

Love, Death, Music and Plants

Scene 1. Incipience

text by Brian Lipson
music by Matthew Hindson

The audience enter the hall. It's a bit like entering a gentlemen's club. Minions bow and take hats and coats. Hushed tones. Towers of paper all around, dimmish light, botanists engrossed in their work classifying plants and other specimens. Artefacts connected with Mueller - books, an ornamental clock, his braces, etc. - are mounted in glass cases around the room. All items are identified and labelled as in a museum.

Mueller is lying fully dressed on a cabinet in the middle of the hall as if sleeping or perhaps dead. Nobody refers to him.

We are being taken on a kind of guided tour of Mueller's life. The activity within the hall is like an animated museum or a wordless lecture/demonstration. Events and dates are chalked up on blackboards; photographs displayed or projected; maps set up and referred to with pointers, pins and flags; botanical specimens passed around and projected on to screens or walls by an epidiascope.

The items chalked up on the blackboards are as follow:

- 1825 The birth of Ferdinand Jakob Heinrich Muller
- 1830 Confined to bed with rickets (rachitis) for several weeks.
- 1835 The death of his father from tuberculosis
- 1840 The death of his mother from tuberculosis
- 1845 The death of his sister from tuberculosis.
- 1847 He sails for Australia with his two remaining sisters.
- 1849 Naturalised in South Australia.
- 1853 Appointed Government Botanist of Victoria.

At some stage the following music commences. The audience will be milling around the exhibits, unaware that the piece has started. Similarly, the chorus enters singing their figures inconspicuously.

Molto Lento

The musical score is for a piece titled 'Incipience' in 'Molto Lento' tempo. It features five staves: Female Solo, Chorus, Guitar, Violin, and Cello. The Female Solo and Violin staves contain rests. The Chorus part begins with a half note on a high pitch, followed by a half note on a lower pitch, and then a phrase of three notes: a quarter note (p), a quarter note (mp), and a quarter note (p) with a slur over them. The lyrics 'Be - fore da - y' are written below these notes. The Guitar, Violin, and Cello parts also contain rests. The Cello part has a dynamic marking 'p' and a section marked '+ III.'.

add some swells, move to *sul pont.* etc. but always occurring very slowly

Offstage *p* *languid* Be-fore day The black way *sim.*

Ch. *p mp p* Be-fore da - y *some singers add these notes to their pattern* *chorus echos soloist's text after she sings it*

Gr.

Vln.

Vc.

F. The trees sway The plants pray The stars stay The tense de - lay *long* *rall.*

Ch. *after soloist* *slowly back to:*

Gr.

Vln.

Vc.

A In Tempo  c. 138

2 3 4 5

F.

Ch. a - - - y - - - a - - - y - - - gradually come off this chord one-by-one

Gtr. Pizz. p

Vln.

Vc. ppp mf

6 7 8 9 10

F.

Ch.

Gtr.

Vln.

Vc. ppp

B

11 12 13 14 15

F. Ch. Gtr. Vln. Vc.

Pizz.
p

16 17 18 19

F. Ch. Gtr. Vln. Vc.

20 21 22 23 24

F.
Ch.
Gtr.
Vln.
Vc.

25 26 27 **C** 28 29

F.
Ch. *p legato sempre*
Be - fore day
Gtr. *ord.*
Vln.
Vc.