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**Franz Schubert's "WINTERREISE"**

**As a teaching tool for the college-level singer**

by

Sang Jun Yoon

B.M., Manhattan School of Music, 2001

M.M., Manhattan School of Music, 2003

Pedagogy Project

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Submitted to the  
Faculty of the Graduate School of the  
University of Colorado in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree  
Doctor of Musical Arts

College of Music

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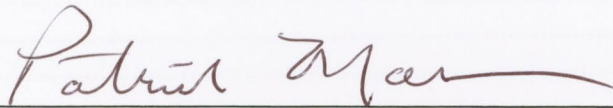
This Thesis for the Doctor of Musical Arts Degree by

Sang Jun Yoon

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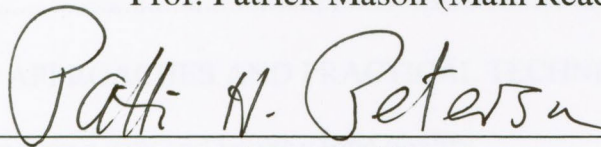
College of Music

By



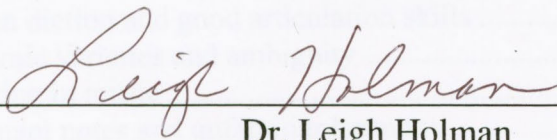
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Date 4/30/15

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## INTRODUCTION

Musicians agree that *Winterreise* is a masterwork. And it also offers us important artistic values as well as a sensitive humanism. For a singer, learning and performing a song cycle requires rigorous voice training and musicianship. Although singers reach at certain level of singing ability, they might hesitate to perform the song cycle because they are concerned about advanced voice techniques or complexity of understanding the text. The compositional styles of writing songs provide helpful guidance for singing well, and considering the texts as well as detailed descriptions of musical demands support singing intelligently. Through the performance and research I have done, as a voice instructor, I believe that college level voice students can learn and perform the song cycle. This paper will address proper approaches in voice techniques and interpretative music skills to learn the song cycle for male voice students of college level.

I would like to point out the main purposes of teaching *Winterreise* for singers at the college level. From both points of a musical as well as a vocal aspect, singers can experience many advantages by learning the entire cycle. Young singers are able to get more vocal benefits than vocal instructors might expect through learning the song cycle *Winterreise*. In order to perform this cycle, advanced vocal techniques and precise musical interpretation skills are required. One must be able to express various musical changes in singing by understanding the musical ideas in Schubert's *Winterreise*. With adequate vocal techniques and understanding poems, *Winterreise* can lead and pull out powerful emotions from the singers once they commit to the songs. Dynamic changes in emotions and a realistic storyline throughout the text become a great source of growing singers' musical interpretation skills. Basic repertoires of songs that voice students at the college level might already be given have plain choices of emotions or

require standardized interpretation skills. Due to the depth of the text in *Winterreise* and its distinguishing musical characteristics, such as tempo changes, dynamics and unique rhythmic patterns, which are clearly written in each song, singers are able to figure out what the songs are about and what they demand. In teaching young singers, the most important consideration is not their voice production only, but rather their full commitment to the songs. The text of *Winterreise* allows singers to let their personal subtext be melded with the story of the songs. To perform this cycle, having a close relationship with the poems is mandatory for singers and also allows them to gain independent ownership of the entire story. The vocal line and the piano accompaniment represent detailed descriptions of each song. In close connection of the poems, singers spontaneously put their personalities aside and become a person in the story, the wanderer. Maintaining this connection through singing is one of the greatest subtleties German Lieder, especially *Winterreise*.

From a vocal training standpoint, working on the whole cycle provides opportunities to develop the vocal ability of young singers. Voice instructors might be afraid to say that singing *Winterreise* is vocally productive when singers are at the college level. The most reasonable issue can be that there is a wide range, which requires smooth vocal flexibility. Being vocally flexible in a wide range, regardless of top and bottom, is one of the obstacles that young male singers encounter when their voices have not yet matured. Many passages in the songs bring out natural vocalism and develop legato skills. Singers at the college level might not have many opportunities to work with a collaborative pianist, a useful skill for their future careers. It is common for singers to find the answers of what music wants to tell in the songs by hearing the piano's introduction or a solo line. Since Franz Schubert considered the piano parts as important as the vocal lines, understanding the piano lines and how they sound will be another key to

performing *Winterreise*. In general, breathing might be a difficult issue for young singers through twenty-four songs since many of the songs require long phrases with good legato skills. Breath control, therefore, is a great part of singing to express emotions while performing *Winterreise*, using all of the rests, pauses, dynamics, and endings of phrases by controlling proper airflow.

## INTRODUCING BACKGROUND OF THE SONG CYCLE

*Winterreise* is a Schubert's setting of twenty-four poems by Wilhelm Müller. The first twelve songs were composed in February of 1827, and the second twelve songs were composed in October of the same year, when Schubert was thirty. The two sets were published separately. The texts of entire songs are based on the story of a tragic wanderer, and the story develops like a monodrama. The earlier song cycle of Schubert, *Die Schöne Müllerin*, is a set of songs about the innocent, young love. Unlike *Die Schöne Müllerin*, the texts and meanings of songs in *Winterreise* are relentlessly gloomy, depressing and serious. The wanderer describes what he sees, thinks, and feels at each stage of his journey. That journey is frightening because it has no destination. The scenery he passes through awakens his memories and his emotions. The landscapes in his journey make the wanderer feel bleak despair, and gradually lead him to the exit of life, either through insanity or death. Kimball describes it thus: "Psychologically, he seems resigned to his state, too numb emotionally to show outward feeling; there are only four songs among the twenty-four in which he shed tears ("*Gefrorne Tränen*," "*Erstarrung*," "*Wasserflut*," and "*Lezte Hoffnung*")."<sup>#</sup> Unbearable sorrow, fearful loneliness, and pessimism are described in the texts of every song as well as through the musical settings of the cycle. There are two exceptions in the songs, "*Der Lindenbaum*"(No. 5) and "*Frühlingstraum*"(No. 11), the texts of which include happy reminiscences of what the wanderer had with his lover previously. As the cycle progresses, he becomes old and tired. He starts to feel that no hope remains in his life and little meaning to anyone, including himself. The development of the story in every song is clearly connected and moving forward, powerful attraction for listeners. Besides the flow of the story in the texts, various musical ideas and unique distinctions also deliver the



meaning. *Winterreise* was originally written for a high voice (*Die Schöne Müllerin*) but both cycles are suitable for other voice types. Schubert might have had lighter tenor voice in mind while he composed songs.

### <Paraph 2>

It is true that performing *Winterreise* requires lots of synthetic imagery in singers' heads. Being more creative in order to be the main character of the songs is a chance to keep the full commitment to the story of the songs. Through the music and text in *Winterreise*, even young singers are able to experience emotions and learn improvisative skills. Instead of manipulating expressions or imitating interpretation by listening to other performers, discovering and understanding musical ideas in *Winterreise* is the way for young singers to build their own musical interpretation skills to a higher level. Singers, especially beginners, may focus on their voice quality; however, teaching them how to carry the text and story for an art song must be the first step in working on an art song. The poetry and music of *Winterreise* is full of hidden emotions, which we might never fully experience during our lifetimes. It is necessary that singers should give up their own personalities to express emotions by singing creatively. For example, there are passages that describe the state of hearing by the character. The audience must be able to sense the listening to avoid physically while hearing some parts of songs. "Gute Nacht" (Good Night), the first song of the cycle, has the text "Ich höre dich nicht, dich die Nacht" which means "Let your sleep be loud before that hour." Another example is expressed in the same song, lines 17-21 "Ich höre dich nicht, dich die Nacht, dich die Nacht" which means "You shall not hear my thoughts, while the door is closed." The job of singers is to help themselves feel the process of hearing while they are performing, and

**PURPOSES OF TEACHING *WINTERREISE*  
TO COLLEGE STUDENTS**

**<Purpose 1>**

It is true that performing *Winterreise* awakens lots of synesthetic imagery to engage singers' senses. Being more creative in order to be the main character of the songs is a chance to learn the full commitment to the story of the songs. Through the music and text in *Winterreise*, even young singers are able to experience expressions and learn interpretative skills. Instead of manipulating expressions or imitating interpretation by listening to other performers, discovering and understanding musical ideas in *Winterreise* is the way for young singers to build their own musical interpretation skills to a higher level. Singers, especially beginners, may focus on their voice quality; however, teaching them how to unify the text and story for an art song must be the first step in working on an art song. The poetry and music of *Winterreise* is full of human emotions, which we might never fully experience during our lifetimes. It is necessary that singers should give up their own personalities to express emotions by imagining creatively. For example, there are passages that describe the sense of hearing by the character. The audience must be able to sense of listening to sound physically while listening some parts of songs. "*Gute Nacht*" (Good Night), the first song of the cycle, has the text on mm44, "lass irre hunde heulen vor ihres Herren Haus," which means, "Let stray dogs howl before their house." Another example is expressed in the same song, mm75-79, "sollst meinen tritt nicht hören, sacht, sacht die türe zu," which means, "You shall not hear my footsteps, softly, softly the door is closed." The job of singers is to help the audience feel the sense of hearing while they're performing, and

it might be quite complicated but an appropriate challenge for them to learn various interpretation skills. The tenth song, "*Rast*" (Rest), starts with the text "Nun merk ich erst, wie müd ich bin," "Now notice I first how tired I am, when I to the rest myself lay." The sentence delivers the feeling of physical tiredness that the wanderer feels, and the singer should find out how to apply the kinesthesia into the singing by a detailed musical interpretation skill. In regard to the sense of seeing, the beginning of the fifteenth song, "*The Krähe*," is "Eine Krähe war mit mir aus der Stadt gezogen, ist bis heute für und für um mein Haupt geflogen," which means "A crow left town with me until now, it has circled above my head over and over again." As the wanderer is watching the crow, the beginning of the song must be interpreted musically to get a sense of seeing for the performer and audience. Unlike other art songs, most of the feelings, emotions, and senses are very descriptive and straightforward as if we see a movie in front of us. The musical interpretation skills that are concrete and realistic should be required to resolve successfully any demands of the text of each song and what they are telling.

