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I, Soon Y. Cho, hereby submit this original work as part of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts in Voice.

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The Interaction Between Poetic and Musical Caesurae in Six Settings of Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s Sonnet XLIII

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The Interaction between Poetic and Musical Caesurae in Six Settings of Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s “Sonnet XLIII”

A document submitted to the Graduate School of the University of Cincinnati in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts in the Performance Studies Division of the College-Conservatory of Music by

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This study focuses on various musical settings of Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s Sonnet XLIII from the *Sonnets from the Portuguese*. The interaction between the poetic and musical caesuras is explored: the text settings in the musical examples do not always reflect the poetic caesura as indicated. Also considered is conceptualizing caesura as a dynamic compositional tool of which composers use as an effective way of expressing emotions. As caesura is an example of poetic silence, direct and indirect speech acts are performed in silence.
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When analyzing the interaction between text and music, discussions of form and structure, harmonic language, rhythm and meter, melodic line, and accompaniment come to mind.\(^1\) Unbeknownst to most listeners, silence frames the words and the music they hear. Rather than focusing on the musical elements that create the sounding of the text, the aesthetics and function of the silence that frame the sound\(^2\) need further inquiries and discussion; specifically, an examination of how composers convert the poetic tool of silence, the *caesura*, into musical settings.

Caesura in modern prosody is a "rhetorical break in the flow of sound in the middle of a line of verse."\(^3\) This form of silence makes the reader pause and slow the rhythm in speech for effective delivery of the text, in that the pause and the hesitation express unspoken thoughts.\(^4\) The functional importance of poetic caesura for rhetorical effectiveness and sophistication of the rhythmic metric style is analogous to the functional significance of the musical silence valued by centuries of composers and performers.\(^5\) Pianist Artur Schnabel states, "The notes I handle no better than many pianists. But the pauses between the notes – ah, that is where the art resides."\(^6\) Song composers recite text and poems to the point of memory to recreate the natural flow of the

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words⁷ and to enhance the meaning of the text in their music.⁸ Hence a study of how composers set poetic silences in their music will give insight to the silent meaning behind the words. This document will explore the interaction between the poetic and musical caesurae found in six composers’ musical settings of Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s “Sonnet XLIII: How do I love thee? Let me count the ways,” from the Sonnets from the Portuguese.

I took interest in this topic when a dear composer friend, Scott McAllister, set this particular sonnet to music for me to perform as a wedding gift for his bride in the summer of 2008. While conducting background research at the Armstrong Browning Library at Baylor University, which houses the largest collection of Browning-related materials in the world,⁹ I discovered over forty different musical settings of this love sonnet.¹⁰ I have chosen six particular settings by William Roy, Joseph M. Hopkins, Édouard Lippé, Carlos Surinach, Libby Larson, and Scott McAllister to illustrate the different interactions between the poetic and musical caesurae. My analysis will show that placements of poetic and musical caesurae are most parallel in “How do I love thee?” by William Roy. In Joseph Hopkin’s setting, musical caesurae are added to parallelism for text articulation, while Édouard Lippé utilizes the additional caesurae for musical articulation which facilitates musical and texture change. An example of the most modified caesurae placement in a song setting from the original poem is found in Carlos Surinach’s “How do I love thee?,” where he inserts rests in between each word in the first line for intensification of word stress. Libby Larson setting allows individual performers some

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⁷ Lanier, Music and Poetry, 248.
discretion while enhancing communication, while Scott McAllister setting uses musical caesurae to frame the structural elements of the song.

This document includes both an analysis of poetic caesurae and a comparison of the aforementioned musical settings that illustrate both parallelism and modification in the caesurae placement. An increased awareness of the importance of caesura as a compositional tool to enhance the expression of the emotion\textsuperscript{11} is needed, since there is lack of information and research on the role of poetic caesura within the musical structure. Specifically, discussion of each musical setting gives insight into differing interpretations of Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s love for Robert Browning\textsuperscript{12} and leads to better understanding of each composer’s textual treatment, thus enhancing the performer’s interpretation and, thereby, enriching the listener’s experience.

\textsuperscript{12} Williams Rhian, "Our Deep, Dear Silence": Marriage and Lyricism in the Sonnets from the Portuguese," \textit{Victorian Literature and Culture} 37, no. 1 (March 2009), 85.
CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND

Elizabeth Barrett Browning is “regarded as one of the most notable female poets in Western literature.”¹³ She is best remembered for the intensely personal and romantic Sonnets from the Portuguese (1850) and the versed novel Aurora Leigh (1857). Her fame and recognition were so great during her lifetime that “such poets as Emily Dickinson and Christina Rossetti cited her as an influence,” and she was “seriously considered to replace William Wordsworth as Britain’s poet laureate upon his death in 1850.”¹⁴

Born Elizabeth Barrett Moulton-Barrett near Durham, England, on March 6, 1806, Barrett Browning was the oldest of eleven children. She was born into a wealthy family and raised with certain privileges other nineteenth-century young ladies were not fortunate enough to enjoy, specifically education. “Her father was a wealthy and domineering man who forbade his daughters to marry but encouraged their intellectual development.”¹⁵ She studied Greek and Latin alongside her younger brothers and prided herself as a young intellectual. Her father even arranged the private publishing of her first book of verse, The Battle of Marathon (1820), at age fourteen. At age fifteen, she suffered a spinal injury which caused her to be confined to a bed for a year. In addition to her physical ailments, Barrett Browning suffered personal loss of her two younger brothers: one whom she called “her other”¹⁶ died unexpectedly from an illness and her favorite brother, Edward, drowned in a sailing accident while visiting her. She fell into a deep depression and found solace in expressing her grief through her poetry in almost total isolation.

¹⁴ ibid.
¹⁵ ibid.
¹⁶ ibid.
for the next few years. “Suffering and self-knowledge…made her believe, perhaps for the first time that her own experience might really suffice for making poetry.”17 She began to publish more frequently and began corresponding with many of the greatest English writers of her time, including Robert Browning.

Robert Browning -- six years her junior and a lesser known writer at that time -- wrote a “letter of acknowledgement and gratitude”18 in responds to a tribute paid to him by Barrett Browning. This instigated a correspondence that revealed “a mutually deep and empathetic connection.”19 After five months of correspondence, the two finally met. Barrett Browning was a forty-year old reclusive invalid, who resolved never to marry, living under the watch of an “overbearing and powerful widowed father.”20 Upon her insistence, their first meeting only lasted one hour. Promptly following their encounter, Robert wrote again and asked for her hand in marriage. Although she was skeptical of his affections and “horrified at the rapidity of the initial proposal,”21 their relationship grew. Sixteen months later, in spite of her father’s strong disapproval, they eloped and moved to Italy in 1846.

