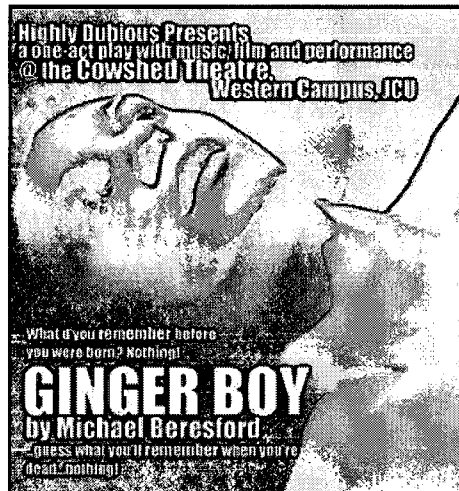


Frederick de Jaeger, "Gender and Musical Meaning in the Works of Chopin"

- suggestion that Mickiewicz's poetry in some way influenced Chopin's composing of the ballades. Hedley, *The Master Musicians Chopin*: 172.
56. Marek and Gordon-Smith, *Chopin: A Biography*: 84, 85.
57. Hedley, *The Master Musicians Chopin*: 51.
58. Hedley, *Selected Correspondence of Fryderyk Chopin*: 117.
59. William Lovelock, for example, translates this phrase as envy on Chopin's part. William Lovelock, *A Concise History of Music* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1953; 1966): 188.
60. Janet Ritterman, "Piano Music and the Public Concert, 1800-1850," *The Cambridge Companion to Chopin*, ed. Jim Samson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992): 30.
61. Hedley, *The Master Musicians Chopin*: 49.
62. Hedley, Introduction to *Selected Correspondence*, x; Henryk Opie_ski and E. L. Voynich, collected, trans. and ed., *Chopin's Letters* (New York: Vienna House, 1973), Preface.
63. Cortot, *In Search of Chopin*: 184.
64. Azoury, *Chopin Through His Contemporaries: Friends, Lovers, and Rivals*: 139.
65. John Ellis, *The Theory of Literary Criticism* (California: California University Press, 1974).
66. Hedley, *Selected Correspondence*, 24; Cortot, *In Search of Chopin*: 96.



Michael Beresford

GINGER BOY

Billy is a boy of 10 years old who has just been killed. He is laying on the slab in a city morgue. Earlier Billy had been sexually abused by Tom, his brother, in a garden shed. Billy retaliated by scratching him. Tom bundles Billy into his car, and then pushes him out on to the road as he drives towards the mountains. We hear Billy's story within the time space of his landing and dying on the bitumen. Billy's disbelief at his own death at ten years and his awareness of the diminishing living space he holds forms the drama of this short monologue.

(BILLY's) body is laid out on an aluminium/steel table in preparation for an autopsy. He is covered by a sheet. His wounds are graphically coloured against his body skin which is whitened.

Lights are dim.

BILLY SITS UP

BILLY: Hey! What you remember before you were born ... nothing.
Guess what you'll remember when you're dead ... Nothing!

LONG PAUSE

Tom said I can't stay anymore. I cost too much to feed he said. He took the television and his mountain boots and put them in the car on the back seat.

PAUSE

(WHISPERING) I don't need a lot of space.

My habits are clean ... and ... I'm capable of all kinds of improvement if I set my mind to it.

PAUSE

Before.

Tom got very angry and pressed his thumb into my eye.
The rhythm is important he said so I should concentrate.
I tried but I was choking. And wanted to be sick.

He lifted me up by my hair. Then he put his feet on my feet. I couldn't move.

Then he moved my head. Up and Down. Up and Down.

PAUSE

Then I let him put his finger up here.

But just one finger.

PAUSE

Get your teeth pulled out! Tom said. That's what our Mum did.

Silly slut. Made her face look like her twat.

And cross your legs. Make a fanny. Cross your legs!

Eyes. Keep them flat and look out.

Still. Dead eyes take practice.

That's all what Tom said.

BILLY touches his crotch

Tom said I had been very bad and he took me in his car. He let me sit in the front seat. He drove all the way past Tarreleah. I didn't have my shoes. I had these thongs I found in a bin. Only one was broken. Easy enough to fix with a bit of wire. I was wearing Tom's bush hat. He let me for today. Said no one would see who I was. The rain was spitting and Tom's face was shining. He was in shirt sleeves and wet. I put my face up under his arm smelling his fur and laughing. I wanted to fall in love with my brother at that moment. Forever.