## <Purpose 2>

All of the songs in the cycle start with an introduction by piano that presents the characteristics or the mood of the songs. Even without any text, the musical energy and power that are given by an introduction from the piano control the entire song. This is because the introduction by the piano also draws a summarized main frame of what the song is about. After the first lines of text starts, the main images of the songs are clearer. Even if the piano introduction is short, musically, it is descriptive and precise in implying what is happening to the wanderer in each stage. Below are some examples about the piano interludes and their musical implications.

- No.1 *Gute Nacht* – Walking Steps of the Wanderer
- No.2 *Die Wetterfahne* – Rough Wind
- No.3 *Gefrorne Tränen* – Frozen Tear Drop
- No.4 *Erstarrung* – Searching in Snow
- No.11 *Frühlingstraum* – Memory of Happiness
- No.13 *Die Post* – Steps of Mail-Coach
- No.15 *Die Krähe* – A Crow's Moving
- No.16 *Letzte Hoffnung* – Unstable Trees
- No. 17 *Im Dorfe* – Dogs' Bark
- No. 19 *Täuschung* – Blinks of Light
- No.24 *Der Leiermann* – Organ grinder's Playing

Simple and descriptive passages that are given at the beginning of songs, using melodic or rhythmic patterns, let performers develop a strong relationship with the texts. If they are fully committed to the songs and are fully aware of the text in *Winterreise*, young singers will be ready to focus on performing with fewer concerns about their vocal abilities. By concentrating too much on vocal technique and voice production, young singers might get limited chances to rely on what the stories of the songs mean to them. Due to concerns about sound production and the technical obstacles of singing, they may lack natural vocalism or add up more vocal tension. In my experience as a singer and teacher, once they fully commit to what the songs are telling, more vocal freedom and relaxation of vocal production occurs, and there even might be an automatic treatment of the passages that are vocally problematic.

A great attraction of performing a song cycle is to sing from one song to another song in a continuous connection, keeping with the same character but having dramatic changes of emotions. *Winterreise*, Winter Journey, begins with the departure of the wanderer; however, his location and his emotions keep changing. In other words, performers should identify with the wanderer; indeed, being the same character in different songs might be an automatic reaction of being fully committed to the story. This is the best approach for young singers to take to learn how to perform a song cycle on stage. By performing Schubert's *Winterreise*, young singers are able to learn how to interact with the text of songs and how important it is to commit to the development of a story when they perform it.

Imagining symbolic images in the songs is also helpful in learning how to commit to songs more effectively. The poet, Müller, seems to use hidden meanings frequently during the entire cycle, but performers and listeners focus on its realistic meanings. This process helps singers not to lose the story development throughout and to build up interpretation skills

creatively as well as pay constant attention to the songs. A few examples are listed below.

- No.5 *Der Lindenbaum* – “A Linden Tree” = Eternal peace
- No.15 *Die Krähe* – “A Crow” = Wanderer’s gloomy fate
- No.16 *Letzte Hoffnung* – “Leaves of tree” = Hope of life
- No.20 *Der Wegweiser* – “Signpost” = A goal of life
- No.21 *Der Wirtshaus* – “Inn” = A place of rest
- No.23 *Die Nebensonnen* – “Three suns” = Mental illness
- No.24 *Der Leiermann* – “Organ-Grinder” = Invitation for the wanderer’s insanity or death

### <Purpose 3>

Besides the purpose of having an emotional commitment to the songs, performers must be aware of maintaining a character throughout the whole cycle. During the cycle, the wanderer keeps having conversations with himself. Wherever he moves, there is something psychological happening to him, and the performers are required to coordinate different moods and colors by using appropriate voices to support the storyline effectively. In other words, performing *Winterreise* is about telling the story with singing as if there were twenty-four different conversations in different places. Once performers, especially young singers, commit to the story the songs tell, they must be independent owners of the entire story, not just each song. The conversations might sound like a monologue, like talking to oneself about things that remind one of memories of the past. In general, most art songs are performed by expressing emotions and feelings; however, having independent ownership not only means conveying expression, but also means being responsible for leading the story as a main character in the story. Between each song, definite pauses are needed for vocal rests as well as for changes in musical connections. More effectively, pauses are the moments for performers and listeners to realize what is going on and to anticipate what will happen next. Without independent ownership as a singer, young singers might lose intensive attention to the story or the development of emotional progress. Examples I would like to mention (see below) especially indicate a development and gradual flowing of emotions, and the psychological process of a main character, rather than expressing one emotion to another emotion.

- No.3 *Gefrorne Tränen*
- No.7 *Auf dem Flusse*
- No.10 *Rast*
- No.11 *Frühlingstraum*
- No.14 *Der greise Kopf*
- No.19 *Täuschung*
- No.20 *Der Wegweiser*
- No.21 *Das Wirtshaus*
- No.23 *Die Nebensonnen*
- No.24 *Der Leiermann*



#### <Purpose 4>

The purposes I have mentioned so far are focused on how to deal with the text in the cycle. I would like to move on to the next step; Learning Schubert's *Winterreise* is a challenge vocally for singers, especially singers who do not have advanced vocal techniques. Due to the need for flexibility of vocalism, as well as strong demands to perform the entire cycle from top to bottom voice, young singers might have difficulty in making an appropriate shift of registers. The ranges of this song cycle are G#2 – G4(High Baritone), F#2 – F4(Bass or Bass Baritone) and A#2 – A4(Tenor). The vocal lines that are written in most of the songs, however, develop healthy vocalization skills when singers follow the voice lines in phrasing, use good diction skills, and keep correct tempos and dynamics. In other words, the melodic lines of the voice part provide easier access to flexible vocalism than singers expect, and the natural musical flow of the vocal part develops smooth phrasing skills and provides vocal direction for the singers. Here are some examples of the most challenging vocal parts and practical ways of dealing with them.

#### **No. 6 *Wasserflut* (mm5-6, mm19-28)**

An arpeggio (1-3-5-8) on mm5 gives a tuneful and comfortable vocal line without producing a rigid or stiff sound. The diction on the top [trän] note is narrower than the bottom note. As the initial consonants “tr” must be prepared before the beat, using airflow earlier than actual beats on high range, it brings strong connection with the breath on higher range of male voices. The first vowel of the word, [ɛ], is already placed on the breath safely because of the initial consonant “tr”, aiming to feel higher resonance, singing with closed “e” vowel, is required. After feeling the resonance of head voice or mixed voice, singers can gradually open

up the vowel towards [ɛ] vowel. Unvoiced consonant “t” and flipped “r” help to carry on airflow, and a sound on the vowel blends more with head voice, producing healthy vocalism.

After mm19 to the end, phrases that consist of triplets let singers develop superior legato skills when they ride on the flow of the music. The highest note on mm27 is placed in a phrase that keeps moving, rather than holding for longer beats or beats with accents or strong dynamics. The diphthong [aI] on the highest note, “weiche” and “meiner” is difficult for male voices.

The voice consonants, “v” and “m”, make the vocal cords come together firmly. Although [a] vowels make singers open the backspace of the mouth, especially the soft palate, releasing jaw tension, they must keep a small mouth position to keep the mixed voice register to approach easier access for the high notes. Using puckered lips’ position or modification, closed [o] like German for open [a] vowel, should be practically applied for producing flexible vocalism.

#### **No.14 *Der greise Kopf* (mm4-8, mm29-33)**

When the song begins, the piano interlude presents a melody and is repeated by the entrance of a vocal part. The vocal entrance can be treated like an echo from the melody of the piano interlude; therefore, singers follow the musical flow that happened previously as if the same sonority continues. The second beats of MM5, 6, and MM 30, 31 are dotted quarter rhythms, which help the phrases move forward and create a vocal direction of flow. Singers also can use good airflow without holding their breath on the second beats of those measures. This could be a good lesson for how to feel natural airflow as well as the breath support (*appoggio*) for students. The sequential progress of rhythms and harmony in those sections, before the high notes come, provides flexible vocalism that makes singers release tension or rigidity on their laryngeal muscles.