The result of the famous whirlwind courtship that was filled with boundless correspondences and frequent meetings was the Sonnets from the Portuguese, the amorous sonnet collection acknowledged “as one of the finest sonnet sequences in English literature.”22 During the period from 1845 to 1846, Barrett Browning quietly composed the sonnets as if it were a private diary. “These lyrics are a revelation of the initial stages of Barrett Browning’s

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17 Dorothy Mermin, "Elizabeth Barrett Browning through 1844: Becoming a Woman Poet," Victorian Poetry 31, no. 3 (September, 1993), 275.
19 ibid.
20 ibid.
21 ibid.
22 Bomarito and Whitaker, Elizabeth Barrett Browning 1806-1681, 1-2.
courtship; they succinctly convey her terror at being so genuinely and so completely loved,”23 which includes “her initial surprise at his romantic attention, her rejection of his love, and finally her acceptance and joy.”24 Initially, fearing that he would not approve, she did not share the sonnets with Robert. She believed Robert did not personally care for the sonnet form as a serious writer and he once criticized the use of very intimate subject matter in one’s writing. Barrett Browning shared these sonnets with him three years after the death of Robert’s mother. “She chose this time to reveal the sonnets, believing that the poems might remind him of earlier happier moments, and hoping that these personal outpourings of love might help bring about healing from this painful time.”25 When Robert finally read them, he was “overwhelmed at their excellence and persuaded her to publish them, albeit with a title that implied the sonnets were translations rather than original works so as to deflect intrusive attention to their autobiographical nature.”26 Thus the title, *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, was derived from one of Elizabeth’s early poems, ‘Catarina to Camoëns,’ which tells “the story for young girl, Catarina’s love for the Portuguese poet Luis Vaz de Camoëns.”27 The Brownings were well versed in Portuguese literature and Robert lovingly associated Elizabeth as Catarina, his little Portuguese.

Ironically, when the *Sonnets from the Portuguese* was published in 1850, it went unnoticed by the critics. The work gained widespread critical acclaim when its autobiographical nature became known to the public. The sonnets were praised for “their sincerity and intensity; most concurred that no woman had ever written in such openly passionate tones. In addition,

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they argued that the emotion of Browning’s verse was effectively balanced by the strict technical restraints of the sonnet form. Several critics compared the adept technique utilized in the sonnets to that of John Milton and Shakespeare.”

Typical comments include those of Richard Henry Stoddard, who termed the sonnets “the noblest ever written . . . by anybody,” and William T. Herridge, who stated that they were “an exquisite revelation of a woman’s heart.” Although her poetry was highly regarded by the critics during her lifetime, she had “an undercurrent of critical apprehension over her tendency toward loose rhymes and diction, saccharine subject matter, and general lack of the restraint expected of poetry of the time, particularly a female poet.”

Barrett Browning’s marital life in Italy improved her health immensely. The steadfast presence of her husband and the birth of their son in 1849, fed into her exceptional creative energy, which sustained her through the rest of her life. In written expression of the exploration and development of her ideas and inner feelings, she found love and fulfillment in her personal and professional lives, and made her mark in the world of poetry. Barrett Browning died on June 29, 1861, in Florence, Italy, and was “lavishly eulogized as England’s greatest woman.”

28 ibid.
29 ibid.
30 Bomarito and Whitaker, Elizabeth Barrett Browning 1806-1681, 1-2.
31 ibid.
Originating in Sicily around 1235 or so by Giacomo da Lentino (1188-1240), the word sonnet derives from the Italian sonneto, meaning ‘a little sound,’ or ‘a little song.’ By the fourteenth-century, lyrical poem became quite popular and garnered the attention of Francesco Petrarca, known as Petrarch by English speakers. “With its fourteen lines, fixed meter, and intricate rhyme scheme, the [Petrarch] sonnet was the poetic form par excellence for a Renaissance man to display and explore his poetic genius in all its multifariousness,” and “a small vessel capable of plunging tremendous depths... enabling forms of human inwardness.”

The fourteenth-century sonnet is divided into two asymmetrical parts: an octave (eight lines rhyming abbaabba) and a sestet (six lines commonly rhyming cdcd). A strong statement opened the poetic form “to build an obsessive feeling in the octave that is let loose in the sestet.” The term volta, or ‘turn,’ was coined by the Italian readers to refer to the shift and rhetorical division between the opening eight lines and the concluding six.

In the sixteenth-century, Sir Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, imported the Petrarchan form into England. The English or Shakespearean sonnet – named after the greatest practitioner of that time - invites a more symmetrical division of thought into three equal quatrains (four lines) and a summarizing couplet (two lines). The octave-sestet combination was divided into three quatrains and a couplet with the usual rhyming scheme of abab, cdcd,

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The Shakespearean “well-balanced, well-suited,” sonnet with “particularly brainy, calculated incisiveness…gives [the form] a strong rhetorical close.” Unlike the fixed meter of the Petrarch sonnet, the meter of the English has always been iambic pentameter, “a give-stress, ten syllable line, [which has been] closest to the form of our speech and thus has been especially favored for the sonnet…. The form enables a precision of utterance and freedom of forensic argument. It also offers more flexibility in rhyming, which is crucial since Italian is so much richer in rhyme than English.”

As Wyatt and Howard revised the Petrarch sonnet form, other notable writers such as John Milton and Aleksandr Pushkin varied the form to meet their own needs of expression. The most important evolution was that the sonnet became idiomatic due to the use of local vernacular by English poets. By the last decade of the sixteenth century and beginning of the seventeenth-century, Shakespeare, along with Sir Philip Sidney, had succeeded in establishing the sonnet as a vital, powerful idiom claimed by English poets as their own. After 1650 and into “the age of wit and science [and] reason rather than emotion” of the eighteenth-century, the sonnet form went “out of fashion and far from favor,” and was almost extinct.

The nineteenth-century Romantic writers revitalized the rhyming fourteen-line poem as one of the primary forms of English poetry. The nineteenth-century sonnet was “often viewed as a form capable of tremendous inwardness, a key to emotion rather than reason…. [It] also proved to be an important theater for women poets… many women poets claimed the sonnet as their own. They used it to prove their poetic legitimacy.”

\[\text{efef, gg.}\]^{36} \text{The Shakespearean “well-balanced, well-suited,” sonnet with “particularly brainy, calculated incisiveness…gives [the form] a strong rhetorical close.”}^{37} \text{Unlike the fixed meter of the Petrarch sonnet, the meter of the English has always been iambic pentameter, “a give-stress, ten syllable line, [which has been] closest to the form of our speech and thus has been especially favored for the sonnet…. The form enables a precision of utterance and freedom of forensic argument. It also offers more flexibility in rhyming, which is crucial since Italian is so much richer in rhyme than English.”}^{38}

