

William Walton [1902-1983] LAM 102

Belshazzar's Feast (1931)

Bar 2:

1. What style is the soloist singing in?
2. Describe the tonality at this point.
3. What is the texture?
4. In what way does the setting of text mould to the nature of the inflections of the English language?
5. What can be said about the rhythm in this bar?

Bars 3-8:

5. How does the texture change?
6. Why do you think Walton uses bar lines here?
7. What is the role of the percussion part?
8. Comment on the use of imitation.

Bar 9:

9. Comment on this bar.
10. How does this bar relate to bar 2?

Bars 10-12:

11. Analyse the harmony of the vocal parts.
12. How has the texture changed?
13. Identify a false relation and a simultaneous false relation.
14. How has Walton achieved a dissonant effect?

Bars 12- 15:

15. How has the melismatic movement changed from the opening?
16. Comment on the use of free rhythm.
17. What effect would the vocal chord have in bar 14?

Orchestral introduction to Psalm 81

1. Comment on the change of tonality.
2. Identify Hemioliac cross rhythms.
3. To what extent would you agree with the statement “the chromaticisms used here are different from the opening of LAM 102 as they act as passing dissonances”?
4. What is important about the bass line in bars 32-35?
5. Mark an important syncopated motive.
6. What is the texture?
7. Identify a section that could be mistaken for 6/8 time and an underlying triplet meter.
8. What part is played by 7th chords in Walton’s harmony?
9. What jazz influences are evident in the orchestration?

Psalm 81 enters at bar

10. How is the orchestra used at this point?
11. Comment on the texture.

Make a table of the different textures and where they happen.

Try and answer the following questions.

In what respects is ‘Belshazzar’s Feast’ **NOT** an oratorio in the traditional sense?

How does Walton’s use of recitative compare with that of earlier composers?