**No.15 Die Krähe** (mm29-30, mm31-33)

mm29-30 and mm 31-33 are the climax of this song, and these two phrases help each other vocally. Although the highest note (mm32) of this piece is quite challenging for a student, voice leading in previous bars (mm29-30) and musical flow of the entire phrase in a climax give a healthy vocal access to reach the high note. In mm29-30, singing in a low range of voice helps singers to be ready for high notes by having an open throat and making sure to relax their abdominal muscles for breathing. Before the climax happens, singing two measures actually cooperate with the flexible vocalism and suggest healthy access of making a sound in the top range.

### <Purpose 5>

The greatest adventure of working the entire cycle of *Winterreise* is to understand how Franz Schubert emphasizes his musical ideas and uses these ideas by making the piano accompaniment equal to the vocal part. As a performer, the piano accompaniment must not be underestimated when considering the intention of Schubert's compositional setting. As I have noted Schubert gives a short piano introduction for each song before the voice enters. This introduces the mood and the atmosphere of the song, as well as the personal emotions of the main character. The piano accompaniment in *Winterreise* not only supports the harmonies and rhythms of the pieces but also creates individual descriptions of each piece, actively interacting with the text. Students at the college level tend to focus solely on their voice technique and sound production without considering the piano accompaniment. By becoming aware of the musical characteristics that are presented in the piano part, singers will learn that they are able to interpret their parts more productively. Listening to the piano accompaniment of Schubert's *Winterreise* also suggests detailed explanations of the text as well as great sources of musical description. When the cooperation between piano and voice works successfully, joint musical ideas created by the piano and the voice become a powerful source of maintaining individual musical responsibility throughout entire songs. Supportive musical expressions represented in the piano part evoke the emotions of the main character and the moods of the songs for singers. A college level singer, just beginning to understand the strong connection between the piano and the vocal part, can take advantages for developing more successful musical interpretation skills when the singer study the piano accompaniment. Young students need to learn that ideas or musical interpretation by the voice and piano must be mingled and maintained with a good balance.

There are three different types of piano accompaniment style, especially solo piano sections: a descriptive style, a supportive style, and a conversational style. Each piano accompaniment in *Winterreise* contains these three elements; however, I would like to make groups, depending on the emphasis of each style. Furthermore, as a voice instructor, a teacher can explain different roles of piano accompaniment to young students in order to let them focus more on the piano part. By increasing their awareness of the importance of the piano accompaniment, young singers will eventually achieve better musical interpretation skills as well as stronger support for their vocal abilities.

### **1. Descriptive style**

The descriptive style of accompaniment implicitly reminds one of text and emotions of the main character.

#### **<Examples of descriptive accompaniment>**

No.1 *Gute Nacht*, No.2 *Die Wetterfahne*, No.3 *Gefrorne Tränen*, No.5 *Der Lindenbaum*,  
No.8 *Rückblick*, No.13 *Die Post*, No.15 *Die Krähe*, No.16 *Letzte Hoffnung*, No.17 *Im Dorfe*,  
No.19 *Täuschung*, No.20 *Der Wegweiser*, No.24 *Der Leiermann*

### **2. Supportive style**

The main goal of this style is to help the vocal part harmonically and rhythmically. Some piano accompaniments provide harmonic partnership and keep the harmonic balance with the vocal part by using various rhythmic patterns rather than creating detailed descriptions. This style of accompaniment requires more responsibility for singers to lead phrases and musical ideas since most of the descriptions remain the singers' choices.

### <Examples of supportive accompaniment>

No.4 *Erstarrung*, No.7 *Auf dem Flusse*, No.9 *Irrlicht*, No.10 *Rast*, No.12 *Einsamkeit*,  
No.22 *Mut*

### 3. Conversational style

The piano accompaniment plays the role of a conversation partner as if a melody from the piano interlude invites the main character, the wanderer, to begin. There are some musical characteristics of the conversational style accompaniment. The piano part introduces an interlude with a tuneful melodic line, and then the melody in the interlude is repeated later on by the voice. Whenever the piano plays a solo line without a voice, it sounds steady, creating a definite musical theme, and this allows listeners to feel as if there is another element standing in front of them with the main character. In other words, the relationship between the piano part and the vocal part work like a discussion, as if someone is constantly listening to what the main character is saying.

### <Examples of conversational accompaniment>

No.6 *Wasserflut*, No.11 *Frühlingstraum*, No.14 *Der greise Kopf*, No.18 *Der stürmische Morgen*, No.20 *Der Wegweiser*, No.21 *Das Wirtshaus*, No.23 *Die Nebensonnen*

## <Purpose 6>

From the vocal training standpoint, the most ambiguous part to explain properly to young singers is to teach them about breath mechanism. First of all, performing the entire song cycle of *Winterreise* requires not only precise concentration but also advanced breathing skills, including good physical support, breath control, an understanding of airflow and air pressure, and an organized master plan for breath management throughout the entire song cycle. Breathing, like other elements for singing, should be informed as a natural process of the human body. Singers, regardless of age and level of voice technique, should understand breathing for singing as well as breathing when they talk. Nobody completely runs out of breath when they talk; however, young singers often run out breath when singing. This mistake happens when singers only concentrate on duration of breathing. In addition to developing a natural process of breathing for singing like breathing for speaking, singers must study and practice to control the muscles that they use for singing. In order to extend their breath duration, as a voice instructor, I would like to emphasize the importance of body alignment and breath support for young singers who learn and perform the entire song cycle of *Winterreise*. The skill of good breath support cannot be achieved without using proper body alignment. To increase their abilities of breath support and breath control and maintain appropriate use of breathing skills through singing twenty-four songs, young students must strengthen their physical muscles that are related to singing and develop a feeling for how those muscles are controlled while singing. Young students might not be fully aware of the relationship between using different amounts of air and dynamic changes. For singing with dynamic changes to create musical highlights, voice teachers should teach carefully about the use of dynamics. Once young students learn the skills to control their breath, and after their chest and

abdominal muscles naturally mature, their voices will become bigger naturally, rather than by pushing their voices or holding heavy air pressure.

ES IN TEACHING

### WINTERKUNST

#### Introduction to produce a soft and healthy voice quality

Regardless of age and vocal ability, a singer must develop good vocalism, a correct production with healthy vocal cord closure, proper breathing as well as supportive breath management and good vocal placement. These techniques, especially teachers for young students, allow them to develop a soft and healthy vocal tone and can apply their vocal technique in the natural interpretation of an art song. In German Schubert's Winterreise, young students should focus on healthy vocalism and a flexible tone quality that adapts to the needs of the song cycle. Young singers who try to imitate professional singers like Winterreise often imitate professional singers or copy an advanced singer. First of all, voice instructors must inform their students about the processes of the four steps of healthy vocal production: (Phonation, Resonance, Articulation, Prosody) and usually trained in the 4 basic steps during regular voice lessons. Due to the large number of songs in German and strong demands of musical expression in Winterreise, I would recommend that students read about the text with the rhythm to practice a natural breathing process as well as healthy phonation, allowing the voice to rise and fall in response to the text. Then students also should sing each song with vowels that feel comfortable, depending on their range, or syllables such as "r", "m", and "l", to practice healthy vocal production before making efforts for articulation.



**PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES AND  
PRACTICAL TECHNIQUES IN TEACHING**

***WINTERREISE***

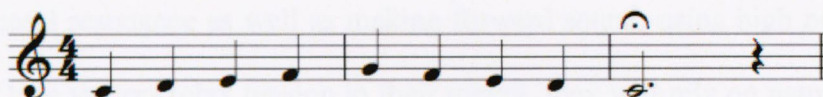
**Introduction to produce a safe and healthy tone quality**

Regardless of age and vocal ability, a singer must develop good vocalism, a sound production with healthy vocal cord closure, lower breathing as well as supportive breath management and good resonances. Voice instructors, especially teachers for young students, allow them to develop a safe and healthy vocalism first and then apply their vocal technique to the musical interpretation of an art song. To perform Schubert's *Winterreise*, young students should focus on healthy vocalism and a flexible tone quality that adapts to the needs to the song cycle. Young singers who try to learn and perform a masterpiece like *Winterreise* often imitate professional singers or copy an advanced singer. First of all, voice instructors must inform their students about the processes of the four steps of healthy sound production, (Breathing, Phonation, Resonance, Articulation). Students are usually trained in these four basic steps during regular voice lessons. Due to the large number of songs in German and strong demands of musical expressions in *Winterreise*, I would recommend that students read aloud the texts with the rhythms to practice a natural breathing process as well as healthy phonation, allowing the voice to rise and fall in response the text. Then, students also should sing each song with vowels that feel comfortable, depending on their range, or consonants, such as "z", "m", and "l", to practice healthy sound production before making efforts for articulation.

## Some examples of vocal exercises (for lower and middle ranges)

For lower and middle range male voices, try them to practice these exercises should be done comfortable speaking range.