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\[^{36}\text{ibid.}\]
\[^{37}\text{ibid.}\]
\[^{38}\text{ibid.}\]
\[^{39}\text{ibid.}\]
\[^{40}\text{ibid.}\]
\[^{41}\text{ibid.}\]
such as Vittoria Colonna and Charlotte Smith, Elizabeth Barrett Browning “inherited a poetic genre governed by masculine principles.” 42 Barrett Browning’s *Sonnets from the Portuguese* “are one of the nodal points of the form during the century, a moment at which a number of different features come together to produce a new orientation.” 43 “Distinctions between forms of the sonnet usually involved a rhyme scheme,” 44 therefore the *Sonnets* recall the Petrarchan tradition of octave-sestet structure with the rhyming scheme of *abbaabba cdcdec*. “Most importantly, the *Sonnets from the Portuguese* represent the first sustained attempt to revive the Petrarchan amatory sonnet sequence in the language and imagery of Shakespeare in the nineteenth century,” 45 in hybrid with the heroic/political sonnet, introduced into English by Milton and revived by Wordsworth. “The tone of the poem ironically includes both emotional idealism and subdued social satire.” 46 Natalie Houston has pointed out the way in which these sonnets construct an effect of authenticity through their rhetoric of intimacy, detailed private allusion and direct personal address: “Whether or not the poems were intended for publication, their rhetoric presents them as part of a private conversation.” 47

“Although Victorian reviewers uniformly praised Elizabeth Barrett Browning for the ‘sincere’ poetic voice of *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, they often blamed her for faulty craft.” 48 with features like irregular rhyming and pauses, lofty diction and syntax more conversational than ideal, and enjambment, which “usually destroys the integrity of octave and sestet.” 49 For

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42 Van Remoortel, *(Re)Gendering Petrarch: Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s Sonnets from the Portuguese*, 247-266.
44 Margaret M. Morlier, “*Sonnets from the Portuguese* and the Politics of Rhyme,” *Victorian Literature and Culture* 27, no. 1 (1999), 97.
46 Morlier, *Sonnets from the Portuguese and the Politics of Rhyme*, 97-11298.
48 Morlier, *Sonnets from the Portuguese and the Politics of Rhyme*, 97-112
49 ibid.
example in “Sonnet XLIII,” “Barrett Browning rhymed the noun phrase ‘put to use’ (line 9) with the infinitive ‘to lose’ (line 11) and rhymed ‘faith’ (line 10) with ‘breath’ (line 12).”\(^{50}\) Reviewers in the Victorian age suggested that Barrett Browning’s defective ear for music contributed to these apparent technical lapses. In Margaret M. Morlier’s article, "Sonnets from the Portuguese and the Politics of Rhyme," she follows The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics and refers to Barrett Browning’s experiments of imperfect rhyme as “near rhyme”\(^{51}\) and distinguished it from correct rhyme to describe her verse. “Near rhyming: ‘to use’ and ‘to lose’ (lines 9 and 11) parallel each other and would rhyme if they were both infinitives, but since ‘put to use’ in context is a noun phrase, the pair results in a near rhyme.”\(^{52}\) Morlier continues to state that “the unstable rhyming patterns as well as the play of sight and sound make the sestet more cognitively sophisticated – more ‘vigorous’ – than if it had the predictable, correct rhymes of popular, sentimental poetry.” Although Barrett Browning is credited the progression of the nineteenth-century sonnet form through her unconventional rhyming technique, she was remembered for her careless craft; thus “her influence on those poets who are remembered for skill is usually discussed without reference to Sonnets from the Portuguese.”\(^{53}\)

In light of these criticisms, it is compelling that the most celebrated and recognized sonnet that launched over forty different musical settings -- in fact only one line of the poem -- has been remembered for so long. While the rest of the poems are not memorable in the popular sense, “Sonnet XLIII: How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.” seems the least experimental in style. The phrase “I love thee” that begins six lines to “count the ways” of love makes the poem a list that is easy to read and remember with an addition of a seventh “I love thee” in the

\(^{50}\) ibid.  
\(^{51}\) ibid.  
\(^{52}\) ibid.  
\(^{53}\) ibid.
middle of line 12. Also, the anaphora of the lines 7-9 “unifies the poem even though there is a traditional syntactical period at the end of the octave.” The quantification of Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s love for Robert Browning in seven different ways “expanded the emotional range” of the sonnet form. The *Sonnets from the Portuguese* “looks backward to the Renaissance and forward to the modern era” providing Barrett Browning’s successors an effective and resounding model for the expression of a modern woman’s hopes and fears about love and marriage within the compounds of form created by Renaissance men.

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54 ibid.
56 ibid.
CHAPTER 3

CAESURA

A poetic caesura is fundamentally a pause, a moment of silence, for rhetorical or metrical reasons depending on the context: metered poetry or free verse. N. M. Hoffman states in his article that “the caesura is shown to be a metrical device which, through registers of discourse described by Tsvetan Todorov in Introduction to Poetic, is linked to considerations of grammar, rhetorical figures, polyvalence, and aesthetics….Musical terms like ‘rest’ and ‘pause’ have not been adequate to describe the complexities of this poetic device.”

Rules exist in various languages concerning where caesurae occur in Latin hexameter and pentameter, in Greek appositives, and in new American verse. These rules provide a framework for the examination of caesura as it functions in Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s “Sonnet XLIII”. Hoffman comments that “a new definition of term is fashioned out of the caesura’s role in meaning-making, its variability of placement, and its respectable tenacity in contemporary criticism.”

According to Merriam-Webster Online, caesura is defined as follows: (1) In modern prosody: a usually rhetorical break in the flow of sound in the middle of a line of verse; (2) Greek and Latin prosody: a break in the flow of sound in a verse caused by the ending of a word within a foot; (3) Break, interruption; (4) A pause marking a rhythmic point of division in a melody. Browning’s “Sonnet XLIII,” does not follow the Greek and Latin prosody of metered verse exactly, nor is it

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61 Hoffman, Stabilizing Silence: The Caesura in Verse, 533A.
62 Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, Caesura, 11.
in free form. It retains the structure of the lyrical sonnet form and pentameter in each line, but utilizes the vast range of expression from free verse to convey a “complex maze of feelings” of love. The irregular pulses found in “Sonnet XLIII” provide a vehicle for an assortment of different interpretations for readers, composers, and performers. Actor Ralph Richardson states that “the most precious things in speech are pauses.”

Since caesura is a poetic tool for silence, an investigation of how silence affects spoken and sung text must include sources dealing with silence and music as a broad topic. These sources included conversations concerning the use of silence by composers for structural articulation and dramatic expressiveness to create tension and release. Elliott Gyger wrote about the effectiveness and the intentional use of silence as a compositional tool by Arnold Schoenberg in Moses und Aaron to depict absence and the unresponsiveness of God. Journal articles indicate the use of silence for pianists and vocalists enhance their performances. Research studies such as “Silence in Music are Musical not Silent: An Exploratory Study of Context Effects on the Experience of Musical Pauses,” which explores the transformation from one-dimensional acoustic silence in performed music to multi-dimensional silence perceived by listeners document responses to silence within a musical performance. The book Silence, Music, Silent Music, edited by Nicky Losseff and Jenny Doctor, contains a collection of stimulating essays derived from conference proceedings that address the topic of silence and music.

