

CHAPTER 1

METHODOLOGIES: SOURCES, SINGING, AND STYLE

For anyone who wishes to study early recordings, the first challenge is finding them.¹ As Leech-Wilkinson has noted, there are no discographical resources comparable to RILM, RISM or The Music Index.² To discover an old recording, therefore, one is forced to turn to a variety of resources, including print discographies, serial publications, record reviews and recording catalogs, both old and new.³

For pre-LP-era classical recordings, a good starting point is the *World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music* (“WERM”) which aims to catalog all electrical recordings of classical music.⁴ In the introduction, its authors state that “No record issued between 1925 and 1950 has been omitted intentionally, except where we have had to exercise our discretion in curtailing slightly the most heavily-recorded operatic arias and the like.” WERM does include some acoustic recordings when they feel either the music or the performance warrants inclusion. Another excellent discographical resource is the “Rigler Deutsch Index,” which includes what were, in 1985, the acoustic and electrical coarse-groove discs at the following American sound archives: Library of Congress, New York Public Library of the Performing Arts, and

¹ For a concise bibliography of discographical resources, see Timothy Day, *A Century of Recorded Music: Listening to Musical History* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000): 260-1. There will also be an introduction to discography by Simon Trezise in *The Cambridge Companion to Recordings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), edited by Nicholas Cook, Eric Clarke, Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, and John Rink. My thanks to Daniel Leech-Wilkinson for bringing the latter, which is still in press, to my attention.

² Leech-Wilkinson, *The Changing Sound of Music*, 15.

³ To some degree, recordings are catalogued according to the era in which they were published. Early recording technology is typically divided into the acoustic era, which lasted until 1925, and the electric era, which lasted until the early to mid 1940s. In that period, engineers began using editable magnetic tape, and soon after began issuing recordings on LP. More complete histories of recording exist in numerous places; a recent one may be found in Day, *A Century of Recorded Music*, 7 ff.; see also Day's excellent bibliographic overview of the subject, 257-9.

⁴ Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming, *The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music*, 3 vols. (London: Sidgwick and Jackson Ltd., 1966; Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1970), v. Citations are to the Greenwood Press edition.

the universities of Yale, Syracuse and Stanford.⁵ Originally published on microfiche, its contents are now included in RILM.⁶

Other resources are especially useful to studies of vocal recordings. Roberto Bauer's *New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09* is a discography organized alphabetically by singer, including many unusual ones.⁷ Discographies of the more famous historic singers can be found in the serial *The Record Collector*. Additional resources catalog Lieder recordings exclusively: these include *Song on Record*, edited by Alan Blyth; a German serial called *Stimmen die um die Welt gingen*; and home-published Lieder discographies by the reviewer Jerome Weber.⁸ These last two are excellent resources for unusual recordings.

Having determined the existence of a recording, the next step is to find a copy. Again, this is not always easy. In at least one major American archive, many recordings are not catalogued at all. Instead, they are shelved according to publication data, which the prospective listener must provide – and in so doing, learn whether the archive owns the desired recording. Another archive has catalogued many of its recordings according to label name and issuing number, but has not included the work's title or artist's name in its database. In scenarios such as these, one must know detailed release information about a recording before it is possible to locate it in an archive.

⁵ At that time, these were the major recording archives housed in the U.S.; recently, the library of the University of California at Santa Barbara has added a major collection of sound recordings – vocal recordings in particular.

⁶ However, it is very important to remember that recordings acquired by these archives after 1985 were not a part of the Rigler-Deutsch catalog and therefore are not included in RILM.

⁷ Roberto Bauer, *The New Catalogue of Historical Records: 1899-1908/09*. London: Sidgwick and Jackson Ltd., 1947. Though incomplete, Bauer remains the best discography of vocal recordings from this period.

⁸ *Stimmen, die um die Welt gingen* may be found at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts; Jerome Weber's discographies are available at the Stanford Archive of Recorded Sound and in the Humanities 2 Reading Room of the British Library.

In the case of 78 rpm discs, the next challenge is determining appropriate playback speeds. In the earliest days of disc recording, primitive technology made speeds variable.⁹ Heat made the grease used in early recording machines runny, while cold temperatures congealed it slightly; consequently, playback speeds varied by as much as 10 rpm or even more. Electric records are likely to be close to 78 rpm, but in the case of acoustically recorded discs it is especially difficult to determine tempo and pitch exactly. Some records – Columbia blue labels in particular – have their playback speeds notated directly on the label, but this is rare.