### 1. Any of voiced consonants (“z”, “m”, “d”, “l”) + “e” and then “a” + Any unvoiced consonants (“k”, “t”, “p”, “s”)



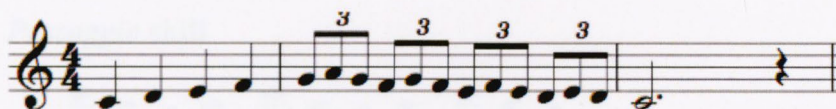
[de] - e - e - e - e - a - a - a - a - a-----k( on the 4<sup>th</sup> beat)

- First consonants can be substituted as [m], [d], [l]

- Final consonants can be substituted as [t], [p], [s]

For emphasizing a phonation process, any of voiced consonants help to move the air and let vocal cords come together. With a good phonation on [e] vowel, gradual changing vowel (“e” to “a”) let singers feel opened backspace of mouth and good resonance. The final consonants are good to practice for German final consonants. Young singers should be able to sing smoothly connect the vowels with good resonance before pronouncing final consonants.

## 2. Using a glide, “j”, and then practice longer vowels



je je je je ja-a-a je-e-e ja-a-a je-e-e ja

“j” glide loosen up tension in jaws, back of teeth and tongues, and it also helps to feel nasal resonance as well as making forward sound, using high position of the soft palate. Once singers relax tension in their mouth, they will rely on natural breath to sing smooth legato lines through descending scales.

For this practice, voice teachers need to choose the vowels and consonants carefully for young singers, depending on their ranges and voice types.

For young male voices, especially, voice teachers should be aware of where the students’ *passaggio* and let them try to sing with vowels that are safe and helpful to practice to gain easy access to their higher ranges. For example, with low male voices, the upper voice begins at E4 (Lyric Baritone), Eb4 (dramatic or heavy Baritone), and D4 (Bass). For high male voices, the upper voice begins at G4 (Lyric Tenor) and A4 (Leggiero Tenor). In general, to practice healthy singing on this range, using closed vowels, such as “ø” or “ü” and keeping a lower laryngeal position and even airflow are helpful.



## **Study in how to make different voice colors using head voice and mixed voice**

Singing an art song can be more difficult than singing in opera. Within a few minutes in art songs, singers must express what opera singers express in a three-hour-long opera. In order to emphasize precise descriptions of a character in an art song, making various tone color changes is mandatory. Most of the songs from *Winterreise* require some soft voice singing, often in a higher range. A reason to use soft singing is to show the dramatic effect in the story of the winter journey by changing the voice color. To develop a voice technique for soft singing, the relationship and awareness in head voice, falsetto, and mixed voice should be emphasized for requiring flexible soft palate, and relaxation of jaw, lips and tongues. Young singers need to understand a difference between head voice and falsetto to produce a mixed voice; head voice is a solid connection of the vocal cords that connects with chest voice; on the other hand, falsetto is an airy and light connection of the vocal cords that does not sound like full voice. Head voice includes a certain connection with chest register, and this gives definite colors and tones, not much relying on light vocal cord closure. Falsetto, however, does not provide a sound rich in overtone; sound does not engage with chest register. Many singers easily get confused or misled between these sounds. Informing young male singers about a clear distinction between head voice and falsetto is fundamental in developing the mixed voice.

In order to practice head voice, with yawning exercise, singers should maintain a lower laryngeal position, and use a lighter mechanism with closed vowel, such as [o] or [y], to feel a front resonance. It is easier to feel the vibration through head, or even the front of face while singing closed vowels on higher range. The important to remember is not to keep the weight that we have in chest voice singing. In addition to this, soft palate must be flexible and relaxed. Using

“K” consonant in vocal exercises can be a practical way to learn active soft palate movement. When the soft palate is lifted up, tension from the jaw, lips and tongue tends to be released. To make good head voice, solid breath support is also required. When first practice head voice, it might sounds lighter or thinner in the singer’s ears. Head voice is an important tool for soft singing or mixed voice, for facilitating the expressions intimacy and feeling.

### Some vocal examples of exercises for head voice

#### 1. Head Voice Exercise (A-C#, Bb-D, B-D#, C-E, Db-F)



[o] - -  
 [e] - -  
 [œ] - -

#### 2. Head Voice Exercise (A-C#, Bb-D, B-D#, C-E, Db-F)



[wi] - - - -  
 [u] - - - -

**3. Head Voice Exercise (Tenor: Start on Db go down to A//Baritone: Start on Bb go down to G//Bass: Start on A go down to F)**



[a] [u] or [o] [a]

In falsetto voice, false voice, vocal cords are coming together enough to one another to vibrate edge as the airflow passes by. Falsetto is the lightest sound of the male voice, and working on falsetto will strengthen ability of head voice. Lightness of falsetto also helps singers to develop the resonance and to feel comfortable their top voice. Like head voice in male singers, putting weight in the falsetto does not allow free sound. Practicing “u” or “o” vowels in higher range helps male singers to access falsetto. Open throat, low position of larynx, soft palate that is lifted and constant airflow are prior steps before working on falsetto.

## Some vocal examples of exercises for falsetto

### 1. Falsetto Exercise: High Baritone – Full Lyric Baritone – Bass // With [u]



### 2. Falsetto Exercises: Sing Fasetto with [u] then change on Fermata to chest with [a]

High Baritone – Full Lyric Baritone – Bass





**3. Falsetto Exercises: Sing Falsetto and then switch to Chest voice on certain note.**

**The note that needs to be switched (5<sup>th</sup> note from beginning) for full lyric Baritone – D (In different scales, for high Baritone-Eb and for Bass – C#)**



[shjui] [jui] [jui] [jui] [jui] [jui] [jui] [jui] [jui] [jui] [jui]

or [zui] [jui] [jui] [jui] [jui] [jui] [jui] [jui] [jui] [jui] [jui]

Mixed voice, a mixture of head voice and chest voice, is difficult for male singers. Learning of how to sing with mixed voice requires keeping the lower larynx position when they start to sing in higher range. This allows them to put less weight in their higher range. When the larynx rises, the vocal tract changes shapes and length, and then resonance becomes different. The best and most simple exercise to keep lower larynx can be an easy yawn. Another requirement is to use nasal resonance or sing with nasal consonants. By practicing this way, singers may feel the resonance in head or somewhat higher than chest or mouth resonance. Using “ng”, “m” helps singers feel the higher resonances feel. Finding a good balance between muscles to make chest voice and head voice let young male singers have smooth connection from their top to bottom voice without noticeable vocal breaks. Using mixed voice helps singers to increase their vocal ranges and variety of colors. It is also very useful when the musical interpretation requires soft but intense dynamics.

## Some vocal examples of exercises for mixed voice

### 1. Use closed or mixed vowels for top notes (C, Db, D, Eb Major scales)



[ze] [i] [e] [e] [e]  
[a] [o] [a] [a] [o]  
[ɛ] [ø] [ɛ] [ɛ] [ɛ]  
[i] [y] [i] [i] [a]  
[ne] [ø] [e] [e] [e]

### 2. Nine notes scale with mixed vowels on the top notes (C, Db, D, Eb Major scales)



[meeee eeee œe œe eeee ee e]

Besides head voice, falsetto, and mixed voice, voice color also can be controlled by how one puts meaning into words. Since all the songs from the cycle are written in German, students for non-German speakers must first understand the text word by word, and then develop their own subtext. Reading the text in the student's own language without music, like a narration or a poem, is helpful in creating meaning for each word. It is very important to feel a natural flow of the German language as well as its inflection. After finding out what to bring out from the text in

the songs, singers should decide how to put the appropriate voice colors to those words. In order to create expression and atmosphere, the different colors of voice should be used, depending on interpretation of singers. Young singers should be aware that powerful messages and appealing strong emotions during the song cycle can also work with soft singing, using head voice, falsetto and mixed voice. By experiencing these vocal techniques, singers are able to find out the most appropriate voice colors for each phrase in the songs.

### **Musical Examples**

#### **No.1 *Gute Nacht***

**(mm7-8, mm39-40, mm43-44, mm71-72)**

Each verse begins with gentle “pp” singing in high range. I would recommend keeping low larynx position and small mouth position, and also can modify the starting vowels towards more closed vowel shapes to allow voice more freely. Those soft high notes must be in a very legato phrase; otherwise, music that shows loneliness of the steps of walking cannot be described properly. Using enough airflow, closed vowel modification, and puckered lips are good ways to produce a fine “pp” singing in the top range. Singing with a feeling of inhalation and a steady rhythmic pattern are ways of not being hesitant in musical phrasing and vocal direction.

#### **No.1 *Gute Nacht* (mm95-99) and No.7 *Auf dem Flusse* (mm53-54)**

These two examples show that a flexible soft palate is required to make “subito piano” in the higher range for male voices. These vocal lines begin in the middle vocal range with strong dynamics, and then they go to a higher vocal range abruptly with the “p” dynamics. Soft palate, jaw, lips, and tongue need to be flexible in order to have successful phrasing by using a gentle

mixed voice. If a student keeps singing head voice, with lower larynx position and lifting the soft palate, while singing in the middle range, the voice will flow much more smoothly, even with a large leap to high notes. Keeping up the steady airflow is also mandatory to move the voice freely.

