

***Parodies and Travesties: 8 Dialogues* (1995)**

1. Hearing, Seeing, 2. So So and No No, 3. Ah! Sweet Music, 4. Echoes, 5. Bella Canto, 6. Evensong, 7. It Seems of Many Things, 8. Il menù

A theatrical work in eight sections for soprano, mezzo, and piano, *Parodies and Travesties* explores the shifting meaning of words through wordplay, parody, sound-texts, all set as a musical banter.

The dialogue is established immediately, as in “Hearing, Seeing,” the two singers each sing a note in turn, building up a twelve-note chromatic set. In “So So and No No,” the dialogue expands to short phrases; the piano interjects in the conversation when the singers breath. Weinzwieg parodies the musical past by recalling Elizabethan madrigals in “Ah! Sweet Music” and bel canto coloratura in “Bella Canto”; in the latter’s embellished coloratura passages, the mezzo interjects her own disdainful “tra la la” phrases. “Echoes” contains only wordless vocalises, which are sung first by the soprano and then echoed by the mezzo. Despite its religious reference, “Evensong” is a witty dialogue between birds. The humour continues in “It Seems of Many Things” as the singers have a gossip-filled exchange similar to the patter-style in sections of *Triologue* (1971) and *Private Collection* (1975). The final section, “Il menù,” is the comedic climax, with a text that combines pasta ingredients and great composers, such as zucchini, Puccini, spaghetti, and Rossini. “Il menù” was made into a short film in 1999, with the original singers (Measha Brueggergosman, Jessica Lloyd) performing and Weinzwieg conducting.

Written by Alexa Woloshyn