There is some question as to whether one should always choose original 78s over CD reissues, for the simple reason that one cannot know how reissues have been edited. In some cases, the question becomes a moot one, for there are CD reissues that offer access to recordings that would otherwise be unavailable, even in archives. Whatever the reason for choosing a reissue, however, one should bear in mind that reissues vary widely in quality, primarily for two reasons. First, while some engineers and reissuing companies seek to reproduce as accurately as possible the sound of a 78, eliminating only the most distracting pops and clicks, others aim to “improve” or “enhance” the sound by applying various electronic filters. Reissues in this latter category should be avoided. Second, sound engineers vary in skill. Some are better than others at determining appropriate playback speeds and coaxing sound from an old recording. Moreover, some engineers are able to get access to the best originals

⁹ See Leech-Wilkinson’s excellent summary in Chapter 3, “Understanding the sources: performance and recordings,” in *The Changing Sound of Music*, 40-76, as well as Day, *A Century of Recorded Music*. Historical overviews of early recording technology may be found in Roland Gelatt, *The Fabulous Phonograph*, 2nd rev. ed. (New York: Collier Books, 1977) and in Oliver Read and Walter L. Welch, *From Tin Foil to Stereo: Evolution of the Phonograph*, 2nd ed. (Indianapolis, Kansas City and New York: H. W. Sams, 1976). The latter was revised by Walter L. Welch and Leah Brodbeck Stenzel Burt and published under the same title (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1994); however, as Day notes (*A Century of Recorded Music*, 257), the 1994 version omits important material.

because their reputations encourage both institutions and collectors to lend them recordings.

Another point to consider, however, is this: engineers are often in a much better position than researchers to determine playback speeds because it is their area of specialty. For all these reasons, I would argue that, while researchers should develop some skill of their own in handling 78s and in determining which reissues can be considered trustworthy, reissues should not be dismissed out of hand as “uncontrolled” sources.¹⁰ For vocal recordings, the work of Ward Marston, who now issues recordings under his own label but in the past worked for companies such as BMG, EMI, CBS, Biddulph, and Romophone, is highly regarded. So is that of Christian Zwarg, of Truesound Transfers. Both these engineers strike a good balance between cleaning up surface noise while retaining the original character of the 78s.

In any case, when making detailed comparisons of tempo or commenting on vocal timbre, one must take into account the virtual impossibility of knowing precise playback speeds. Conclusions that rely on small differences of tempo should be avoided.

Though early recordings may seem an obscure and esoteric subject, an enormous number of them were made, and many are readily available. During the first half century of commercial recording, a few thousand “classical” singers recorded tens of thousands of record sides. Limiting the body of work studied to Lieder brings the numbers down to approximately 3,000-6,000 songs and a few hundred singers – still an abundance of material. From this, I have chosen a representative sample, considering primarily singers whose recorded output includes significant percentages of Lieder sung in the original German, and who made most of their recordings before the Second World War. In the case of a couple of very important singers – notably,

¹⁰ For an alternative view of this topic, see Leech-Wilkinson, *The Changing Sound of Music*, 4.

baritone Heinrich Schlusnus and soprano Lotte Lehmann – I have included some recordings they made during and after the war as well. However, I wished to avoid the recordings made during the war for Radio Berlin: their sheer numbers made it impossible for me to evaluate them properly.¹¹ Finally, insofar as it is possible, my sample includes only those singers who recorded in numbers sufficient that it's possible to determine how typical each recording is of that singer's style. A complete list of singers whose recordings I considered appears as Appendix A.