### **No.9 *Irrlicht***

#### **(mm 33-40, especially on mm39)**

These phrases have wide range with quickly moving notes, requiring ringing sound, tight articulation and comfortable round vowel shape. When the phrases begin on mm33 and mm36, vocal lines start in a very low range and then jump to the highest note in the piece. Besides the vocal techniques I have mentioned previously, breath support is another element to be considered here. When young students meet a fast passage with a large leap, they tend to lift up their breathing to the chest area, which will make their larynx position higher than it should be. To keep the lower larynx position and open throat, it is important to keep up lower breathing and centered breath support. A recommended posture exercise is the “Plie” posture, which is like our posture when we are about to sit down on a chair and unlock or bend our knees. It will help singers to feel lower breathing constantly and buoyant breath support.

### **No.11 *Frühlingstraum* (Langsam Sections)**

Two sections marked “Langsam” in the song are challenging musically vocally. The piano accompaniment does not confirm to the rhythmic pattern of the vocal lines. Ties, written in the piano part, create a heavy mood and hesitation, although the vocal lines sound light. The voice moves forward, like a wanderer, and they never stop completely except in the last phrases.

Vocally, these sections must be started with head voice softly, not using chest resonance, until the high note that could be sung with falsetto arrives in. Recommended practical ways to do this are to use small vowel changes between syllables, using the least movement of lips possible and keeping an “inside smile” for the maximum space inside of the mouth. Using initial consonants, such as “Fenster scheiben,” “Blätter” and “Träumer”, or voice consonants, like “M(Malte),” “D(Doch, Den)” and “Z(Sah),” make the sounds that keep good resonance as well. Another important point is to ask students to count 2/4 as if they feel only one beat in measures, not with two beats, strong and weak, while the piano still plays in 2/4, using strong and weak beats. In other words, second beats of 2/4 must be as light as possible so that singing does not sit on the second beats heavily. If students follow the rhythmic pulse of the piano, it will be difficult to keep the light voice mechanism and ongoing vocal phrases.

## **Introducing German diction and good articulation skills**

Young singers have difficulties singing in any foreign language. Singing in German, especially, makes young singers focus on good articulation skills, emphasizing the consonants. Final consonants and initial consonants are important characteristics show of the beauty of the German language. They should be pronounced and sung with a good amount of airflow; therefore, appropriate breath exercises are recommended for young singers in order to understand a relationship between singing consonants and breath.

Voiced consonants, such as m, l, n, z, d, v and so on, are useful in learning to articulate gracefully, and using voiced consonants might also help create better phonation. When voiced consonants come initially on a word, those need some time to be sung with a pitch. In general, unlike Romance languages, consonants in the German language are strong and clear regardless of where they are placed in words. As a rule of thumb, to learn effectively all the songs from *Winterreise*, young singers should carefully write down the IPA symbols to concentrate on clear pronunciation in speaking at first. Moreover, experiencing the nuances of speaking or singing whole sentences in German is an essential step of learning.

For singing in German, students also should be aware of the vocal benefits they can achieve by discovering the variety of German vowels. When singing, all singers can enjoy the uniqueness of German vowels, which represent a clear distinction between open and closed vowels, diphthongs and mixed vowels. Closed vowels in German might seem to be too closed to our ear; however, lots of closed vowels provide an easier access to the higher range for male voices. Voice teachers should inform students of the basic rules on pronouncing mixed vowels, the appropriate lip position and tongue positions and let students sing in vocalises until they get

familiar with them. Diphthongs in American English are different from German. Second vowels in German's diphthongs cannot be substituted with schwa; whereas, some second vowels in English diphthongs might be modified or substituted with other vowels that are unaccented. When singing diphthongs in German, second vowels of diphthongs must be delivered as clear as first vowels, keeping the same vocalism.

The biggest mistake that might be made by young singers preparing the song cycle *Winterreise* is that they might be inclined only with consonants, unconsciously underestimating the importance of the vowels focus only. A good legato and healthy vocalism can be gained when all of the vowels resonate evenly. For young singers in the intermediate level of singing in German, setting up some basic exercises--like singing only on vowels, or doing a whole song changing the lips and tongue positions without making a sound--will help them effectively set down a fundamental foundation of singing in German with good articulation skills.

### Some examples of practical vocal exercises for German diction skills

#### 1. Exercises for releasing tongue tension



[la la la la na na na na da da da da da]

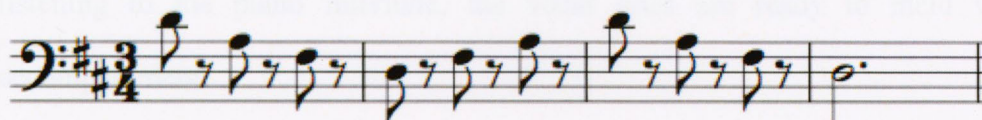


[te de ne le le]

## 2. Exercises for releasing lips tension



[wow wow wow wow a] or [ba-be-ba-be-ba] or [pa-pe-pa-pe-pa]



[mum mum mum mi mi mi mum mum mum mi]

## 3. Exercises for releasing jaw and teeth tension



[e - ja - e - ja - e]



[va ve va ve va]

From the song cycle *Winterreise*, I would bring out two songs as examples in order to point out ways of dealing with fast passages and solving phrasing difficulties in pieces with fast tempo.

### No.4 *Erstarrung*

As the piano prelude starts with fast triplets in this piece, vocal lines express urgency and the desperate mind of the searching lover's footsteps. After a fast introduction by the piano,



singers often tend to continue with a much faster tempo than they should. It is important for singers to keep steady tempo, even taking a quick pause as a breathing break between phrases during the piano solo parts. Young singers must remember the great wisdom, “Good singing is from careful listening.” Once they settle down to the tempo they want, not only relying on listening to the piano interlude, the vocal lines are ready to meld with a rapid triplet accompaniment.

In order to deliver the German text precisely in this piece and not have choppy articulation, voice teachers should point out the inflection of text. As soon as singers try to speak out all of the words clearly with exaggeration in German, the song becomes disconnected and the natural flow of language cannot occur. By picking the words that are the most important in sentences, students are able to create a natural direction, eventually creating musical phrasing as well. Asking students to speak a sentence and then comparing the flow of intonation in the spoken sentence to singing the same sentence might help them to understand the inflection of the German language in singing. In this song specifically, the vocal issue of handling frequent large leaps that might sometimes make students lose the core of sound, is related to good articulation. If students lose their resonance, focus or core of sound, depending on their comfort of ranges, the articulation in German can be lost. For young male voice especially, students with less confidence in a higher range must not produce heavy sound in lower range with much air pressure but, rather, keep a good balance between the head register and the chest register. Making their singing as linear as possible and singing with a lighter mechanism in the lower range will help them gain more clear diction and connected articulation through the low and high ranges. A few phrases that include some of the highest notes don't give enough time to take a breath before the climax comes. Although it creates vocal obstacles of difficult phrasing, all of

the vowels and its sounds before the high notes or the climax need to be lined up with the vowels of high notes or modified as much as they can. Leaning on to accented vowels, using schwa accurately, and relying on voice consonants not only help produce good vocalism, especially for large leaps, but also are the key points for clear diction and artistic articulation.

### **No.8 *Rückblick***

“*Rückblick*” is the wordiest song in the cycle, with rapid moving of eighth notes and wide melodic range. Once students divide a song into little sections by tempos, phrasing, and tone colors, groups of each section can provide different melodies individually. Creating melodies and phrases and feeling the natural intonation of the German, helps them to articulate smoothly, like speaking a German sentence, rather than trying to pronounce each word with all the different notes correctly. Understanding the directions, feeling the natural flow, and bringing out important words in each phrase as clearly as possible help in producing good articulation as well as healthy vocalism. Students also need to be careful not to rely on or listen too much to the piano accompaniment. The piano part in this song is written with lots of detached notes like an *agitato*, but the singing part must be completely *legato*, even in the rapid section in the beginning. Dealing with accents and dynamic markings should be considered carefully to teach students who are not completely ready to sing with the text because it might interrupt the natural flow of the text. To practice this song, students need to remind themselves of melodic line in each phrase, even in an entire song, and this is a shortcut to get used to all the different pitches with graceful articulation.

## **Dealing with rhythmic varieties and ambiguity**

Due to a realistic description of the song cycle, the rhythmic patterns and varieties that Schubert creates or provide realistic description of the text. Schubert uses unmatched rhythmic patterns between piano and voice, and sometimes provides an ambiguous rhythmic pattern for singers to rely on. All of the musical elements, especially the rhythms, become great sources to create the moods of the songs and express the main character's emotions and psychological status. Students should watch out for the rhythms in the vocal part as well as the piano part, and try to infuse into their singing the rhythmic variety and complexity.

First of all, I would like to point out examples to support the idea of unmatched rhythmic patterns between piano and voice.

