

Art Song Workshop and Masterclass (Secondary) (New)

Organised by the Arts Education Section of
the Curriculum Development Institute, Education Bureau

Speaker: Ms WONG Cheuk-yee

Date: 25 April 2025

Time: 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Venue: Recital Hall, Hong Kong City Hall

(8/F, High Block, 5 Edinburgh Place, Central, Hong Kong)

Art Song as a Unique Vocal Genre

- Poetry → inspires a composer → reading and interpreting of the poetry → composer creates a musical framework for the poem → art song
- Poetry and music share similar sound characteristics, including rhythmic patterns, accents, variations in tempo, pitch inflection, and melodic phrases. They are sister arts, and both use imagery
- Marriage of two art forms, not simply singing poetry set to music, but singing a new hybrid vocal art form
- We use our musicianship and intelligence to sing an art song, focusing on the details of text and imagery, while composers skillfully craft the art

Other Common Features of Art Song

- Typical for a solo voice and piano. The piano part is not just an accompaniment but should be treated as a duet partner
- Can be through-composed, strophic / modified-strophic; narrative / descriptive / atmospheric / emotional
- Expressive or lyrical vocal line that highlights the nuances of the text
- Explores deep emotional or psychological themes, such as love, nature, death, and existential contemplation
- Meant to be performed in a more intimate setting, such as salons or small concert halls, where the nuances of the music and text can be fully appreciated

The above information is provided by Ms WONG Cheuk-yee.

English Art Songs

A. General Features of English Art Songs

- Themes
Influenced by the broader English musical tradition, including choral and folk music, and often reflecting **pastoral and romantic** elements of English culture.
- Musical Style and Structure
English art songs vary widely in style, often incorporating elements of English folk traditions and sometimes exhibiting a more **straightforward, direct musical approach**.
- Language
Prioritises clear diction and the natural rhythm of English, often highlighting the nuances and stresses of words.
- Poetic Sources
William Shakespeare, John Keats, and Thomas Hardy, etc.

B. Examples of English Art Songs

- Notable Composers
Benjamin Britten, Ralph Vaughan Williams, and Gerald Finzi, Roger Quilter, Samuel Barber, Purcell, Rorem, Amy Beach, Lori Laitman, etc.
- Recommended Singers
Dame Janet Baker, Sir Peter Pears, Ian Bostridge, Sarah Connolly, Felicity Lott
- Suggested popular English Art Songs
 - *Where the Bee Sucks*, T.A. Arne
 - *Spring Sorrow*, Ireland
 - *Love's Philosophy*, Quilter
 - *Sure on this Shining Night*, Barber

C. Musical Features of *Fear No More the Heat o' the Sun* by Roger Quilter

- **Modified Strophic Form** – requires variety of interpretations
- **Contrasting Dynamics** - control of vocal intensity
- **Literary Devices in the Text** - special treatment of texts
- **Music Imageries, especially for the last stanza** – a thin, weak and haunted voice quality, and the piano evoking the ringing of a death knell

German Art Songs (Lieder)

A. General Features of German Lied

- Themes
Nature, existential contemplation, **solitude**, human experience, **quest for growth**, philosophical introspection, folklore and myths
- Musical Style and Structure
While many Lieder follow strophic or modified strophic forms, others may employ through-composed structures, allowing for greater musical development. **Harmonic Complexity** is also a common feature while the piano part provides richness and depth to the vocal line. The piano part often sets the atmosphere or ambience of the text.
- Language
Deep sensitivity to the text, using music to enhance the meaning and emotional impact of the poetry. In German, lengthened vowels and legato are not always considered beautiful in the same way as in Italian. **Consonants** play an important role in the poetry.
- Poetic Sources
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Heinrich Heine, and Friedrich Schiller

B. Examples of Lieder

- Notable Composers
Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, Wolf, Richard Strauss, Liszt, Mendelssohn (the couple), Joseph Marx, Alban Berg, etc
- Singers
Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Thomas Quasthoff, Elly Ameling, Lotte Lehmann
- Suggested popular German Lieder
 - *Lachen und Weinen*, Schubert
 - *Mariä Wiegenlied*, Max Reger
 - *Ich liebe dich*, Beethoven
 - *Widmung*, Schumann
 - *Ganymed*, D544, Schubert

C. Musical Features of *Verborgeneit* by Hugo Wolf

- **ABCA form** - reflects the physical and psychological journey of the persona
- **Theme - solitude / Einsamkeit**
- **Lyricism** – winding, text-painting melodies
- **Chromaticism** - present in both the voice and the piano
- **Detailed notated dynamics** - instructions and guidelines for building intensity
- **Treatment of text** - enables meaningful, rhetoric singing

中文藝術歌曲(當代)

1. 中文藝術歌曲的背景與特色

- **內容特色**
中文詩詞、中國山水景致、民族舞曲、情愛思戀、刻苦戰爭、民族情懷
- **音樂特色**
中國藝術歌曲發展歷程與 20 世紀初的音樂現代化運動緊密相關，西方音樂理論與中國傳統文化開始深度融合，將傳統中國音樂音階和調式(Modes)糅合於西洋音樂的和聲當中
- **語言特色**
一般傾向字正腔圓的演繹，並依內容和氣氛以情感修飾咬字和句法。重視介音和韻尾的清晰度，以子音處理作為重要的演繹手法。
- **演唱特色**
可以傳統中國戲曲方法為依據的民族唱腔演唱，音色亮麗清晰，不一定用美聲唱法。有了中國少數民族調式的影響，調音不受西方音樂 12 平均律的限制，有時人聲亦會扮演其他中國樂器。

2. 中文藝術歌曲例子

- 作曲家：
蕭友梅、趙元任、黃自、江文也、冼星海、劉雪庵、黃友棣
- 歌者：
宋祖英、彭麗媛、王洛賓、廖昌永
- 受歡迎歌曲：
 - 《教我如何不想他》
 - 《大海啊，故鄉》
 - 《紅豆詞》
 - 《玫瑰三願》

3. 徐沛東《大森林的早晨》的音樂特徵

- 反覆曲式 (Strophic form) - 需用聲線處理去表達不同情感
- 炫技(Virtuosic) 的鋼琴寫作 - 展示琴師的高超技巧
- 大自然主題 - 讚嘆中國山水的優美景致
- 聲樂上的裝飾音 - 與中國民族歌曲的裝飾音相似
- 擬聲詞(Onomatopoeia) 的運用 - 子音及人聲作為樂器的特別的處理

The above information is provided by Ms WONG Cheuk-ye.