

Analysing the Singing Style and Teaching of American Voice in Colleges and Universities

-- The Marriage of Figaro as an Example

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Abstract: Many foreign opera vocal works singing, in the Romantic period emerged many composers, such as Mozart with a unique perspective, clear creative style led the whole European opera era, such as "The Marriage of Figaro" so far in the college teaching and practice singing is an important teaching of the basic curriculum, but in the college American vocal music teaching involves the singing and performance of the content is poor. However, no matter from the inheritance and development of Chinese American vocal opera, or as a teacher engaged in vocal music teaching, it is indispensable to analyse the style and singing of the works as well as the practical rehearsal of the opera for students. This paper mainly focuses on Mozart's works of drama, ethnicity, humanity, vividness of characters, epoch, popularity and ideology to show the singing style of Italian vocal teaching, and takes the piece "se acaso di madama la nozze di Figaro" as an example to talk about how to absorb and apply Mozart's style, language and singing skills to the teaching and practice of American vocal music in colleges and universities. rehearsal.

Keywords: Foreign opera; Mozart's style; Singing; Teaching methods.

1. Introduction

Lozzedi Figaro is one of Mozart's three most outstanding operas, completed in 1786, with a script by Lorenzo da Vinci. The script is by Lorenzo da Ponte. The libretto was adapted by Lorenzo da Ponte from the French dramatist Beaumarchais. It was first performed at the Austrian Theatre in Vienna in 1786. The drama of Mozart's operas is mainly embodied by the repetitions, arias and choruses, and the repetitions play an important role in the singing of the operas, portraying the inner and psychological character of the characters, and at the same time depicting the delicacy and differences of love and exposing the "ugliness" of human nature. The drama of his operas is mainly presented in the form of narration in the repetitions, arias and choruses.

2. The Artistic Origins of Mozart's opera The Marriage of Figaro

2.1. Theatricality in Mozart's operas

Repertoire in Mozart's operas is an important means to promote the development of the plot and reveal the conflicts, and it plays a pivotal role in strengthening the drama of the operas. Mozart sang duets, trios and even septets, which accounted for a large proportion of his operas. In *The Marriage of Figaro*, for example, the composer arranged nine repetitions, accounting for 32% of the total repertoire. This shows that Mozart had already taken repetition as one of the important means to express the drama of the opera.

There are many highly dramatic arias in the opera, which have a distinctive musical character and play an important role in supporting the drama. For example, in the piece "se acaso madama la notte tichiamo", the baritone Figaro presents a lively theme with his baritone's unique thick and broad tone, the speed of the Allegro to Adagio, as well as the jumping rhythmic form and the steady tone, showing the light

and the divine power. The finale music of Mozart's operas often ends with a brilliant and magnificent chorus, producing a strong dramatic effect.

2.2. Ethnicity of Mozart's operas

Mozart's operas are rich in the flavour of German folk music. In Act I of *The Marriage of Figaro*, the main theme of Figaro's ballad (see Fig. 1) is in fact the starting line of the German folk song "The Outlaw Hunter". In *The Magic Flute*, whether it is an aria with folk song flavour or a complex and brilliant chorus, whether it is a monophonic melodic language or a vertical harmonic language, whether it is a plot design or a character portrayal, Mozart adopts a musical language rich in German national colours to express them. As Mozart said, "We Germans should think German, play German, and sing German." As shown in Figure-1.

2.3. Humanity of Mozart's Opera

The artistic style of Mozart's operas reflects more of a true humanistic spirit, which is expressed in five main ways.

The vividness of the characters. The characters in Mozart's operas are living models that can be found in social life. Mozart used music to interpret them on stage, giving the characters personalised music and language, with famous musical arias for all types of characters and voices. Through singing and interpretation to resurrect the image of the characters in the play, so that the audience better understand the characters in the play, so that each character is alive and real in front of the audience. For example, the heroine of the play, Suzanne, is novel, lively and dexterous and melodious singing of "se a caso madama la nozze di Figaro", which shows the personality characteristics of cleverness and cleverness, as well as not to succumb to the Count's and the Count's oppression, reflecting the oppression of female slavery and the rise of feminism in the midst of the oppression under the feudal society at that time.

ATTO PRIMO

DUETTO

N.º 2.

„Cinque...dieci...venti...“
(Soprano e Basso)

SCENA PRIMA. Camera non affatto ammobigliata, una sedia d'appoggio in mezzo. Figaro con una micca in mano e Susanna allo specchio, che si sta mettendo un cappellino ornato di fiori.

Figure 1. The main theme of Figaro's Ballade

The musical characteristics of different characters in the same work are also distinctive and unique. For example, in *The Marriage of Figaro*, Figaro's ballad singing is fast and firm, showing a kind of third-class spirit of resistance. As for an ordinary supporting character, Cherubino, whether it is "Do you know what love is" or "Why am I restless", the music is carefully designed to show the desire and confusion of a young man who is not yet experienced in the world, so his music is restless and unstable. The Countess's music is restless and unstable. The Countess's ballad "Begging the God of Love to Give Me Comfort" or "Where to Find Good Times" are all peaceful, soft and melodious, reflecting the extraordinary temperament of aristocratic women. Mozart's use of musical performance means that the character's personality traits are maximally expressed in the music.