### **No 6 *Wasserflut***

Triplets frequently come with dotted rhythms, and rhythmic tensions are occurred since two rhythmic patterns are against each other. The right hand in piano plays triplets while the left hand plays dotted eighth notes and sixteenth notes. Unmatched rhythmic patterns occur between voice and piano as well. Singers and pianists should study both the vocal part and the piano accompaniment, and clearly make up the best solution that works for both of them. Each part must not solely rely on the other, which means they should be accurate.

### **No. 8 *Irrlicht***

There are also rhythmic tensions between piano and voice on mm 13, mm 35. Although the piano part sings in an even rhythm with sixteenth notes, the voice line sings two beats with

sixteenth notes and one beat with a sixteenth triplet.

Secondly, songs are written with lack of emphasize on strong beat, suggesting heaviness and emptiness. The unique rhythmic choices that Schubert uses work to reveal the text effectively and describe the wanderer's feelings realistically.

### **No. 23 *Die Nebensonnen***

In this song, piano rarely plays third beat, creating sense of suspension, and missing the third beats reminds us of the emptiness and futility of life. Because we do not hear a clear third beat, the direction of phrases loses a firm pulse and makes us feel phrases not go on. Students are able to take musical advantages through consideration of why Schubert suggests some of these unique rhythmic patterns and variety. This is how students study music, especially art songs, independently and build up their own musicianship.

### **No. 14 *Der greise Kopf***

While the downbeat at the beginning of songs are emphasized, in mm17-20, downbeats in the piano part are missing, and the sound of the vocal line becomes heavier. Once students discover these missing downbeats in the piano part create tentative, they will be able to make up more different choices of singing, and how to deliver their independent musical interpretation. For a practical approach, students can perform this part like a recitative singing, to bring out the text and to emphasize a contrast with the previous part.

Art songs, in general, give a clear introduction or prelude by piano before the voice line starts. A clear interlude might mean a tuneful melody and predictable rhythmic patterns that are also used frequently in the song. Schubert, however, does not always follow this. There are

sometimes unpredictable rhythms and harmony during the introduction so that singers might not know what to expect next.

### **No. 16 *Letzte Hoffnung***

In the piano introduction that represents falling leaves, it is quite difficult to feel a regular rhythmic pattern. Although it is full of eighth notes evenly played, the irregular accents and voice leading makes the entrance ambiguous. Once students only listen to what the piano is playing, it might not be easy to come in on time. My suggestion is to sing along with the piano interlude even though there is no text underneath. When students hear piano introduction in mind, as well as where to start and where to end in a phrase, the voice entrance becomes clearer.

## **Discover text painting in music**

To discover text painting in the music is a useful source for young students to experience various musical skills, learning the intimate relationship between text and music. Schubert already provides unique musical language, full of characters and colors, according to the text. As young singers focus on finding out what Schubert intends to bring out through his musical setting, students are able to create more musical colors in their singing, based on the relationship between the text and the music. Studying text painting reconfirms the profound meaning of the text, especially for young voice students. Students are able to perform with unique expression and can bring out independent musical ownership through the process of studying text painting. There are practical ways that I would like to introduce for young singers to practice a relationship between the text and melody. As listed below, I have provided a few obvious examples to support how Schubert emphasizes text painting with his compositional skills.

### **<Examples of exercises>**

1. Reciting the text as a poem

1<sup>st</sup> step – Recite the text in your own language (If you need to translate into students' own language please let them do so)

2<sup>nd</sup> step – Making a plan of how the character feels emotions differently for each part in the song

3<sup>rd</sup> step – Write down how the main character feels for each phrase or sections with some different adjectives

4<sup>th</sup> step – Using a good breath that you need for singing, recite or read aloud the text to

express emotions.

Once singers try this process of an exercise, they will automatically be reminded what the text means and how the character feels in specific moments while singing in German.

2. Through the text of a song, find out few key words from each phrase. Listen to the recording of accompaniment part only, and try to say those key words expressively.

This process will allow singers to concentrate on the key words while they are singing whole phrases, and eventually creative text painting skills will be developed.

### < Musical Examples >

#### **No. 16 *Letzte Hoffnung***

Since this song creates great details of description of visual approach, the song makes us to feel like we are sight-seeing. Voice teachers should ask their students to draw pictures of the story that is in their minds. It is important to imagine the time, scene changes, and changes of emotions by the main character when performing this song. There are four visual sections in this song, (1) looking at trees, (2) looking at a trembling leaf, (3) the leaf falling to the ground, (4) looking at the leaves on the ground, and the main character's empathy with the leaf that has fallen down. In these four visual images, singers start to feel the hope of the wanderer was gone. mm 35-36 and mm 39-40 have a word, "weinen," which means, "to weep," and musically the vocal lines of these include appoggiaturas, which creates harmonic tensions. The word "weinen" is repeated twice each time, and students need to sing more emotionally with the second "weinen," emphasizing the appoggiaturas. Students can use the voiced consonant "w[v]" more with longer

duration of a pitch and a little bit more of a heavy mechanism to highlight the person's weeping. Using accents dramatically and more airflow on the second wein can also increase the level of musical interpretation realistically.

On mm 37 and 41, the downbeats are missing in the piano part, and the lack of strong beats can musically deliver the message of the wanderer's death of hope.

On mm13-20, the text describes the wanderer's attitudes when looking at the leaf that is trembling, using lots of staccato, as well as an accompaniment that is harmonically unstable. In order to perform with this aspect, young singers might sing with less vibrato to produce a tone of desperate emotion; also, half singing and half speaking would create colorless style of singing.

In addition, there are a few other text painting elements students can add, such as large leaps (image of the fallen leaf), use of rests in unexpected places (image of the unstable mind of the wanderer), and frequent use of different rhythmic patterns (expression of being confused). Through careful consideration of how singers find the text painting in music properly and its implication, along with their vocal abilities, musical interpretation skills and independent artistic ownership can be developed productively.

### **No.24 *Der Leiermann***

This is the last song of the cycle. It has the most complicated text, which distinguishes it from the other songs. It uses fewer harmonic variety, repetitions of simple rhythmic patterns, and steady, open-fifth in the left hand of piano. However, the message of the song is complex even though music is simple. Although the wanderer sees and hears the old man and the sound he makes; however, no one can tell surely if there is a really barefoot old man, standing on ice. There might be a mad man, or wanderer might be unhinged in his mind and sees or hears



something that is not real. There could be an illusion of the wanderer who is longing for a death. Piano expresses gloomy drone of the hurdy-gurdy continuously. Vocal part in this song describes the man who lost his mind, so the sound of vocal part is performed a tone that is eerie, still and empty without putting emotions.

To focus on finding text painting issues in this song, students need to be admitted that there are two different scenes appearing, a scene from the wanderer and the organ grinder. Treating the relationship between piano and voice as two scenes through the entire song could be a prior step to approach a text-painting element. Two parts, piano and voice, are isolated each other. By a long journey, the wanderer is really exhausted or even unhinged in his mind, and singing of the text requires a tone of having no hope, energy and lively emotions. Singing with no clear direction in phrasing and less dynamic changes help to emphasize the text realistically. Musically, the piano accompaniment keeps playing the same rhythmic patterns, with fewer harmonic changes, in two measures over and over, sounding like an echo. Indeed, the voice part and the piano part “talk” back and forth like a question and answer dialogue. Along with steady base chords that are repeated, as well as fewer harmonic changes in both parts, the song describes loneliness and madness that both the organ grinder and the wanderer feel at same time. The invitation from the wanderer to the organ grinder might mean death or going crazy, and the music supports the symbolism quite effectively. Performers should consider bringing out the rhyme, such as “mann-kann,” “her-leer,” “an-mann,” and “still-will” and precisely holding the last quarter notes of each vocal phrase. Strong depression and exhaustion need to be expressed through this song. To be clear, performers should sing each vocal phrase as if the wanderer brings in the piano part, treating it as another vocal line, so that the two melodies by piano and voice can be combined like an echo and heard as one melody.

## **Singing with dissonant notes and unfamiliar harmony**

Young singers will be able to improve their training and musical background by learning *Winterreise*. Although all of the songs are written in a tonal style, some songs introduce complex harmonies and vocal lines with unexpected notes. If students learn good pitch skills and also become able to sense colorful harmonic progressions and dissonant notes, they will achieve the benefit of being able to see music within a larger frame. While the main character of the song cycle travels alone and sometimes meets nature, reminding him of his past, the places where he is, how he feels at the moment, and what he thinks about are very specific. In order to describe and draw a picture properly for various scenes, harmonies, rhythms, and dissonant notes are necessary. Once students are aware of harmonic progression as well as sound effects that are made according to unique harmonies, they can have a clearer idea of what Schubert intends. It is necessary for young singers to achieve their goal of learning by discovering advanced musical elements, such as harmony, dynamics, form, and compositional styles. Besides studying the vocal lines, finding out other hidden musical elements can help students to understand and perform better, beyond only focusing on singing with the right notes, rhythms, and even musical expression.