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69 Margulis, Silences in Music are Musical, Not Silent: An Exploratory Study of Context Effects on the Experience of Musical Pauses, 485-506
Numerous writers acknowledge that the connection between music and silence is “a new branch of musicology, in which different disciplines – history, music analysis, psychology, cognition, performance practices, social practices, music therapy, religious studies, and philosophy – intersect in considering the multiplicity of relationships…. We’ve discovered no model that could guide this process of intersection to full effect, to define what this field might encompass or ‘mean’; the essays in this book begin to explore some of the possibilities.”70 Losseff states, “Negative characteristics [that define the word silence] reflect a rather narrow European perspective, where silence is too easily equated with the passive, the submissive and the void. The idea that silence can be perceived as a form of communication – expressing reflection, for instance, as it might in Japanese culture – is less widespread in Western social contexts…. However…musical silences are cognitive in the deepest sense. From the performers communicating through musical rests and composers drawing on meditative silences as fundamental compositional elements, it is clear that in human perception silence in relations to music does not exist as a vacuum.”71

Vinod Menon, the neuroscientist of Stanford’s School of Medicine, and McGill University scientists conducted a study observing brain activity of eighteen subjects listening to classical music. The study found that the brain response was most powerful during the periods of silence. Menon states that, “a pause is not a time where nothing happens,” in fact “silence awakens [the] brain.”72 Skillful composers have long used silence to build a sense of anticipation and some of music’s finest moments are spent in transition. “In the poetic function, the issue is the poet’s or the writer’s decision to incorporate silence as part of the aesthetic sequence. A very

70 Losseff and Doctor, Silence, Music, Silent Music
71 ibid.
72 Lisa M. Mercury, "When the Music Stops, the Brain Gets Going," San Jose Mercury News (California), August 2, 2007.
trivial example is silence as part of an equation: the zero sign, caesuras, ellipses, and blank lines all serve to build up such an effect. “As caesura is a poetic tool for silence, this study illuminates different ways the caesura functions in music: for articulation and text emphasis, facilitation of musical texture and rhythmic changes, and as a tool for framing and structure. This leads to a clearer understanding of the composer’s interpretation of the poem, which allows for better communication in performance.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF SIX SONG SETTINGS OF ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING’S “SONNET XLIII”

The interaction between the poetic and musical caesurae found in six musical settings of Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s “Sonnet XLIII” from the Sonnets from the Portuguese reveals that the text settings in the musical examples do not always reflect the poetic caesura as indicated. As an example of poetic silence where direct and indirect speech acts are performed, the use of caesura as a dynamic tool to enhance expression is illustrated in this chapter. After the poetic caesurae placement in “Sonnet XVII” is identified, the musical caesurae in each of the six song settings will be analyzed and compared. Consequently, the examination of the poetic and musical relationship will disclose various ways the caesura functions in music. Thus, the analysis will display parallelism and modification of poetic caesurae in the musical settings to emphasize text, to facilitate change in musical texture, to give the performer the discretion to heighten text expression, and to frame and structure the song.

Before proceeding to the analysis, categories of parallelism and modification must be defined. In general, parallelism occurs when the placements of the poetic and musical caesurae are similar and it is divided into two categories: intensification and diminution. Intensification of parallel caesurae placements occur when poetic caesura translates into short silence (SS) or long silence (LS) in music. In fact, a short silence is a written rest in between words or vocal phrases, measured in length indicated by meter and only varying in length by the overall tempo change. A long silence is a measured or unmeasured musical silence unique to each performance, which is usually marked with a fermata. The duration of a long silence is undetermined most of the

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time. Diminution of parallel caesurae placements takes place when poetic caesura becomes brief silence (BS) or intrinsic within a vocal phrase in music without a written rest. Moreover, a brief silence is a breath mark or punctuation at the end of the musical phrase or sentence without a written musical rest and modification occurs when the placements of poetic and musical caesurae are not parallel. For this analysis, musical examples of modification will be divided into two categories: addition and exclusion. Addition of modified caesurae placements occurs when composers add short silence or long silence in places where no poetic caesurae take place. Exclusion of modified caesurae placements occurs when composers choose to omit musical caesurae where poetic caesurae take place.

The analysis of the caesura placement in “Sonnet XLIII” is found below in Figure 1 with the following symbols: (a) a strong caesura notated by punctuation is indicated by “||”; (b) a weak, optional caesura implied by prepositional word to connect prosodic phrase for rhetorical effectiveness is indicated by “(||)”. The following analysis will serve as the basis for comparison to display parallelism and modification of the musical caesurae placement in each of the six song setting.

**Figure 1** “Sonnet XLIII” from *Sonnets from the Portuguese*

| Line 1: | How do I love thee? || Let me count the ways. || |
| Line 2: | I love thee (||) to the depth (||) and breadth (||) and height (||) |
| Line 3: | My soul can reach, || when feeling out of sight (||) |
| Line 4: | For the ends of Being (||) and ideal Grace. || |
| Line 5: | I love thee (||) to the level of everyday’s (||) |
| Line 6: | Most quiet need, || by sun || and candle-light. || |
| Line 7: | I love thee freely, || as men strive for Right; || |
| Line 8: | I love thee purely, || as they turn from Praise. || |
| Line 9: | I love thee (||) with the passion put to use (||) |
| Line 10: | In my old griefs, || and with my childhood’s faith. || |
| Line 11: | I love thee (||) with a love I seemed to lose (||) |
| Line 12: | With my lost saints, || --I love thee (||) with the breath, || |
| Line 13: | Smiles, || tears, || of all my life! || -- and, || if God choose, || |
| Line 14: | I shall but love thee better (||) after death. || |
1. **Parallelism**

The song setting by William Roy exhibits an acute parallel placement of poetic and musical caesurae among the six song settings. This through-composed song converts strong poetic caesurae into *brief* or *short silences* as shown in Figure 2. For example, short pauses in between phrases aid forward motion until the appearance of the first and only *long silence* in the song. Single *long silence* is strategically placed at a climactic moment in the middle of line 13, after the word “life.” Roy utilizes shorter silences to build momentum until he releases the tension at an apex, thus creating a single broad musical arch. As previously mentioned, unlike poetic caesura where the timing of the silence is strictly up to the reader, silence may be measured in music into the following categories:

- **Brief silence** (BS) – breath mark or punctuation at the end of the musical phrase or sentence without a written musical rest.
- **Short silence** (SS) – written rest in between words or vocal phrases, measured in length by the meter and only varying in length by the overall tempo change.
- **Long silence** (LS) – measured or unmeasured musical silence unique to each performance usually marked with fermatas. The duration is undetermined most of the time.