Why Lieder recordings? Initially I was drawn to Lieder recordings because as a singer, my first area of specialization was song. However, Lieder recordings do offer certain advantages over opera in a broad discussion of style. Whereas operatic arias are associated with certain voice types, many Lieder were recorded by men and women of all voice categories. Multiple Lieder recordings therefore afford a unique framework for considering the effects of voice type and gender – both of which are of the utmost importance in understanding the interrelationship between vocal habits and style. Furthermore, records of Lieder offer the broadest possible opportunity to address an issue that is vital in studying vocal style: the effects of aging. More so than those of instrumentalists, the abilities of singers change drastically as they age. Some singers even describe themselves as having different voices – mutating from mezzo soprano to dramatic soprano, or from soubrette to lyric soprano to spinto – over the course of their careers. Many singers focused on Lieder when they no longer had the stamina to support the more extreme range of an operatic aria, or the flexibility to handle the coloratura passages so common in opera but so rare in song. Actually, the age of the performers is hugely important to any discussion of early recordings, since

¹¹ At least some of these have recently been released on a box set devoted to the recordings of pianist Michael Raucheisen, who organized many of these wartime recordings. The set includes 66 CDs and over 1,000 recordings of individual songs. See FonoTeam 223067, *Michael Raucheisen (1889-1984): The Man at the Piano*, (P) FonoTeam, 2005; © Membran Music Ltd., 2005.

so many significant recordings were made by singers who were past their vocal prime before recording was even an option.¹²

We will see how important the issue of aging is when we consider how comparative analyses of style are made. Even when one has chosen a large sample, style analysis usually starts with comparisons of small groups of recordings – that is to say, of recordings of a single piece of music. With singers, it is extremely important to know their ages if our aim is to say something about style trends. Consider the following example: in his groundbreaking book on instrumental performance, *Early Recordings and Musical Style*, Robert Philip includes a few vocal recordings in his discussion of portamento. One example includes recordings of Schubert’s “Ave Maria” from 1914 (John McCormack), 1934 (Elisabeth Schumann), and 1947 (Beniamino Gigli), and compares the circumstances under which they make portamento. As Philip rightly notes, Gigli’s performance is “grostequely disjointed by aspirates” – the implication being that, where there are aspirates, there is no portamento.¹³ But this lack can easily be explained if we consider not the date of the recordings, but the ages of the singers. In fact, McCormack, Schumann and Gigli were born within only six years of one another, in 1884, 1888 and 1890. Gigli (57) was therefore nearly twice McCormack’s age (30) at the time each made his “Ave Maria” recording – and as I shall address in chapters 2 and 3, the aspirates result at least in part from his advancing age. Philip is hardly to be criticized for this example, broadening as it does what is otherwise exclusively a discussion of instrumental

¹² I do on one occasion turn to an operatic recording – Lotte Schöne’s recording of “Pronta io son” from Donizetti’s *Don Pasquale* – in making an observation about Schöne’s singing.

¹³ Philip, *Early Recordings and Musical Style*, 176-77. By “aspirate,” Philip refers to the [h] sounds that interrupt Gigli’s vocal line. For definitions and discussions of aspirates, see Cornelius Reid, *A Dictionary of Vocal Terminology* (New York: Joseph Patelson Music House, Ltd., 1983): 14, and William Vennard, *Singing: The Mechanism and the Technic*, rev. ed. (New York: Carl Fischer, 1967): 168-69.

recordings. Suffice it to say that this is an easy trap to fall into and one which should be avoided, if possible.

As the previous example suggests, it is important to contextualize recordings before comparing them. Since the primary aim of this dissertation is to connect stylistic gestures with the physical activity of singing, I have, of course, turned to singers' own writings for context. A few Lieder singers, including Sir George Henschel, Lilli Lehmann, Lotte Lehmann (no relation) and Elisabeth Schumann, have left behind pedagogical writings which are sometimes helpful in understanding their recorded performances. Similarly helpful is a book by the pedagogue Louis Bachner, who taught several important Lieder singers, among them Ria Ginster, Frida Leider, Sigrid Onegin and Heinrich Schlusnus.¹⁴

Such sources do not contain biographical information; for that, I have relied on the *Großes Sängerlexikon*, compiled by K. J. Kutsch and Leo Riemens.¹⁵ The authors limit themselves to concise factual details, often including pedagogical associations. The lives of the more famous singers have been described in full-length biographies, and some have penned books themselves. Most of these are more entertaining than informative, but occasionally include useful details.¹⁶ Additional biographical details may be found in liner notes or aficionado literature; as with discography, the serial *The*

