hinter ihr öffnete sich ein großes Loch, in das K. versank.</p> <p>Während er aber unten schon von der Tiefe aufgenommen wurde, jagte oben sein Name mit mächtigen Zieraten über den Stein.</p> <p>Entzückt von diesem Anblick erwachte er.</p>	<p>III. Salvation in a Dream</p> <p>Josef K. dreamt:</p> <p>It was a beautiful day and K. wanted to go walking. But hardly had he taken two steps, or he was at the cemetery.</p> <p>He glided along a path in a floating posture. Already from afar a freshly dug barrow caught his eye. He felt attracted to this barrow. It was as if a lot of cheering dominated there.</p> <p>Suddenly he saw the same barrow next to him along the path. Hastily, he jumped on the grass, staggered and fell on his knees.</p> <p>Immediately a man emerged from the bushes. In his hand he had a pencil, the tip of which he put at the top of the gravestone. He wrote: »Here lies-«. Then he looked back at K.</p> <p>Whereupon the man attempted to continue his writing, but he couldn't. There was some kind of obstacle.</p> <p>He lowered his pencil and turned again to K. K. noticed that he was in great distress but couldn't communicate the cause of this.</p> <p>Also K. became distressed by this. They exchanged helpless glances. K. was inconsolable about the artist's condition and he began to cry.</p> <p>Then the artist decided, since he didn't another way out, to continue writing nonetheless.</p> <p>Pale and insecure the line dragged on. Very large, though, became the letter. It was a J.</p> <p>At last K. understood. With all of his fingers he dug into the earth, that hardly resisted.</p> <p>Everything appeared to have been prepared, only for appearances a thin crust of earth had been erected. Directly behind this a large hole opened up, through which K. sank down.</p> <p>But while he was already being absorbed by the depth below, his name rushed above on the stone, with powerful ornamented letters.</p> <p>Thrilled by this view, he awoke.</p>
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<p>IV. Weg von hier!</p> <p>Ich befahl mein Pferd aus dem Stall zu holen. Der Diener verstand mich nicht. Ich ging selbst in den Stall, sattelte mein Pferd und bestieg es.</p> <p>Beim Tore hielt der Diener mich auf und fragte: »Wohin reitet der Herr?« »Ich weiß es nicht«, sagte ich, »nur weg von hier, nur weg von hier, immerfort nur weg von hier! «</p>	<p>IV Away from here!</p> <p>I gave orders to get my horse from the stable. The servant didn't understand me. I went into the stable myself, saddled my horse and mounted it.</p> <p>At the gate, my servant stopped me and asked: »Whereto is my lordship riding?« »I don't know«, I said, »just away from here, just away from here, »evermore just away from here! «</p>
<p>V. Nach dem Gewitter</p> <p>Man sehe die Überzeugungskraft der Luft nach dem Gewitter! Meine Verdienste erscheinen mir und überwältigen mich, wenn ich mich auch nicht sträube.</p> <p>Ich schätze meine Vergangenheit gegen meine Zukunft, finde aber beide vortrefflich, finde beide vortrefflich und kann keiner von beiden, keiner von beiden den Vorzug geben. Beide sind vortrefflich!</p> <p>Nur die Ungerechtigkeit, die Ungerechtigkeit der Vorsehung, die mich so begünstigt, muß ich tadeln. Meine Verdienste erscheinen mir und überwältigen mich.</p> <p>Ich schätze meine Vergangenheit gegen meine Zukunft, kann aber keiner von beiden den Vorzug geben. Beide sind vortrefflich! Beide sind vortrefflich! Beide sind vortrefflich!</p>	<p>V. After the Thunderstorm</p> <p>Behold the air's persuasiveness after the Thunderstorm! My merits appear before me and overwhelm me, without my resisting it.</p> <p>I estimate my past against my future, however, I consider both to be excellent, I consider both to be excellent and I can't give preference to either of them, give preference to either of them. Both are excellent!</p> <p>Only the injustice, the injustice of Providence, favouring me so, I must reproach. My merits appear before me and overwhelm me.</p> <p>I estimate my past against my future, can't give preference to either of them, however. Both are excellent! Both are excellent! Both are excellent!</p> <p><i>Translation by Eduard de Boer</i></p>

This song cycle could be composed thanks to a contribution called *Werkbijdrage Muziekauteur* (*Work Contribution Music Author*) of the Dutch *Fonds voor de Podiumkunsten*. (*Fund for the Podium Arts*).
Dedicated to Sabine McNeill
Duration: ca. 22 min.

CONTENTS:

	<i>page:</i>
I. Die Verhaftung (The Arrest)	1
II. Gruppenverhalten (Group Behaviour)	6
III. Erlösung in einem Traum (Salvation in a Dream)	10
IV. Weg von hier! (Away from here!)	21
V. Nach dem Gewitter (After the Thunderstorm)	27



Sabine McNeill gewidmet

Fünf Lieder

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Fassung für Bariton und Klavier

Eduard de Boer, op. 86 (2018)

1. Die Verhaftung

Moderato ♩ = ca. 69 (senza rigore)

mf
Ei - nes Mor-gens klopf-te es und ein Mann trat in die
knock on wood
of piano

4 **1** *mf*
Woh-nung Jo - sef K's__ ein. »Wer sind Sie?« frag - te K.

7 **2** *mp* *f*
Der Mann a - ber ging ü-ber die Fra-ge hin - weg. »Sie sind ver - haf - tet« sag - te er.