**Figure 2**  
*William Roy, How do I love thee?*

- **Line 1:** How do I love thee? (||) Let me count the ways. ||
  - BS
  - SS

- **Line 2:** I love thee to the depth and breadth and height (||)
  - BS

- **Line 3:** My soul can reach, || when feeling out of sight (||)
  - SS
  - BS

- **Line 4:** For the ends of Being and ideal Grace. (||)
  - BS

- **Line 5:** I love thee to the level of everyday’s

- **Line 6:** Most quiet need, || by sun and candle-light. ||
  - SS
  - BS

- **Line 7:** I love thee freely, || as men strive for Right; (||)
  - SS
  - BS

- **Line 8:** I love thee purely, || as they turn from Praise. (||)
  - SS
  - BS

- **Line 9:** I love thee with the passion put to use (||)
  - BS
Line 10: In my old griefs, and with my childhood’s faith. ||

Line 11: I love thee with a love I seemed to lose (||)

Line 12: With my lost saints, || --I love thee with the breath,

Line 13: Smiles, tears, of all my life! || -- and, || if God choose,(||)

Line 14: I shall but love thee better || after death.

An example that reveals the parallel poetic and musical casurae placement is shown in 

**Example 1.1**, a setting of poetic lines 7 and 8 by William Roy. The top line beneath the musical example is the poetic text as it is written. The second line shows the poetic caesurae with the double lines “||” indicating a strong caesura where punctuation clearly identifies the pause. The double lines inside the brackets “(||)” indicate a weak caesura, which is implied and optional because of the absence of a written rest. Finally, while the third line identifies the musical caesurae, the final line identifies the relationship of the poetic and musical caesurae as well as the category of silence.

**Example 1.1  William Roy, How do I love thee?**

**Poetic Lines 7-8:** I love thee freely, as men strive for Right; I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.

**Poetic Caesurae:** I love thee freely || as men strive for Right || I love thee purely || as they turn from Praise ||

**Musical Caesurae:** I love thee freely || as men strive for Right (||) I love thee purely || as they turn from Praise (||)

**Parallelism:** SS BS SS BS

Indicated by punctuation marks in poetic lines 7 and 8, this example shows four strong caesurae. All four poetic caesurae appear in the music as either a short or brief silence and show parallelism. The two strong poetic caesurae after the words “Right,” and “Praise,” are dimished
into optional weak musical caesurae. The use of small moments of rests propel the song forward, generating momentum until the fermata in the setting of poetic line 13. This effect occurs when the first and only long silence appear in the form of a fetura, an unmarked musical silence that takes place after a fermata.

**Example 1.2** William Roy, How do I love thee?

```
--- and, if God choose,
|| and || if God choose ||
|| and || if God choose (||)
LS  SS  BS
```

There are three strong poetic caesurae in the second half of line 13 as shown in Example 1.2. All three devices have parallel musical caesura counterparts: a long silence, a short silence and a brief silence. The first silence is the fetura after the fermata. The unmarked silence before the entrance of “and” creates a sense of anticipation. After “and” is uttered and an eighth-note rest follows to enhance the effect of the words, “if God choose;” Roy utilizes all the poetic caesurae and judiciously converts them into appropriate lengths of musical silences to heighten text expression.

As mentioned previously, parallelism is divided into two sub-categories: intensification and diminution. An example of Roy diminishing the strong poetic caesura to increase the forward motion in his musical setting is found in musical Example 1.3.
EXAMPLE 1.3  *William Roy*, How do I love thee?

There are two strong poetic caesurae in line 1. As the analysis indicates, the first strong poetic caesura is diminished into an optional weak musical caesura in the category of *brief silence*. Roy connects two distinct statements within a single musical phrase. Although it is not required to preserve the long legato line, the performer has an option to add a lift or a quick breath to differentiate the question and answer sentences for rhetorical effectiveness. Crescendo and decrescendo in measures 3 and 4 further connect the two sentences into one musical phrase - encouraging the singer to sing the phrase in one breath - hence diminishing the poetic strong caesura. The second strong poetic caesurae has a parallel strong musical caesura in the category of *short silence*, to signify the finality of the sentence and the musical phrase.

2. **Parallel Intensification to Emphasize Text**

   Similar to William Roy’s setting, the song setting by Joseph M. Hopkins displays predominantly parallel poetic and musical caesurae placements. Hopkins intensifies the pauses into longer silences to emphasize text. Specifically, Hopkins uses the fermata to lengthen and elongate an important word, followed by an unmeasured *long silence*, a fetura, to isolate the word and to provoke a listener’s response. There are five *long silences* in this song setting as shown in Figure 3. This is in contrast to Roy’s single use.
Joseph M. Hopkins, *How do I love thee?*

Line 1: How do I love thee? (||) Let me count the ways. ||

Line 2: I love thee to the depth and breadth and height (||)

Line 3: My soul can reach, || when feeling out of sight ||

Line 4: For the ends of Being (||) and ideal Grace. ||

Line 5: I love thee to the level of everyday’s

Line 6: Most quiet need, || by sun and candle-light. ||

Line 7: I love thee freely, as men strive for Right; ||

Line 8: I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise. ||

Line 9: I love thee with the passion put to use

Line 10: In my old griefs, (||) and with my childhood’s faith. ||

Line 11: I love thee with a love I seemed to lose ||

Line 12: With my lost saints, || --I love thee with the breath, ||

Line 13: Smiles, tears, || of all my life! || -- and, || if God choose,(||)

Line 14: I shall but love thee better || after death. ||

The first *long silence* appears at the end of poetic line 8 and the second at the end of line 12. Two *long silences* appear in the middle of line 13 and the final *long silence* at the end of line 14. The latter two poetic lines will be discussed further to show how Hopkins emphasizes text through the use of caesura.

In Example 2.1, five strong caesurae are found in poetic line 13. Of these, only four have parallel musical caesurae counterparts. The first strong poetic caesura is excluded, the next three are intensified into *long silences* and the last is diminished into a *brief silence.*
Fermatas are placed over the words, “life” and “And,” but the first long silence follows “tears,” the second after “life,” and the third after “And.” The silence that follows “Smiles, tears” allows the singer to better communicate and the listener time to absorb the juxtaposition of two contrasting physical manifestations from an emotional experience: smiling and crying. The spectrum encompassing happiness and sadness is broad and the pause that follows adds more depth to the words. The silence after “life,” is a moment where a thought and emotional shift takes place, similar to a theatrical beat. A pause is necessary to change the emotional intensity from a fortissimo personal exclamation to a mezzo-piano prayer-like plea. While the third long silence after “And” increases the level of anticipation of the words to follow, the common unstressed conjunction is emphasized and held in order to hold the listener’s attention through stress and suspense. Since Hopkins did not write in a musical rest, the last poetic caesura after “choose” is diminished into a brief silence. The performer may elect to add a pause, where the comma is located, for rhetorical effectiveness. The vocal line in the final measure of this example is suspended over a held chord in the piano, which gives the performer freedom to ad lib.
Unlike the previous musical example discussed, only two poetic caesurae appear in line 14: one weak and one strong. These two poetic caesurae have parallel musical counterparts and both are intensified as shown in Example 2.2.