¹⁴ Sir George Henschel, *Mus. Doc., Musings and Memories of a Musician* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1919; reprinted, New York: Da Capo Press, 1979); Sir George Henschel, *Articulation in Singing: A Manual for Student and Teacher with Practical Examples and Exercises* (Cincinnati, New York and London: The John Church Company, 1926); Sir George Henschel, *How to Interpret a Song*, from *The Etude Musical Booklet Library* (Philadelphia: Theodore Presser Co., 1929); Lilli Lehmann, *How to Sing*, first published in English in 1902, translated by Richard Aldrich, new revised and supplemented edition translated by Clara Willenbücher (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1993); Lotte Lehmann, *More than Singing: The Interpretation of Songs* (New York: Boosey & Hawkes, Inc., 1945; reprint edition, New York: Dover Publications, 1985); Elisabeth Schumann, *German Song* (New York: Chanticleer Press, 1948). See also Louis Bachner, *Dynamic Singing: A New Approach To Free Voice Production* (New York: L. B. Fischer, 1944).

¹⁵ *Großes Sängerlexikon*, CD-ROM (Berlin: Digitale Bibliothek, 2000). Only a handful of the singers considered in this dissertation are absent from Kutsch and Riemens.

¹⁶ In Chapter 3 I draw heavily on the following: Elena Gerhardt, *Recital* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1953); Henschel, *Musings and Memories of a Musician*, and Helen Henschel, *When Soft Voices Die: A Musical Biography* (London: Methuen & Company, Ltd., 1944).

Record Collector is especially useful in this regard. Michael Scott's *The Record of Singing* contains biographical sketches of many lesser known singers.¹⁷ Such resources are unfortunately undocumented; however, I have had succeeded in validating some sources through personal correspondence.¹⁸

The comments of collectors and critics offer invaluable insights into recorded performances – particularly the books of Michael Scott and J. B. Steane. Scott's multi-volume work, *The Record of Singing*, is a detailed survey of the recordings of over 400 singers who began making records no later than 1925. Steane's work is broader: in one volume he reviews recordings made from 1900 to 1970, and in three others, surveys a selection of 150 artists.¹⁹ Although Scott in particular has strong opinions on the subject of "correct" singing, these opinions are consistent, and if one listens to recorded examples in conjunction with his comments, one gets a pretty good idea of what he's talking about.²⁰ Steane's writing is less provocative, but full of insightful observations. Scott's books are also an excellent resource for contemporary reviews of the most important singers on pre-electric records. For the most part, I

¹⁷ Michael Scott, *The Record of Singing*, Volume 1: to 1914 (London: Duckworth & Co., 1977) and Volume 2: 1914 to 1925 (London: Duckworth & Co., 1979)

¹⁸ To take one example, Michael Seil's biographical sketch of Schlusnus in *The Record Collector* mentioned some biographical detail that was undocumented elsewhere; Seil was kind enough to provide me with the sources of his information. Michael Seil, e-mail message to the author, February 28, 2008. I am extremely grateful for this correspondence, for as he writes in *The Record Collector*, the 1988 exhibition commemorating the hundredth anniversary of Schlusnus' birth was destroyed by arson. An enormous amount of archival material is now lost.

¹⁹ Scott discusses over 400 singers in *The Record of Singing*, all of whom recorded before 1928. Michael Scott, *The Record of Singing*, Volume 1: to 1914 (London: Duckworth & Co., 1977) and Volume 2: 1914 to 1925 (London: Duckworth & Co., 1979); J.B. Steane, *The Grand Tradition* (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1993). Steane also discusses 150 singers in his three volume series, *Singers of the Century* (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1996-2000.). See also Alan Blyth, editor, *Song on Record: 1: Lieder* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

²⁰ EMI issued two box sets of thirteen records each in conjunction with Scott's books: *The Record of Singing* Volume One (EMI: RLS 724) and Volume Two (EMI: RLS 743). There is also an album of corrected speeds, *A Record of Singers Supplement: Recordings from 1901-1912* (EMI: HLM 7264, 1982). These are unfortunately out of print and have not been released on CD. Though there are only two books in the series, EMI did release two additional sets of records, Volumes Three and Four, in the same series. Volume Three was subsequently released on CD by Testament (1999), and Volume Four by EMI Angel (1992).

have limited myself to criticism that deals with studio recordings rather than live performances.

The EMI Archives, located in the town of Hayes, in the London borough of Hillington, house vast files of unpublished material. Of particular interest to anyone working with 78s are the so-called “session sheets.” The information they contain varies, but may include any or all of the following: the songs recorded, the scores used, the number of takes, the accompanists’ names, recording speeds and keys. Artists’ files may also include contracts and correspondence. Although the research I conducted at EMI did not find its way into this dissertation, I mention their archives in the hope that others may learn of this singular resource.