Mozart's opera themes of the times. The themes chosen for Mozart's operas are distinctly contemporary. The chosen themes reflect the sharp social conflicts at that time. The opera exposes the antagonism and class contradiction between the nobles and the commoners, ridicules and exposes the power of the upper class, strongly attacks the unique hegemony possessed by the feudal nobles, penetrates into the feudal autocracy, and praises the commoners' resourcefulness and bravery. The protagonists of the play, Susanna and Figaro, represent the third-class commoners, whose resourcefulness and courageous attitude of resistance win them marriage and love, and who, through Figaro's interpretation, expound their disdain for the feudal aristocracy.

The popularity of Mozart's opera music. Mozart's opera music language is simple and clear, which is inseparable from his familiarity with and love of folk music and the democratic tendency of creation. In the creation of Mozart's more concerned about the audience's live reflection, and strive to catch the listener's ears and mind collision.

The ideological content of Mozart's opera. The opera "The Marriage of Figaro" is adapted from the French playwright Beaumarchais's comedy "Figaro Trilogy", which was regarded as the pioneer of the revolution in France. Even though Mozart did not have a deep understanding of Beaumarchais's own revolutionary concepts, his own experience led him to realise the inequality between the

nobles and the commoners, as well as being influenced by the movement of the Rapture and the Enlightenment, which reflected the composer's desire to eliminate the traditional practices of the society. The composer's desire to eliminate traditional social conventions is reflected in the composer's ideas.

From the above five analyses, it can be concluded that Mozart expressed the humanitarian spirit in the form of extremely pure and beautiful music, and Mozart's operas have the artistic charm of humanism. Mozart's artistic style is rich and is shown to the world through the music he created. Mozart's artistic style is rich and is shown to the world through the music he creates. He always sticks to his own creative principles and music plays a dominant role in his operas. In the opera, music is used to create convincing and beautiful music for the characterisation of the characters, the expression of their inner feelings and the creation of dramatic conflicts. Mozart's heyday was a time of hardship and illness, but his works never revealed his suffering, and he expressed life in a more optimistic way than anyone else. It is like a poem engraved on the door of an opera house in Germany: "Bach brings us God's words, Beethoven brings us God's fire, Mozart brings us God's laughter." 3.

3. The Marriage of Figaro - Duet of Susanna and Figaro se a caso madama la notteti chiama " artistic characteristics

The Marriage of Figaro" is a comedy opera, the plot of which is based on the main lines of the heroine Susanna and the Countess, the hero Figaro and the Count, as well as the secondary lines of the servant Cherubino and the doctor Bartolo. The story is based on the fact that Figaro is to be married to Susanna, Countess Rosina's chambermaid. The Count, who is naturally romantic in nature, is unfaithful to his wife Rosina and pursues Susanna again, obstructing Figaro's marriage in many ways. Rosina's former guardian, the doctor Bartolo, and his housekeeper, Marcellina, each have their own personal agenda. Susannah is both sheltered from the Count's advances and unable to publicly offend him. Later, with the

help of Figaro and Rosina, she uses her intelligence and courage to do many things that a man would not dare to do, forcing the Count to kneel in front of Rosina to make amends for his dishonourable actions. In the end, Susanna and Figaro finally bond with Figaro through their struggle.

This excerpt has been sung by many famous singers, and my favourite version is by Mirella Freni (27 February 1935-9 February 2020), a famous Italian singer. The characterisation of Susanna is vivid and flexible. The overture is in scherzo form and uses modal and repetitive techniques. There is a distinctive aesthetic principle in the tone of the voice in this work, which is to sing the Italian language and tone of voice in a manner of speaking. The female voice has a small span of intervals in the natural vocal range within an octave, but still needs a high vocal position when singing, such as humming the voice from the nasopharyngeal cavity with a closed mouth, and imagining the voice with an idea that the voice goes straight to the head cavity. In the sound tone between e1-b1, due to the melody is low and flat, the range expansion amplitude is small, when singing, you need to focus on the front of the voice, the real voice and the mixed voice to achieve a combination of true and false, the breath use properly and keep the position of the centralised attention not to pinch and squeeze the cord to sing, at the same time, we must pay attention to the smoothness of the language and the double consonants, cloudy consonants and intonation of the display of the accents. *Seacaso madama la notte tichiamo* is sung by soprano Susanna and baritone Figaro in a fast tempo. The first section is in bars 1-20, and the section opens with Figaro quoting "din din" and "don don" knocking on the door, making this section a classic. The rhythm is upbeat, with orchestra and brass, and the "din din" and "don don" are beautifully expressed, followed by Susanna's "din din" and "don don". "The dialogue between the two also shows the charm of rap from the singing of the rounds of the song, in which the bass voice is thick, maintaining a high position in the treble, the opening of the chest cavity and the good use of breath, shaping a charismatic voice. And the female protagonist Susanna's linguistic accuracy and coherent line processing (commonly known as Legato), such as the processing of double consonants: *passi, quella, discaccia, sospetti*, and the processing of uvular consonants: *porta, servir*, and so on. The detailed treatment of the words and the addition of orchestral violins, such as *ascolta*, which can be easily confused with the consonants, make the whole section cheerful, clear and full of suspense. The breathing method used in the performance is still the chest-abdominal joint breathing. In inhalation, the diaphragm actively expands and maintains, the use of the diaphragm downward compression of the abdominal cavity so that the intercostal muscles, abdominal muscles outward expansion, to ensure that the breath is sufficient to naturally hold up the chest, in the singing of the controlled exhalation of slowly contracting the abdomen naturally give the breath (as if driving a car, stepping on the accelerator evenly give the accelerator that power) while maintaining the muscle against the force.