**Example 2.2 Joseph M. Hopkins, How do I love thee?**

The first weak, optional poetic caesura is intensified into a strong musical caesura in the category of *short silence* before the word “after.” The second strong poetic caesura is also intensified into a *long silence* at the end of poetic line 14. The *short silence* serves the purpose of text articulation and aids vocalism. The pause before the words “after death” emphasizes the text and also allows the singer to breathe before sustaining the longest note in the whole song. The final note on “death” spans over five full measures with a fermata on the last measure to add breadth to the textual meaning. The fetura that follows this note is the *long silence*, a moment of audible nothingness that provokes cerebral reaction and emotional response to what was heard seconds before. The silence at the end of a song is compared to the silence felt after a reader has finished reading a great book, or an audience member sitting speechlessly after a moving live performance. Hopkins prolongs and intensifies the silence at the end by utilizing fermatas in the piano line. The performer is challenged to stay in character while silent until the piano sound completely fades.
3. Parallelism Intensification to Facilitate Change in Musical Texture

In Édouard Lippé’s song setting, caesura is intensified to facilitate change in musical texture. These moments where changes in musical texture take place also give the performer time to initiate new thought internally before words are sung externally, similar to the idea of a beat change in theater acting as mentioned before. As Figure 3 shows, Lippé translates the poetic caesurae into mostly short and long silences. This contrasts William Roy’s use of brief and short silences and Joseph M. Hopkin’s use of long silences. Lippé uses parallel poetic and musical caesurae placement to facilitate a shift in musical texture, which adds another layer of dramatic expression.

**Figure 3** Édouard Lippé, *How do I love thee?*

| Line 1:          | || How do I love thee? || Let me count the ways. ||          |
|------------------|------------------|
|                  | LS               |
|                  | LS               |
|                  | SS               |
| Line 2:          | I love thee to the depth and breadth and height (||) |
|                  | BS               |
| Line 3:          | My soul can reach, || when feeling out of sight || |
|                  | SS               |
|                  | SS               |
| Line 4:          | For the ends of Being and ideal Grace. || |
|                  | LS               |
| Line 5:          | I love thee (||) to the level of everyday’s |
|                  | BS               |
| Line 6:          | Most quiet need, || by sun and candle-light. || |
|                  | LS               |
|                  | LS               |
| Line 7:          | I love thee freely, || as men strive for Right; || |
|                  | SS               |
|                  | SS               |
| Line 8:          | I love thee purely, (||) as they turn from Praise. || |
|                  | BS               |
|                  | LS               |
| Line 9:          | I love thee with the passion put to use |
| Line 10:         | In my old griefs, || and with my childhood’s faith. || |
|                  | SS               |
|                  | SS               |
| Line 11:         | I love thee with a love I seemed to lose |
| Line 12:         | With my lost saints, || --I love thee with the breath, || |
|                  | SS               |
|                  | SS               |
| Line 13:         | Smiles, || tears, of all my life! || -- and, if God choose, || |
|                  | SS               |
|                  | SS               |
| Line 14:         | I shall but love thee better || after death. |

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A specific example of caesura initiating change in musical texture is found in the setting of poetic line 1 as shown in Example 3.1. Two strong poetic caesurae appear in line 1. Lippé parallels both and adds a third strong caesura. The musical caesurae now appear as two long silences followed by a short silence. All three of these moments of silences alter the musical texture, which is motivated by a shift in emotion and thought.

Example 3.1 Édouard Lippé, How do I love thee?

Poetic Line 1: How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
Poetic Caesurae: How do I love thee || Let me count the ways ||
Musical Caesurae: || How do I love thee || Let me count the ways ||
Parallel Intensification: LS LS SS

The unmeasured silence that follows the fermatas in the opening piano line, before the first words are uttered, builds a sense of anticipation, evoking a pause that occurs before someone has something significant to say. While this first long silence heightens dramatic expressiveness, it also initiates the first change in musical texture in the piano line. The eighth-note arpeggios in the left hand with the chordal half-note in the right hand shift to two-hand contrapuntal eighth-note chords. The second long silence, marked by a rest with fermata, after “How do I love thee?” generates tension and a moment of suspense before the answer, “Let me count the ways.” The beat allows the performer to shift thoughts from posing a question to answering and bridges one musical texture to another in the piano line: the two-hand contrapuntal eighth-note chords shift to left-hand accompanying the octave right-hand melodic line. The last pause, the one short silence, facilitates a change in musical texture that accompanies the different ways Elizabeth Barrett
Browning loves Robert Browning: simple broken arpeggios in the left-hand accompanying the chordal melody in the right-hand.

Another musical sample that shows the enablement of musical texture transformation is found in the setting of poetic line 6 as shown in Example 3.2.

**Example 3.2** Édouard Lippé, How do I love thee?

![Musical notation](image)

**Poetic Line 6:** Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light  
**Poetic Caesurae:** Most quiet need || by sun (||) and candle-light ||  
**Musical Caesurae:** Most quiet need || by sun and candle-light || SS SS

Three poetic caesurae exist: two strong and one weak. Of those, only the two strong poetic caesurae are employed and the weak poetic caesura before “and candle-light” is excluded. The two musical caesurae are categorized as *short silences*. These moments of silences present chordal planing based on a pentatonic scale that depicts the light of the sun and the candlelight imagery.

4. **Modification Addition to Emphasize Text**

Contrary to the previous three composers and their song settings, Carlos Surinach modifies the poetic caesurae by frequently inserting additional pauses to emphasize text. In his song setting from the *Flamenco Mediations* published in 1965 for solo voice, the modification through additional musical caesurae is displayed in the caesurae analysis found in Figure 4. The extra pauses are incorporated in between the words when rules of prosody and rhetoric do not apply. The frequency of the silences within a setting of a single poetic line makes it impossible to sustain a fluid vocal line further dictating where the stress falls. These modified musical caesurae
are placed to deepen the meaning of particular words Surinach regards as significant in his understanding of the sonnet, which leaves little room for a performer’s own interpretation.

As Figure 4 displays, every poetic line contains two or more silences except line 11. The majority of the silences are either short or long silences with the exception two cases of brief silences. This is a result of Surinach, a renowned composer of dance music, controlling the rhythmic structure of the piece. As moments of silence are used for rhythmic articulation, the text following the silences are articulated, thereby using the silences for text articulation.
Following Daniel Barenboim’s idea that “Music does not start from the first note and goes onto the second notes…but the first note already determines the music itself, because it comes out of the silence that precedes it,” Surinach creates this effect in Example 4.1, where he adds a fermata over G3 in the piano line before the first entrance of the voice. The silence that follows the fermata builds a sense of anticipation to intensify the vocal entrance.

Example 4.1  Carlos Surinach, How do I love thee?

Two strong poetic caesurae are found in line 1, but Surinach makes modification of the caesurae placement by inserting four musical caesurae in addition to the two preexisting poetic caesurae. The six musical caesurae are compiled of one long silence at the beginning and five short silences in between words to emphasize text. The words, “love,” “thee,” and “let me,” enter on weak beats creating a syncopated effect for text articulation. While the additional pauses preceding these words aid in their articulation, the lyricism of a vocal phrase is sacrificed.