Recently, two books have appeared that address how recordings have affected performance: Mark Katz’s *Capturing Sound: How Technology Has Changed Music* and Robert Philip’s *Performing Music in the Age of Recording*.²¹ Though the focus of these works is very far from my own, the effects of recording on singers are important to consider. In the case of a performer who recorded over a long period of time, it may be important to consider how hearing recordings – one’s own, or those of other people – may have affected style.

Returning now to the recordings themselves: in an analysis of recordings, is it important to give scholars studying recordings visual aids? There seems to be a pervasive assumption, evidenced by the many transcription systems scholars have invented, that transcription is necessary in order to study recordings.²² Does this mean that aural documents are too abstract to be admitted as evidence in scholarly pursuits? Listening is not an abstract phenomenon – it just isn’t transcribed. And yet, that

²¹ Katz, *Capturing Sound: How Technology Has Changed Music*; Philip, *Performing Music in the Age of Recording*.

²² Pervasive, in that most studies involve transcription. Will Crutchfield discusses the matter in his seminal article, “Vocal Ornamentation in Verdi: the Phonographic Evidence,” *19th Century Music* 7/1 (Summer 1983): 13 and 20.

musicology might be biased in favor of visually concrete evidence should come as little surprise. A bias that favors the visual over the aural, the concrete over the abstract, is reflected within the academy at large as well as within intellectual discourse more broadly.²³

To emphasize this point, I ask the reader to listen – without a score – to the following excerpts, the first from a recording made by tenor Leo Slezak (1928, in A Major), the second, by baritone Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (1971, in F Major; both on CD 1, tracks 3 and 4). Many listeners undoubtedly recognize both these recordings as Schubert’s “Ungeduld,” the seventh song from *Die schöne Müllerin*. Even those who are not familiar with the work will probably recognize Slezak’s and Fischer-Dieskau’s renditions as versions of the same song. Yet, less experienced listeners may not perceive such diverse recordings as being “the same piece.” I once played these same excerpts during a radio interview – and the program host asked whether these had really been the same piece, even though he had the discographical information in front of him.²⁴

In all likelihood, anyone who is reading this dissertation will have the musical background to recognize both these recordings as versions of the same song. And of course, scores serve as an important reference and tool, so I will include them. My point is simply that scores emphasize the underlying similarities between or among performances. I ask readers to remember this point while listening with scores, for the printed notation may minimize the performances’ differences. In this spirit, you will

²³ In the introduction to *Musicology and Difference*, Ruth Solie discusses a hypothetical “privileging of visual power over oral, superior status will then flow to written language over spoken...” but also notes that “music’s power... rests (like women’s?) upon our failure to recognize and understand it” (14). In the chapter “Difference and Power in Music,” contributor John Shepard describes the process by which aural communication gets supplanted by written: “Sound—ephemeral, evanescent, slippery, and challenging—ceases to be the central presence in language. It is replaced increasingly by the safety, permanence, immutability, silence, and isolation of vision” (55-56). See *Musicology and Difference: Gender and Sexuality in Music Scholarship*, edited by Ruth A. Solie (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

²⁴ Capitol Public Radio, “Insight,” September 8, 2006.

find an excerpt of “Ungeduld” on the following pages. Editions were selected based on ease of use. I frequently used online music service “Schubertline” because it allows for printing in any key, though I substituted scores from CD Sheet Music for the more obscure works, or when the particular examples fit better on the page.

As often as possible, the key of a score corresponds with the recorded performance. When it does not, I include the key of the performance either in the text or along with the recording date and track information. Sometimes, as with “Ungeduld,” a score is used for multiple recordings in various keys; in such cases I typically include the score in its original published key, and again, I state the keys of recordings for the reader. Particularly for acoustic recordings, the reader should not assume that the playback key is the “right” key, for playback speeds are always open to some degree of doubt. I include the keys for the listener’s convenience only.