In the singing of "*seacaso madama la nottetichiamo*", to express the characterisation of the characters, the emphasis is on capturing the characteristics of the language, with a clear, well-rounded diction. Since Italian works mainly use the five vowels, it is different from our Chinese songs. The bite of Italian is not as clear as that of Chinese Hanyu Pinyin. However, in singing Italian works, we should pay attention to the accentuation of double consonants, the major and minor

consonants, and the linguistic rhythmic coherence (as mentioned above). The speed of the sixteenth notes and the accuracy of the dotted notes, especially at the beginning, are also important. The psychological activity is applied to the artistic expression of the tune, which pays more attention to the direction of the melodic intervals (A-B-B-A), expresses different moods and implies different emotions, together with the image and vivid performances and the content of the plot, which makes the whole fragment rich.

4. Teaching Methods and Significance of Mozart's Opera the Marriage of Figaro

In the university vocal classroom, teachers teach different foreign works, and students are not able to sing them in the Italian language, and they are not able to grasp the aesthetics of the art of singing, the characteristics of the language and the vividness of its expression. The students' ability to accurately grasp the performance of foreign operatic works and their ability to sing need to be improved. The singing repertoire of foreign opera works into the classroom is of profound significance to the teaching of American vocal music in colleges and universities. From the teaching point of view of teachers, it breaks the single teaching method of traditional vocal music teaching, which enriches the classroom teaching means and increases the students' curiosity and interest in learning, and motivates students to take the initiative to learn. Through the history of European foreign theatre and the history of western music development, we can trace and understand how the singing style of European music is formed and better study foreign operas as accumulation. In terms of teaching singing, the traditional teaching method of "words, feelings, voice, stage, table, performance, singing" combined with the singing of foreign operas in the natural vocal region of the real voice-based singing style is scientific and in line with the aesthetics of the art of singing. At the same time, the students' common problems of unstable transition of the natural vocal range, the tone is not bright and other technical problems are well practiced in the art of singing. The problems in vocal training will be brought into the singing and actual arrangement, so as to better explore and solve the technical problems in singing. In terms of classroom efficiency, the teacher will design the new learning content - "History of Foreign Opera Development" and the audio-visual materials of a certain opera as a way to stimulate the students' interest in learning and to set up related problems before class. This will encourage students to take the initiative to collect and consult relevant information and background knowledge. It is conducive to realising the fullness of the vocal practice class. Enhance students' aesthetic perception of music, choose appropriate songs according to the different voice conditions of each student, and also introduce and innovate foreign opera culture and technology.

5. Conclusion

The teaching of foreign operas is now particularly popular in colleges and universities, but it is imprecise. Opera works are not only Italian, but also French, German, Austrian and American; there are realism, romanticism, conceptual musicals, light operas, comedies, musicals and so on. The European Renaissance was first launched in Italy, when the development of literature and art was vibrant, laying the

foundation for the birth of opera. Verdi is the 17th century Italian music history occupies a very important position in the composer, whose works are "Othello", "Faust", "The Lady of the Camellias", etc., and Mozart in the 18th century is also unique, followed by Rossini will be the Italian opera to the climax. After the birth of Italian opera, opera, a new musical art, soon became popular and developed in European countries, and has been very prosperous. The content and style of opera creation also developed differently because of the differences in the humanistic environment of different countries, and evolved such as light opera, comedy opera, and realist opera, etc., and the introduction of opera to China should be traced back to the 1900s. The introduction of opera in China dates back to the 1900's. After the first batch of students, such as Mr Zhou Xiaoyan and Mr Shen Xiang, returned to their motherland, they enthusiastically spared no effort in the teaching of American vocal music, and at the same time, they introduced the advanced singing techniques, humanistic and cultural qualities, and singing aesthetics of the West. At the same time, it also raises a very "sharp" question for us, when can we popularise and popularise the singing of foreign operas and opera performances to the public, not only in colleges and universities, but also like the Chinese opera, which is loved by the public and has the aesthetic appreciation

and basic discernment. The author personally believes that we also need the progress of the times and the improvement of humanistic qualities, the development of the country leads to the development of artistic attainments, and I hope that there will be a legacy like the Chinese opera, which also requires us so that music education students have a good humanistic qualities and the ability to identify the music to sing.

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