The vocal line is less disjunct in the setting of poetic line 6. Three poetic caesurae are present in this line: two strong and one weak. Surinach modifies the caesura placement by adding a fourth caesura, totaling four strong musical caesurae as shown in Example 4.2.

Example 4.2

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75 Williams Rhian, ""our Deep, Dear Silence": Marriage and Lyricism in the Sonnets from the Portuguese," Victorian Literature and Culture 37, no. 1 (March, 2009), 85.
EXAMPLE 4.2 Carlos Surinach, How do I love thee?

POETIC LINE 6: Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.
POETIC CAESURAE: Most quiet need || by sun (||) and candle-light ||
MUSICAL CAESURAE: Most quiet || need || by sun || and candle-light ||
MODIFICATION ADDITION & SS SS LS SS
PARALLEL INTENSIFICATION:

Additional musical caesura appears as a short silence before “need.” The eighth-note rest, placed on the strong beat before the word, articulates the syncopated entrance of “need.” The second short silence heightens the words “by sun.” While highlighting the “sun,” the long silence that follows after the fermata builds a moment of suspense in anticipation of the contrasting textural setting of “and candle-light.” Measures leading up to the sustained chord accompanying the word “candle-light” have been driven with predominately triplets in the piano. The final caesura is a short silence marking the ending of the phrase.

5. Modification Exclusion to Heighten Text Expression

Unique in this group of six songs, Libby Larsen’s song setting allows individual performer to use personal discretion to heighten text expression. This is achieved by the use of unmeasured musical caesurae in the form of unaccompanied vocal lines similar to secco recitativo in operas. The freedom to choose where a performer may insert a musical caesura is in total contrast to how Surinach set his text in strict rhythmic structure. Unlike Surinach’s preference to add frequent short and long silences within a line, Larsen employs silences sparingly in the middle and, mostly, at the ends of the lines. This is evident in the caesurae placement analysis shown in Figure 6.
Figure 6 Libby Larsen, *How do I love thee?*

Line 1: How do I love thee? (||) Let me count the ways. ||

Line 2: I love thee to the depth and breadth and height (||)

Line 3: My soul can reach (||) My soul can reach (||)

Line 4: For the ends of Being and ideal Grace. (||)

Line 5: I love thee to the level of everyday’s

Line 6: Most quiet need, || by sun and candle-light. ||

Line 7: I love thee freely, as men strive for Right; ||

Line 8: I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise. ||

Line 9: I love thee with the passion put to use

Line 10: In my old griefs || and with my childhood’s faith. I love thee with the passion ||

Line 11: I love thee with a love I seemed to lose

Line 12: With my lost saints, || --I love thee with the breath,

Line 13: Smiles, tears, of all my life! || -- and, if God choose, ||

Line 14: I shall but love thee better after death. ||

This analysis illustrates that all fourteen lines have 0 to 2 musical caesurae and only six lines are dissected in the middle with a pause. Lines connect from one to the next with only brief or short silences to interrupt the flow. Long silences are reserved for climactic moments at the end. The unaccompanied vocal line and the score marked “very freely throughout,” and “freely, recitative” further encourage the performer to choose the placement of caesurae to increase the rhetorical effectiveness as shown in Example 5.1.
EXAMPLE 5.1  *Libby Larsen, How do I love thee?*

**POETIC LINE 1:**

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.

**POETIC CAESURA:**

How do I love thee || Let me count the ways ||

**MUSICAL CAESURA:**

How do I love thee (||) Let me count the way ||

**PARALLEL DIMINUTION:**

BS SS

**EXAMPLE 5.1** shows two parallel caesurae placements. Musically speaking, two strong poetic caesurae are converted into two different ways: one weak and the other strong. The weak musical caesura translates into a *brief silence* because there is no written rest, but the question mark in the text directs the performer to take a breath to pose the question, if desired. The decision to insert a pause is strictly up to the individual performer. The second poetic caesura, indicated by a period mark, is converted into a written dotted-quarter note rest, which is categorized as a *short silence*. While the silence brings the first poetic line to a close, the absence of sound creates a sense of anticipation, which segues into the emotional journey the sonnet discloses.

In the setting of poetic line 4, both parallelism and modification of musical caesurae are found, as shown in **EXAMPLE 5.2**. Two poetic caesurae are present in this line: one weak and the other strong. In the musical setting, the first poetic caesura is excluded and the second is diminished into a *brief silence*.
EXAMPLE 5.2  *Libby Larsen*, How do I love thee?

POETIC LINE 4: For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.
POETIC CAESURA: For the ends of Being (||) and ideal Grace ||
MUSICAL CAESURA: For the ends of Being and ideal Grace (||)
MODIFICATION & PARALLELISM: BS

Although there are no written rests in the vocal line, the performer may add caesura to increase rhetorical effectiveness for optimal text delivery. The piano line is composed sparsely in the first measure and non-existent in the latter two measures to allow the vocalist to freely express the text in recitative style.

This next example further supports Larsen encouraging the performer to use their discretion to enhance text communication. In the setting of the final poetic line as shown in EXAMPLE 5.3, all but one word of the whole line is unaccompanied, exemplified by the final word “death,” which is paired with the piano to end the song.

EXAMPLE 5.3  *Libby Larsen*, How do I love thee?

POETIC LINE 14: I shall but love thee better after death.
POETIC CAESURA: I shall but love thee better (||) after death ||
MUSICAL CAESURA: I shall but love thee better after death. ||
MODIFICATION & PARALLELISM: SS
Two poetic caesurae appear in this line: one weak and one strong. The first poetic caesura is modified and excluded while the second poetic caesura is parallel and translated into a short silence. Since the vocal line is unaccompanied and Larsen desires the performer to express freely, the performer may add silences to enhance vocalism and text communication.

6. Modification to Frame and Structure

Scott McAllister uses musical caesurae to frame and structure the song. In McAllister’s setting, three big caesurae divide the piece into four sections. Similar to Libby Larsen’s treatment of the poetic caesurae in the musical setting, McAllister makes modification through excluding strong and weak poetic caesurae as displayed in Figure 7. There is less presence of marked musical caesura dividing the vocal line, which allows the performer freedom to dictate where a pause may be appropriate for rhetorical and vocal effectiveness.

Figure 7 Scott McAllister, How do I love thee?

Line 1: How do I love thee? Let me count the ways. (||)

Line 2: I love thee to the depth and breadth and height ||

Line 3: My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight ||

Line 4: For the ends of Being and ideal Grace. ||

*How do I love thee? Let me count the ways. (||) *additional text

Line 5: I love thee to the level of everyday’s

Line 6: Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light. ||

Line 7: I love thee freely, as men strive for Right; ||

Line 8: I love thee purely, (||) as they turn from Praise. ||

Line 9: I love thee with the passion put to use ||

Line 10: In my old griefs, || and with my childhood’s faith. ||
Line 11:  I love thee with a love I seemed to lose ||

Line 12:  With my lost saints, --I love thee with the breath, ||

Line 13:  Smiles, tears, of all my life! || -- and, if God chose,

Line 14:  I shall but love thee better after death. ||

*How do I love thee? Let me count the ways. || *additional text

Unlike the previous song settings discussed in this document, McAllister repeats poetic line 1 two additional times. The reappearance occurs after poetic lines 4 and 14. When asked for the reason of this addition during a personal interview, McAllister expressed that he liked things in 3’s, hence the three big musical caesurae and three appearances of “How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.” This particular technique helps to structure and frame the piece. While the additional lines frame the song: beginning, middle, and end; the three long silences structure the song intrinsically. These silences are used as a bridge from one section to the other.