Much of the time, my primary concern is the sounds singers make; thus, I do not include translations for the songs considered here. When, however, the discussion turns to the prevailing mood of a piece, readers not already familiar with the repertoire may wish for translations. An easily accessible reference is the website called the Lied and Art Song Texts Page, where the quality of translations is variable, though mostly adequate.²⁵ Additional translations are available in numerous print sources.²⁶

²⁵ Emily Ezust, The Lied and Art Song Text Page (accessed March 5, 2008)
<<http://www.recmusic.org/lieder/>>

²⁶ Excellent translations of the most popular songs can be found in Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, George Bird, and Richard Stokes, *The Fischer-Dieskau Book of Lieder* (New York: Limelight Editions, 1984), as well as in Philip L. Miller, *The Ring of Words: An Anthology of Song Texts* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1973), and Lois S. Phillips, *Lieder Line by Line and Word by Word* (London: Duckworth, 1979). For translations of more obscure works by the composers considered here, see Henry S. Drinker, *Texts of the Vocal Works of Johannes Brahms in English Translation* (New York: Printed privately and distributed by The Association of American Colleges Arts Program, n.d. (1946?)); Beaumont Glass, *Hugo Wolf’s Complete Song Texts* (Mt. Morris, New York: Leyerle Publications, 2000), Thilo Reinhard, *The Singer’s Schumann* (New York: Pelion Press, 1989), Richard Wigmore, *Schubert: The Complete Song Texts: Texts of the Lieder and Italian Songs, with English Translations* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1988).

With sources in order, we can move on to the primary concern of this study: the impact a singer's technical habits have on his style. But what is style? How do we define it? In the sense that style means "a manner of discourse, or tone of speaking,"²⁷ performance style could be said to include the aural attributes that differentiate one performance from another. On vocal recordings, it would then follow that style could include any number of characteristics that allow us to distinguish one singer from another. But how do we move from such a broad definition to a vocabulary of style as it relates to singing on recordings? How do we categorize those elements of style that change?

The first academic studies of vocal recordings focused on ornamentation – a tool of little use in analyzing Lieder recordings, where ornaments per se are extremely rare.²⁸ More recent work on classical recordings, including vocal ones, reflects in some measure the framework of style gestures set forth by Robert Philip in *Early Recordings and Musical Style*, a framework which consists of tempo, rubato, portamento and vibrato. My own vocabulary of style is in large part based on Philip's work. In particular, I have incorporated the distinctions Philip makes between large-scale tempo flexibility and local rubato – which he further subdivides into accelerando and rallentando, melodic rubato, and agogic accent.

Only a couple of points need clarification in order to understand how this terminology translates from instrumental to vocal recordings. Philip defines melodic rubato as "the rhythmical independence of a melody from its accompaniment." On vocal recordings, this effect is caused by the stylistically driven rhythmic dislocation

²⁷ "Style," *OED online* (accessed September 28, 2004) <<http://ezproxy.library.cornell.edu:2216>>

²⁸ See Crutchfield, "Vocal Ornamentation in Verdi"; Bowen, "Performers Interpreting History: Finding 'Una voce poco fa'"; and Senici, "Per una biografia musicale di Amina." It should be noted that both Bowen's and Senici's studies reflect a post-modern paradigm shift away from a work-based concept of music. Senici argues the importance of incorporating the history of performance into the critical edition of *La Sonnambula*. That work on performance could influence what is perhaps the most traditional area of musicology – creating a critical edition – is an exciting prospect.

27

31

3. Den Mor - gen - win - den möcht ich!
4. Ich meint', es müßt' in mei - nen

35

hau - chen ein, ich möcht es säu - seln durch den re - gen Hain; o
Au - gen steh'n, auf mei - nen Wan - gen müßt' man's bren - nen seh'n, zu

38

leuch - tet' es aus je - dem Blu - men - stern! trüg' es der Duft zu ihr von
le - sen wär's auf mei - nem stum - men Mund, ein je - der A - tem - zug gäb's

Figure 1.1, Schubert, "Ungeduld," mm. 27-53

Figure 1.1 (Continued)

41

nah und fern! Ihr Wo - gen, könnt ihr nichts als Rä - der trei - ben?
laut ihr kund; und sie merkt nichts von all' dem ban - gen Trei - ben:

44

Dein ist mein Herz, dein ist mein

47

Herz und soll es e - - wig e - - wig

50

blei - - ben! ben!

of the vocal line from the accompaniment. As for agogic accent, it is important to note that, in vocal performance, it can be motivated by text as well as by music – or by both in combination. When agogic accents are motivated by the rhythms of speech, I refer to them as “declamatory rubato.”