### **No.11 *Frühlingstraum***

A middle section, *Schnell*, is full of dissonant notes, along with unexpected harmonies, and creates quite a violent mood. The music describes the anguished heart of the wanderer. The harmonic progression and abrupt entrance of triplets with the right hand in the piano part might confuse singers and make them unsure the harmony. When students try to sing precisely with

half steps and perfect fifth intervals (on krähten and finster), harmonic tension in the piano part will be emphasized. Although the piano plays only powerful strong beats in 6/8, the vocal line must be sung through with legato, and the combination of quarter notes and eighth notes also needs to be done precisely. Discordance in harmonies and rhythms between the voice line and the piano produce a powerful tension and deliver the message more realistically.

### **No.20 *Der Wegweiser***

Using various harmonic progressions and enharmonic modulation, this song shows the image of the main character, who is walking without a goal for his life. Most of the rhythms in this piece are divided into four eighth notes to describe an image of walking. A harmonic development, however, changes to express the tiredness of the wanderer. Due to the repeated use of common tones, hidden harmonic changes are not noticeable at times; this progression works as a harmonic chain. Students do not need to bring out all of the harmonic changes while singing; however, they are required to have more time to start with new harmonies in order to help the audience feel clear transitions.

For example, on mm 20-21, modulation is created from minor key to major key by repeating a common tone. For the major section, the text tells that the wanderer confuses or regrets in his past memories. Singing this section could be persuasive and demanding to describe how the wanderer is trying to figure out the right answer for himself. Singers may take more time to sing when the music changes to a major key, and gradually build up energy as well as dynamics towards the end of major section. In order to be sounded persuasively, singers might prepare to sing downbeats sooner and get ready a brighter color of tone.

From mm 55 until the end, almost every measure has different harmonies that progress

unpredictably. In the text of this section, the hope of the wanderer becomes weak and seriously painful, and all the harmonic changes and gradual dynamics support the meaning of the text. Without taking any ritardando at all until the end of the vocal lines, students can sing to create the sound of being in cruel, discouraged pain. When the piano rapidly uses different harmonies, singing should follow with the same flow and the same direction of phrasing so as to be joined in unified movement.

I would like to discuss the perspectives of each of the vocal parts and try to focus on the different characters of how to imply their aspects in singing. As a voice teacher, it is important to teach students to make a great connection to build up a story while they are singing. I would like to ask students to introduce themselves as the wanderer before they sing, helping them to make a clear story by asking specific questions: "Where are you? Who are you? What are you doing now and why? When is it now? Why are you here? How do you feel now?"

After asking up the questions in these questions, students can feel secure and naturally say the first line of text. It is important to let students feel their own sense of being the wanderer, rather than copying the feelings of other performers.

### Description's style of songs

Through his journey, the wanderer describes various things and moves to different places, and descriptions are drawn by the wanderer's thoughts. Descriptions do not have to deal with emotions yet, I would recommend students not use excessive personal expressions to deliver the information. Whatever the wanderer does and wherever he is, students must to perform their songs and not over-expressive to this style of songs, the text mainly provides detailed descriptions and then later on, evokes the emotions of the character. The things that the

## Figure out different roles of vocal parts

Art songs generally present a visual description of things and the emotions of the main character. Unlike other art songs, each song in *Winterreise* has a different role of vocal parts. Depending on the location and emotions of the wanderer, the text can be explained with three roles of vocal parts, such as descriptive writing, monologue writing, and conversational writing. I would like to discuss the perspectives of each of the vocal parts and try to focus on the different approaches of how to imply these aspects to singing. As a voice teacher, it is important to teach students to make a preset condition to build up a story while they are singing. I would like to ask students to imagine themselves as the wanderer before they sing, helping them to make a clear story by using specific questions: Where are you? // Who are you? // What are you doing now and why? // When is it now? // Why are you here? // How do you feel now?

After setting up the answers to these questions, students can feel secure and reasonably say the first line of text. It is important to let students feel their own sense of being the wanderer, rather than copying the feelings of other performers.

### **Descriptive style of songs**

Through his journey, the wanderer describes various things and moves to different places, and descriptions are drawn by the wanderer's viewpoint. Descriptions do not have to deal with emotions yet. I would recommend students not use excessive personal expressions to deliver this information. Whatever the wanderer sees and wherever he is, students need to perform these songs and not over-expressive. In this style of songs, the text usually provides detailed descriptions and then, later on, evokes the emotions of the character. The things that the

wanderer sees and the places where he is remind him of even joyful memories or feelings.

### **Monologue style of writing**

Most of the songs possess a monologue perspective since the wanderer is the only character. The wanderer speaks to himself about his sadness, tiredness, suffering, madness, and even a joyful memory. Students, as singers, should present a process of thinking since this is about talking to oneself. When we are speaking a monologue in front of people, we must not sound like we're reading a book, which means that control of emotions and adequate time to connect sentences are required. The audience needs to physically see and feel the process of thinking from a performer. In singing, students also need to make a plan for the flow of emotions according to the text and apply this to their singing as naturally as possible. In this style of songs, students find out where there is a climax of expressing emotions and let their singing follow in the same direction.

### **Conversational style of writing**

Being clearly considering a song as an aspect of conversational writing in music, there are few significant elements required, such as interchanging of emotions, building up a climax and a bond between the parts. The interesting point is that there is only one side talking since no one speaks back to him. Sometimes the conversation might only be imagined; however, performers should always picture a partner to talk with when they sing a song in the conversational style. I recommend that students be careful in how they shape the endings of sentences for this style of songs. When we speak to somebody, no matter what we are saying or asking for, it requires certain speech patterns speaking. If the text of the song includes some conversations, I would ask

students to imagine a recitative without dealing with many dynamics and to have clear visual focus. The practical guides of singing a song that has a conversational style will make young students experience a full commitment to be in story of the text.

**<Examples>**

No.1 – Descriptive and Monologue Style

No.2 – Descriptive and Monologue Style

No.3 – Descriptive and Monologue Style

No.4 – Monologue Style

No.5 – Conversational Style

No.6 – Conversational Style

No.7 – Conversational Style

No.8 – Monologue Style

No.9 – Descriptive Style

No.10 – Monologue Style

No.11 – Monologue Style

No.12 – Monologue Style

No.13 – Descriptive and Monologue Style

No.14 – Descriptive and Monologue Style

No.15 – Conversational Style

No.16 – Descriptive and Monologue Style

No.17 – Descriptive Style

No.18 – Descriptive and Monologue Style

No.19 – Descriptive and Monologue Style

No.20 – Descriptive and Monologue Style

No.21 – Monologue Style

No.22 – Monologue Style

No.23 – Descriptive and Conversational Style

No.24 – Descriptive and Conversational Style



## How to make groups of songs for the performance

When performing the song cycle, voice teachers and students should consider carefully key relationships, the flow of storyline in the text, and whether or not to have a pause between songs. Decisions on the pauses between songs can be made by looking at the key relationships of the songs or the connection of the story in the text. Students, however, can have a pause after singing songs that are expressed in similar psychological statuses of the main character. Due to the demanding and difficult work of the song cycle, it is important for young students to divide *Winterreise* into groups of songs by considering a few musical elements. Schubert purposely wrote this song cycle with specific key signatures. When singers modulate songs, depending on their vocal categories and voice range, they need to be aware that some of the songs must go together as a group in order to make natural transitions of tonality. For this matter, singers should discuss with their accompanist how to make transitions as smooth as possible because being ready for the upcoming tonality, even turning pages, might be a challenge for pianists. Songs are also divided into groups related to how the main character feels, and this process should be carefully planned.

In general, most performers have a long pause after singing No.11 *Frühlingstraum*, and it is up to performers to leave the stage to take a break or to stay on stage, taking a longer pause. It is also recommended for young students to work by groups first and then try the entire cycle with a few breaks. After all the songs are learned, taking as much time as needed, and students feel secure about performing the whole cycle, the voice teacher must ask them first to sing only a group or a few groups of songs to check the student's duration of healthy singing through repeated rehearsals.

There might be many more recommended ideas of choosing keys, depending on voice types, ranges, and other related voice techniques. I, personally, choose a lyric baritone voice for performing *Winterreise*. As an example, I would like to introduce possible keys and a way of how to make groups.