PAUSE

(DREADFULLY) See I let him cum too fast. I was thinking maybe he'd sleep and be satisfied. But. No. No.

Then he used all his fingers. I wanted to kick but my legs were twisted. So I scratched. And I scratched. And I cut him.

PAUSE

I don't want nothing.

SILENCE

It was raining. Hard.

PAUSE

I was nursing the cat. I thought.
And it got startled. I jumped after it. I thought.
It was a kitten and young and had trusted.

PAUSE

I thought I felt this bump when we drove over the cat. It was on the highway. I saw from below a car stop behind us. Two women got out and were looking. The cat was ginger it ran under the back wheel.
I thought.
It seemed to be leaping like a wild cat.
Squish, squelch. Fur and blood and tar and gravel. Blue patties of cat-ginger flecked. And Tom-
Faster forward. Faster back.
Faster forward. Faster back.
Trying to shake something off his wheels. The women that were looking pointed with their mouths open. I waved back from under the car.
Smiling.

PAUSE

BILLY looks towards the window

Its cold out ... a sou'wester is blowing. There's white horses out there riding on the ocean. Best time for swimming ... except its cold when you get out ... ice cold. You have to rub your hands together hard like this. Then run hard on the spot.

PAUSE

I'm writing a story about two horses. See its in this exercise book. I kept it from when I went to school that time. I was only there two weeks. They gave me jam sandwiches wrapped in newspaper.

I feel equal with animals ... But I don't like dogs. I see it in their eyes. A dog will bite me one day. I wait for that. I pretend with dogs but not cats. You can talk over a distance to a cat. Cats understand space like birds.

And horses. They're free. It's a story but it could be a song. Its straightforward. They live on a farm ... they're ponies really. The children who have them grow up and find new activities to play. The horses run

away without plans of where to seemingly. One gets a job in a circus, the other goes into the bush and up to the mountains.

PAUSE

The grown up children remember about the ponies a long time after they have gone and are very angry and unforgiving. The ponies lose the memory of the children at once and of themselves immediately. The grown up children keep the memory of what their ponies did and give their own children dogs that are obedient. The dogs are small and yap a lot but they don't run away. But the grown up children still talk about the ponies when they take their families for drives in the country and they still feel cheated even though their dogs are waiting for them at home.

PAUSE

Fuckin' old cunt said I had a grown up face like hers. That's before she jumped under that train. Like that ginger cat ... Squish Squelch.

SILENCE

Tom told me —

PAUSE

Tom told me I had bum grubs.

Now he's got them. Every morning he walks around with his hand up his crack trying to nab them. Bum grubs.

He itches right up his arse.

I reckon I look like Tom. Its not just the hat. I reckon I can be Tom see. Its how I move my mouth. I keep my lips over my teeth so my mouths soft and firm all at once. See.

PAUSE

BILLY moves towards the window

(DREADFULLY) And the ponies ... they get older ... and ... I haven't finished ... I can't finish. I wanted too.

(FEVERISHLY) More. More. So young. Not fair. Old before my time. And not fair. Silly little boy. Filthy little boy. Fuckin' little cunt. Billy. Not my real name. Boy. Son of. Nickname Ginger.

SILENCE

I don't think any of this is proper. Lots of things are coming out that I can't control saying. I've tried punching my head like this see ... to make it stay in but it just keeps coming.

BILLY points towards the window

I was looking at what I wanted to happen before Tom tied me up in the back shed. Before he took me to the car.

I am ten years old. My name is Billy Bread.

PAUSE

I saw those two women for an instant when they got out of the car. Their mouths were open like Tom's but their eyes were different. Soft for me. Scared for me.

(FEVERISHLY) And I ...

PAUSE

More. More. So young. Not fair. Old before my time. And not fair. Silly little boy. Filthy little boy. Fuckin' little cunt. Billy. Not my real name. Boy. Son of fuckin' old cunt. Nickname Ginger. Me Ginger. Me on road. Me too much to feed. Me pushed out of car. Tom in his bush hat. Driving faster. Faster. Far away now. Fading to black. From below. I could see the sun for an instant. Just for an instant light up the mountains.

BILLY LAYS DOWN

(WHISPERING) I don't need a lot of space. My habits are clean ... and ... I'm capable of all kinds of improvement if I set my mind to it.

(BILLY IN V.O) Hey wakeup Billy. Wakeup. What you remember before you were born ... nothing. Guess what you'll remember when you're dead ... Nothing.