Portamento, too, receives wide treatment in my study, although I expand on Philip’s model. Among singers, portamento has long led a double life both as an ornament and as a fundamental characteristic of singing – both as a technique used to make a discrete, temporal sound effect and as the omnipresent foundation of all sound. As we shall see, treatises exhibit both meanings, sometimes confusing one with the other, and it is not always easy to tease them out. This is an enormous topic, and makes up the bulk of Chapter 2.

Some may be surprised not to find vibrato among the style parameters in an analytical study of vocal recordings. I have omitted it because my work is primarily concerned with issues of performer agency. That is to say, I am interested in those physical skills that performers make conscious choices about, either in their habitual practice or in the moment – and on early Lieder recordings, vibrato is not typically among them.²⁹ Moreover, as the voice scientist Johan Sundberg notes,

...almost all professional opera singers acquire vibrato without thinking about it and without trying to acquire it. Thus, vibrato develops more or less by itself as voice training proceeds successfully.³⁰

²⁹ While the technique of minimizing vibrato has become common within the historically informed performance movement, I am hard-pressed to think of a many instances of it on historic Lieder recordings.

³⁰ Sundberg, 163. Though the singers included in this study focused on Lieder at some point in their careers, all but two of them – Elena Gerhardt and Sir George Henschel – began their careers as opera singers.

Although vibrato is not always voluntary, it often shares a link with other stylistic choices.³¹ What is more, pedagogues talk about the more general relationship between vibrato speed and vocal weight, or registration.³² It is in this last sense that further examination would enter into a discussion of the connection between vocal habits and style, but as a secondary consideration; I therefore leave it to the next paper – or scholar – to ponder.

While an analytical model of style gestures that is constructed around portamento and rubato is not new, such gestures have heretofore been discussed in terms of their sound rather than their function. However, as I mentioned in the preface, my aim is to discuss performance style not according to what the listener experiences, but in terms of what performers do. In fact, this is how singers are trained to think about singing: in terms of habitual techniques that make the vocal instrument work.

Sadly, there exists no generally agreed upon lexicon of vocal terminology. It is a vocabulary that relies heavily on metaphor, and many singing terms have long and complex histories that the secondary literature has only begun to explore. *The New Grove* contains three entries for “Portamento,” but the two that relate to vocal music are not entirely in agreement.³³ Nor does Grove address most singing terms: “registration,” a fundamental concept that refers to the voice *qua* voice, is absent from its pages. Cornelius L. Reid’s extensive work, *A Dictionary of Vocal Terminology*, reveals dozens of terms that are of interest particularly to singers, or that have unique

³¹ Leech-Wilkinson has argued convincingly for a relationship between a singer’s emotional choices and vibrato speed, in “Emotion and Meaning in Musical Performance,” unpublished paper presented at Sigtuna, Sweden (September 2004).

³² Anecdotal evidence suggests that singers often do not perceive their own vibrato accurately. In my experience, as well as that of my teachers Jane Randolph and Judy Kellock, when breath and phonation are equalized, singers often have little awareness of their vibrato.

³³ These *NG* entries are by Ellen T. Harris and Will Crutchfield.

definitions within the singing community;³⁴ unfortunately, many of his definitions are insufficiently documented, and must be treated with caution. Many histories of singing are similarly lacking in documentary evidence, to the point where I have been unable to rely on them.³⁵

Since no generally agreed upon vocabulary exists, I have had to define terms carefully. In so doing, I have sought to interweave terminology drawn from a broad array of pedagogical treatises³⁶ with evidence supplied by voice science.³⁷

Occasionally, this has meant taking a broad historical stance. However, it is not my intention to suggest that terms have consistent meanings. Rather, I rely on a wide

³⁴ Cornelius L. Reid, *A Dictionary of Vocal Terminology: An Analysis* (New York: Joseph Patelson Music House, Ltd., 1983).