10 *mf* *mp* *mf*
»Und wa - rum denn?« frag - te K. »Ich bin nicht da - zu be - stellt, Ih - nen das zu

13 *mp*

sa - gen« er - wi - der - te der Mann.

p

3

15

ff

17 *mf* *mp*

»Wie kann ich denn ver - haf-tet sein? Und gar auf die - se Wei - se?«

mp *p*

Red.

19 *f* *poco rit.*

»Sol - che Fra - gen be - ant-wor-te ich nicht.«

f *f*

4

A tempo

21 *mf*

»Zeigen Sie mir dann wenigstens den Haftbefehl,« sagte K.

p

Ed.

5

23 *f* *mp* **Tempo di valse**

»Was kümmert mich denn der?« rief der Mann, »Was kümmert mich denn...

f *mp*

6

28

der?«...

7

36 *f*

f

42

8

48

mp

9

56

p

trmm

10

64

p

11

72

ff

12

un poco animando

Musical score for measure 79. The system consists of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The right hand features a melodic line with slurs and accents, while the left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment. Dynamic markings include *ff* and *mp*. Fingerings are indicated with numbers 1 and 2.

13

Musical score for measure 86. The system consists of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The right hand has a melodic line with slurs, and the left hand has a rhythmic accompaniment. Dynamic markings include *f*, *mf*, and *f*.

14

Musical score for measure 94. The system consists of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The right hand features a melodic line with slurs and trills, and the left hand has a rhythmic accompaniment. Dynamic markings include *f*, *mf*, *f*, *mf*, and *p*. Trills are marked with *tr*.

15

Allegro $\text{♩} = 80$

Musical score for measure 102. The system consists of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The right hand has a melodic line with slurs, and the left hand has a rhythmic accompaniment. Dynamic markings include *f*. A first ending bracket is shown above the right hand.

16

Musical score for measure 111. The system consists of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The right hand has a melodic line with slurs and trills, and the left hand has a rhythmic accompaniment. Dynamic markings include *mf*. Trills are marked with *tr*.

Musical score for measure 118. The system consists of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The right hand has a melodic line with slurs, and the left hand has a rhythmic accompaniment. Dynamic markings include *ff*.

attacca

II. Gruppenverhalten

1 **Adagio** ♩ = ca. 58

f *mf*

»Bin ich nicht Steu-er-mann?« rief ich. Ich war am Steu-er ge-stan-den

4 *p*

in der dun - klen Nacht, und nun war ein Mann ge-kom - men und woll - te mich bei - sei -

p *mp* *p* *mp* *pp*

7 **17** *p*

- te - schie - ben. Und da ich nicht wich,

ff *p*

10

setz-te er mir den Fuß auf die Brust und trat mich lang - sam nie-der, wäh - rend ich noch im - mer

3 *3*

an den Stä - ben des Steu - er - ra - des hing und beim Nie - der - fal - len es ganz.

18

mf

her - um - riss. Da a - ber fas - ste es der Mann und brach - te es in Ord - nung.

18

ff

Mich a - ber stieß er weg.

19

mp

Doch ich be - sann mich bald, lief zu der Lu - ke, die in den Mann - schafts - raum führ - te und rief:

8 23

poco animando

f

»Mann-schaft! Ka-me-ra-den! Kommt schnell! Ein Frem-der hat mich vom Steu -

25

- er ver - trie - ben!«

20**calmando****Tempo primo**
pp

27

Lang-sam ka - men sie, stie-gen auf aus der Schiffs-trep - pe.

pp

31

mp

»Bin ich der Steu - er-mann?« frag - te ich. Sie nick - ten, a - ber

33

Bli-cke hat-ten sie nur für den Frem-den.

mf *pp*

36 **21**

Im Halb-kreis stan-den sie um ihn her-um und, als er be-feh-lend sag-te: »Stört mich

mf *f*

38

nicht«, sam-mel-ten sie sich, nick-ten mir zu und zo-gen wie-der die Schiff-strep-pe hin-ab.

mf *mp* *p*

41

43

pp

III. Erlösung in einem Traum

Adagio ♩ = ca. 80

pp legato
con molto ♩

3 *p*

Jo - sef K. träum - - - te:

22

6 *poco rit.* ♩ = ♩ → Allegretto

f

*) All arpeggios in this movement are to be played rapidly.

9 *mf*

Es war ein schö - ner Tag, _____

mp

14

und K. woll - te spa-zie - ren - ge - hen.

18 **23** *mf* *poco rit.* *Meno mosso* *f*

Kaum a - ber hat-te er zwei Schrit - te ge macht, war er schon auf dem

f *mf* *p* *f*

23 *rit.* **24** *Tempo 1*

Fried - hof.

pp

pp 3 3 3 3 3 3

2 2

4 5 R.H.

25

30 *mp* Er glitt ü - ber ei nen Weg in schwe - ben - der Hal - tung. *pp* **rit.** **Tempo II**

33 Schon von der Fer - ne faß - te er ei - nen

36 frisch auf - ge - wor - fe - nen Grab - hü - gel ins Au - ge. Die - ser Grab - hü - gel

26

39 *f*

üb - te ei - ne Ver - lock - ung auf ihn aus. Es war, als

43 herr - sche dort viel Ju - - - - - bel.

8va

47 **27** *mf*

Plötz - lich sah er den glei - chen Grab - hü - gel ne - ben sich am Weg.

sf p mf

52 *rall.*

Er sprang ei - lig ins Gras, schwank - te und fiel ins Knie.

p f