**<Example>**

No.1 – *Gute Nacht* (C minor)

No.2 – *Die Wetterfahne* (G Minor)

**Break**

No.3 – *Gefrorne Tränen* (Eb Minor)

No.4 – *Erstarrung* (A Minor)

**Break**

No.5 – *Der Lindenbaum* (E Major)

**Break**

No.6 – *Wasserflut* (D Minor)

No.7 – *Auf den Fluss* (D Minor)

**Break**

No.8 – *Rückblick* (F Minor)

**Break**

No.9 – *Irrlicht* (A Minor)

No.10 – *Rast* (Bb Minor)

No.11 – *Frühlingstraum* (G Major)

### **Long Break**

No.12 – *Einsamkeit* (A Minor)

No.13 – *Die Post* (Db Major)

### **Break**

No.14 – *Der greise Kopf* (Bb Minor)

No.15 – *Die Krähe* (Bb Minor)

### **Break**

No.16 – *Letzte Hoffnung* (Db Major)

No.17 – *Im Dorfe* (C Major)

### **Break**

No.18 – *Der stürmische Morgen* (C Minor)

No.19 – *Täuschung* (G Major)

### **Break**

No.20 – *Der Wegweiser* (F Minor)

No.21 – *Das Wirtshaus* (Eb Major)

### **Break**

No.22 – *Mut* (F Minor)

### **Break**

No.23 – *Die Nebensonnen* (G Major)

No.24 – *Der Leiermann* (G Minor)

The End of Songs

## How to deal with contrasts vocally

Unlike other art songs, in general, some songs in this cycle show abrupt changes of moods or in the character's feelings. Since the text is based on the story of a man who becomes psychologically unstable, contrasting ideas and expressions are presented frequently. As a singer, no matter how advanced, dealing with musical contrasts effectively is not easy. Vocal techniques that singers can apply to show contrasts in singing can be changes in volume, using diction skills, adequate use of breathing, and voice colors.

First of all, changing volumes is deeply related to dynamic changes. The most familiar way of representing contrasts in singing can be using different volumes. Soft dynamics (pp or subito p) to strong dynamics (ff or sf) are frequently used in songs of the cycle. Students need to be careful not to push or squeeze their voices to make bigger sounds. Volume changes can be created best when singers control the amount of air by using a healthy breathing mechanism.

### <Examples of vocal exercises>

#### 1. Closed [e] vowel with same pitches for 4 times like a detached vocal exercise

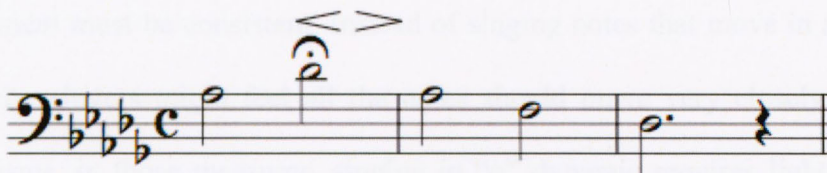
Change unnoticeably with "I" – "e" – "ah" as long as you can with smooth crescendo and decrescendo

Be careful of breathing, especially even airflow, its management, rearticulating of vowels, and keeping same round space, including feeling resonance all the way through.



[e] [e] [e] [e] [e] [i] [e] [a]

## 2. Using closed vowels on the top range with crescendo and decrescendo



[ʌ] [u] [u] [u] [u]

[æ] [e] [e] [e] [e]

[u] [o] [o] [o] [o]

### <Musical Examples>

#### No.7 *Auf dem Flusse*

mm 47 until the end, as a contrast to the beginning, requires much bigger sounds to express the painful emotions of the character. Students should rely on or listen to the left hand of the piano part rather than following the right hand of the piano part, singing through lyrical melody, and they also should remember that forte singing does not need to be big all of the time. Creating forte singing by gradually increasing the level of volume is also allowed in this part. In this piece, levels of volume should be controlled by resonance. In order to describe the text realistically, a conversation between the wanderer and the river or himself, lingering of sound should be remained after each phrase.

#### No. 10 *Rast*

mm 21-31 and mm 51-61 include dynamic changes between forte and pianissimo. In addition to changing dynamics, vocal lines also jump up and down frequently. Students need to

sing horizontally, producing an even sound for high and low notes. Breath control and its management must be consistent. Instead of singing notes that move in a phrase with larger leaps accurately, singers might feel all the notes should move very closely. For applying of sound mechanisms, in those measures, singing in “p” dynamic requires light mechanism all the way through the phrase, feeling more of head voice sound, because the vocal line has ascending melodies from bottom to top notes. However, few measures with “f” dynamic, moving from upper notes to lower notes, should be sung through, keeping the low larynx position. It might be a useful idea to treat the lower notes like a pick up notes as if the lower notes are upbeats before the strong beat comes. They should aim for more consistent sound, not only focusing on making a bigger voice. Singing through for large leaps by feeling the direction of phrasing properly can also produce effective crescendo.

Secondly, to make musical contrasts effectively with their voices, singers can apply different diction skills to show the contrast. Consonants can make songs sound stronger, whereas keeping longer vowels might make the songs sound smooth and tuneful in general. By making diction choices of emphasizing consonants or vowels, students will be able to express musical contrasts in their singing.

### <Musical Examples>

#### **No. 8 *Rückblick***

The fastest song in the cycle may provide difficulty pronouncing all of the words clearly during a fast tempo. German diction skills in both fast sections and slower sections require the same energy to bring out consonants and vowels equally. Since the song shows a dreaming mood in the slower part (mm28-48), lips, tongues, and jaws need to be relaxed and open to smoothly

align the vowels while keeping a head voice.

### **No.11 *Frühlingstraum***

This song is clearly divided into three sections, and voice students can make their diction choices regarding being in dreams or reality. The middle section creates an aggressive, abrupt mood. In the middle section, students can use consonants almost like speech to bring out the text energetically and let their lips move as little as possible without holding tension. Through use of crisp and rapid diction skills, the violent mood that the song presents during the middle section can be expressed.

Thirdly, breathing can be another element to support creating the musical contrasts. The rhythms of some songs must be done in a lively fashion, whereas some of the rhythms need to be treated more heavily and thickly. Keeping rhythms and using different types of rhythms are related to airflow. When students sing more energetic rhythms, slight movement of the abdominal muscles is recommended. Comfortable breath support and keeping lower breathing are necessary for legato singing.

### **<Musical Examples>**

### **No.13 *Die Post***

This has two parts; the first part is about the wanderer's excitement while waiting for a letter from his lover, and the second part is about his disappointment because no letter comes for him. As the first part is written with crisp dotted rhythms in major key, students might consider a lighter breathing mechanism with flexible support. Whereas singing of the second part requires more legato and a smooth connection, breathing needs to be deeper and sustained as long as possible.

### **No.23 *Die Nebensonnen***

This song sounds like a male choir and the melodic lines of the voice are broad, sustained. Good support of breathing is necessary and students need to learn to lean on to back muscles in order to sing many sustained notes without pushing their sound. On mm 15-29, there is a part that requires flexible flow of air. The middle section of this song expresses more intimate relationship between the wanderer and the suns, and the piano is tightly connected with the voice. Direction of air must keep moving forward, and students should remember that a sound in this part never stops. Students should also be aware of the best tool of expressing music can be depending on how to use breathing differently.

Lastly, using different voice colors help to show the contrasts musically. Voice colors are related with tonality, especially major and minor, and many songs in the cycle are written in both major keys and minor keys. In general, when song is in major keys, the wanderer is reminded of happy memories or he is trying to return to the normal life. When song is in minor keys, the wanderer is psychologically trouble. A brighter tone, making clear core of sound, lighter voice with enough airflow can help to produce a fine sound for the parts in major keys. Contrastingly, a darker tone, using more back spaces of a mouth, deeper voice with using air pressure can help to create a tone for the parts in minor keys. Among many song examples of presenting both of major and minor keys, I would like to bring out songs that have a clear distinction of tone colors.

#### **<Musical Examples>**

No.1 *Gute Nacht*

No.5 *Der Lindenbaum*



No.8 *Rückblick*

No.11 *Frühlingstraum*

No.13 *Die Post*

No.20 *Der Wegweiser*

## Conclusion

In order to perform Schubert's *Winterreise*, adequate vocal training and an ability to understand poem are necessary for voice students. I, as a voice instructor, would like to encourage young singers to learn and try to perform *Winterreise* when they have certain years of vocal training and enough musical background. Students can experience many valuable perspectives of how to make music appropriately through learning this song cycle. Breathing skills, flexible vocalism, good musical interpretation skills and many other elements for good singing must be achieved primarily for young singers. I, however, strongly think that some repertoires provide more vocal challenges. Students who have strong interest in poetry and sensitive to texts can develop their vocal techniques without giving much pressure of learning songs with difficulties. Although the text of songs are quite serious and might seem foreign to young students, as an artist, they have to be as creative as possible and have the courage to attempt singing a text that is beyond their experiences. Complex style of music, intimate relationship between piano and voice part, unique uses of harmonies and rhythms, and characteristic musical aspects are reflected in the song cycle effectively. To understand the song cycle appropriately, students need to discover important musical issues at first, not only for a practical way of singing. Young voice students need to be familiar with finding out an intention of the composer and any special requests that the music suggests when they first learn a piece. All songs in the cycle provide a wide variety of musical elements to learn, and students are able to progress, along with having an advanced viewpoint to understand music properly. Being afraid of voice technique excessively and focusing on making better sound production might also limit students' ability to advance their musical skills. Powerful musicianship skills and

supportive musical elements that singers should achieve could be developed through working on *Winterreise*. Besides these musical benefits, including various advantages of vocal techniques, young singers are able to open up a big wall in performing art songs by a learning process of this song cycle. With profound understanding in poetry, young singers might imagine the wanderer who accepts a farewell with his lover and becomes matured by purifying his anger, rather than to imagine the wanderer with being sad, lethargic.

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