The three long silences are at the ends of poetic lines 4 and 6, and in the middle of line 13. The first transition point is shown in Example 6.1, after the word, “Grace.”

Example 6.1  Scott McAllister, How do I love thee?

Poetic Lines 4-5:  For the ends of Being and ideal Grace. I love thee to the level of everyday’s

Poetic Caesurae:  For the ends of Being (||) and ideal Grace. || I love thee to the level of everyday’s

Musical Caesurae:  For the ends of Being and ideal Grace || How do I love thee?

Modification & Parallelism:  LS
Two poetic caesurae appear in line 4: one weak and one strong. The weak poetic caesura is modified through exclusion and the strong poetic caesura is paralleled through intensification in the musical setting. As the musical example displays, there is no written fermata after “Grace.” This is the case because McAllister gave a verbal instruction to add a fetura after “Grace” to allow the sound to disappear before proceeding to “How do I love thee?” The first reappearance of poetic line 1 marks the beginning of the second section of this song in ¾ meter. The repetition of the opening line reminds the listener of the question posed at the beginning, thus making the answers more immediate in thought rather than an afterthought.

The second long silence appears after poetic line 6, which is shown in Example 6.2. Three poetic caesurae are seen in this line: two strong and one weak. The first two poetic caesurae, one strong and one weak, are modified through exclusion. The last strong poetic caesura is paralleled through intensification marking the second long silence in the piece. Similar to the preparatory treatment of the first long silence, the proceeding poetic caesurae are excluded to enhance the effect of the silence that follows the word “light.” The same piano gesture accompanies the word “light” as it first appeared accompanying “Grace” in Example 6.1.

Example 6.2 Scott McAllister, How do I love thee?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poetic Lines 6-7(a):</th>
<th>Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light. I love thee freely,</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poetic Caesurae:</td>
<td>Most quiet need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical Caesurae:</td>
<td>Most quiet need by sun and candle-light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modification &amp; Parallelism:</td>
<td>LS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition, this second caesura marks the beginning of the third section accompanied by a change in musical texture in the piano line. As mentioned before, McAllister verbally added a fetura after “light,” and gave instruction for the voice to enter after several repetition of the new piano gesture before, “I love thee freely.” The vocalist and pianist were encouraged to “freely” express themselves to reinforce the importance of text delivery.

The third and final caesura is found in the middle of poetic line 13 after the word “life,” as shown in Example 6.3. Unlike the previous two long silences, this caesura is clearly marked with a fermata over the rests.

**Example 6.3**  *Scott McAllister, How do I love thee?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poetic Line 13:</th>
<th>Smiles, tears, of all my life! -- and, if God choose,</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poetic Caesurae:</td>
<td>Smiles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical Caesurae:</td>
<td>Smiles tears of all my life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modification &amp; Parallelism:</td>
<td>LS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Five poetic caesurae are found in line 13, which is the most in any given line of the sonnet. All five are strong caesurae indicated by punctuation marks. McAllister modifies the first two poetic caesurae by excluding them to intensify the third caesura after “life.” The fourth and fifth poetic caesurae are also excluded in the musical setting. McAllister additionally explained in the interview that he wanted this caesura to be the most important transitional point in the song, which he indicated by using the fermata over the rests. This final long silence, while marking the end of the third section, builds a moment of suspense and tension before the words “and, if God chose.” Another unique feature in this setting is that meter becomes obsolete, thus increasing the
performer’s role in the creative process. Similar to Larsen’s setting, McAllister’s vocal line is composed in the opera recitative style, where the singer defines the caesura placement in conveying the emotional complicity through effective text expression.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Aesthetics and function of the silence that frame the sound have been examined through the poetic device of silence, the caesura, in six musical settings of Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s “Sonnet XLIII” from the Sonnets from the Portuguese. The interaction between the poetic and musical caesurae was explored: the text settings in the musical examples did not always reflect the poetic caesura as indicated. As caesura is an example of poetic silence, where direct and indirect speech acts are performed in silence; musical caesura was conceptualized as a dynamic compositional tool used by composers as an effective way of expressing emotions. Hence, the variety of the caesurae placements found in various musical settings were due to composers utilization of the device to better communicate Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s words of love; either her love or the individual composer’s love, as stated by Edward T. Cone in Music and Text: Critical Inquiries.77

Analysis has shown that the song setting with the most parallel interaction of poetic and musical caesurae was the composition by William Roy. The continuous flow of text revealed simplicity behind the words, rather than a specific interpretation predestined by the composer. The setting with parallel caesurae interaction with added intensification was by Joseph M. Hopkins. The augmented musical caesura, through the use of fetura following fermata, created a moment of anticipation to enhance textual meaning. In conjunction with Roy and Hopkins, Édouard Lippé honored the parallelism of caesura placement but intensified them to facilitate

change in musical texture; specifically, the musical shifts added depth to the sung poem. In contrast to the three composers’ use of parallel interaction, Carlos Surinach modified the caesura placement by frequently adding extra musical caesurae within a single phrase to emphasize individual words. The rhythmically charged, heavily articulated, and disjunct vocal lines all conveyed a sense of instability, which was in contrast to the lyricism found in other settings. Modification through exclusion of poetic caesurae was found in Libby Larsen’s song setting, where she allowed the performer to use personal discretion to capture the mature love of Elizabeth Barrett Browning. The freedom to choose where a performer placed the caesura has been achieved through the compositional method of unmarked musical caesurae as found common in secco recitativo practice in opera. Contrary to Larsen’s objective to express Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s mature love, Scott McAllister’s intent was to capture his ideal of love into four parts, where he utilized three big musical caesurae to frame and structure his song.

Six musical settings of Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s “Sonnet XLIII” were discussed to display the parallel and modified interactions between the poetic and musical caesurae. Analysis revealed that each musical setting conveyed different interpretation of Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s love for Robert Browning. A better understanding of each composer’s textual treatment enhances the performer’s performance; hence a careful study of the varying treatment of caesura only heightens the communication of love and emotion of the poet, composer, and the performer, which heightens the listener’s experience. Lisa M. Krieger challenges the singers in Silence Proves Food for Thought to “celebrate silences in the songs

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79 ibid.
we sing. Composers have ‘elected’ silences; we are duty-bound to sing those silences. In so doing, we may uncover fresh insights. As skillful composers have long used silence for some of the music’s finest moments, singers have the tool of silence to communicate emotions that words alone cannot express. An old proverb poignantly summarizes the fundamental idea of this document: *speech is silver, silence is golden.*

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