³⁵ These include Michael Scott's introductory essay in *The Record of Singing*, and John Potter, *Vocal Authority: Singing Style and Ideology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

³⁶ The most important early vocal treatises have been translated, annotated and edited numerous times. The following is intended as a way of distinguishing among the many available editions of the works I will rely on most. **Tosi 1**, hereafter called **Tosi-Leonesi**: Pier Francesco Tosi, *Opinioni de' cantori antichi e moderni o sieno Osservazioni sopra il Canto Figurato* (Bologna: 1723), annotated by Luigi Leonesi and published in the series *La Scuola di Canto dell'epoca d'oro (Secolo XVII)* (Naples: Stab. Tipo-Stereotipo F. Di Gennaro & A. Morano, 1904); **Tosi 2**, hereafter called **Tosi-Galliard**: Pier Francesco Tosi, *Observations on the florid song; or, sentiments on the ancient and modern singers, useful for all performers, instrumental as well as vocal: to which are added explanatory annotations and examples in musick*, trans. Galliard (London: J. Wilcox, 1743), reprinted from the second edition (London: William Reeves Bookseller Limited, 1926); and **Tosi 3**, hereafter called **Tosi-Pilkinton**: Pier Francesco Tosi, *Observations on the florid song*, trans. Galliard, ed. Michael Pilkinton (London: Stainer & Bell, 1987). In this group I include **Agricola 1**, called **Tosi-Agricola**: Johann Friedrich Agricola, *Anleitung zur Singkunst*, translated from the Italian of Pier Francesco Tosi (Berlin: George Ludewig Winter, 1757; Wiesbaden, Leipzig & Paris: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1966); and **Agricola 2**, called **Agricola-Baird**: Julianne C. Baird, trans. and ed., *Introduction to the Art of Singing by Johann Friedrich Agricola*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). There are also the following: **Mancini 1**, hereafter called **Mancini**: Giambattista Mancini, *Riflessioni pratiche sul canto figurato*, 3rd ed., rev., corrected and enlarged (Milan, 1777; Bologna: Forni Editore, 1970); and **Mancini 2**, hereafter called **Mancini-Foreman**: *Practical Reflections on Figured Singing: The editions of 1774 and 1777 compared, translated and edited*, published in *Masterworks On Singing*, Vol. 2 (Champaign, Illinois: Pro Musica Press, 1967). Finally, there is **Garcia-Pashke 1**: Manuel Garcia II, *A Complete Treatise on the Art of Singing*, First Part, Complete and Unabridged, the editions of 1841 and 1872 collated, Donald V. Paschke, ed. and trans. (New York: Da Capo Press, 1984); and **Garcia-Paschke 2**: Manuel Garcia II, *A Complete Treatise on the Art of Singing: Part Two*, Second Part, Complete and Unabridged, the editions of 1847 and 1872 collated, Donald V. Paschke, ed. and trans. (New York: Da Capo Press, 1972). For an overview of Garcia's works, including revisions, reprints and translations, see **Garcia-Paschke 1**, 260-61.

³⁷ Two standard references are Johann Sundberg, *The Science of the Singing Voice* (DeKalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 1987) and William Vennard, *Singing: The Mechanism and the Technic: Revised Edition, Greatly Enlarged, 1967* (New York: Carl Fischer, 1967; first edition, 1949).

variety of sources in order to best describe what I am hearing, and intertwine the terminology with evidence revealed by the recordings.

One term in particular deserves special mention here. I use the word “Affekt” to describe the prevailing mood of either a piece or of a performance. More so than the word “effect,” which could refer to a momentary gesture or a fleeting emotion, Affekt conveys something broader: a generalized emotional state that characterizes an entire performance.

Describing vocal gestures in terms of function adds layers of understanding to a discussion of style – for such descriptions get at the heart of what it is that performers *do*. Some of the sounds singers make are rooted in their vocal habits, acquired from years of repetition in the practice room. It therefore follows that some stylistic gestures may not be choices at all, but rather result from the interaction of a singer’s habitual vocalism and the piece she is singing. This is not to say that performers never make choices, or that they don’t consider how even habitual gestures will be perceived. However, as the recorded evidence will demonstrate, many gestures are primarily byproducts of singers’ vocal habits.

Typically, discussions of style do not automatically differentiate between those gestures that are byproducts and those that are choices. We may say a singer has “made” a portamento (out of choice), or “made” a portamento (out of habit) – but it would be very interesting to know which is which. By considering style in terms of a singer’s habitual vocalism, we begin to identify which gestures result from interpretative choices, and which are grounded in the fundamentals of her technique. In short, we begin to recognize the substance in her style.