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Author: Iulia Isaev
E-mail: iulia.isaev@gmail.com

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Iulia Isaev
Bucharest National Opera

From Role to Reading: The Dramatic Soprano Monologue in Wagner's Elsa of Brabant

Keywords: musical performance, operatic character, the romantic heroine

There are several stages in preparing an operatic monologue. First, a performer must by no means skip looking for information on the origin of the libretto and of the role itself, as this is the key to understanding the composer's inspiration. Details on the composer, the time that work was written, and the context of the monologue are also essential.

The second stage is dedicated to analysing the vocal difficulties of the role as a whole and to evaluating the problems that the monologue itself poses. This prepares the performer for the specific vocal training prior to approaching a role. Thus, a certain colour or texture will ask for a certain vocal adaptation as early as the vocalise phase.

The third stage is reserved for the character's psychological and physiological structuring. On the basis of the material furnished by the libretto and the music, a performer can create a complete character: origins, general basic and particular complex features, relation with the other characters. Now the psychological aspects have been examined, the performer can move to constructing their own, detailed, version of the character (see Stanislavski 1955).

Approaching a monologue superficially can lead both to harming the singer as to the quality of their performance and to damaging their voice, like an athlete wanting to participate in a sporting event beyond their physical means without proper prior training. The consequences can be devastating, and there is more than one case of singers having ruined their voice because of a wrong approach.

Confronting the psycho-physiological issues of a monologue comprises two directions I consider fundamental: getting *the performer* ready and studying *the character*. Both are repertoire-specific, which is why I insist that this preparation be moulded on the psycho-physiological structure of the performer as adapted to the character's demands.

The case study I propose is Elsa's monologue, *Einsam in trüben Tagen*, from Richard Wagner's *Lohengrin*. In a larger work (see Isaev 2018) I have likened it to other pages from the second half of the 19th century, focusing on such heroines as Tchaikovsky's Tatyana, Verdi's Desdemona, Leoncavallo's Nedda, Puccini's Tosca and Manon Lescaut. A few short introductory notes on the heroine of romantic opera might be worthwhile here too.

The romantic heroine: some musical particularities

The structure of the romantic hero, and by extension that of the romantic heroine, gives special attention to those attributes which appeal to the sensibility, rather than the reason, of the audience. The character's psychology is what determines their actions. The decisive factor when structuring the plot is no longer a divine element, external, arbitrary or neutral (as in the classical model), with all that it implies – fatalism and the inevitability of the denouement. Now the work is conceived so as to revolve around the psyche and the emotions of the main character, at the centre of the drama.

The composer is interested in how what happens on stage will affect the spectator. Romantic opera is replete with characters striving to move the audience by all possible means. We can thus notice, in early romanticism and in the twilight of pure vocal expression, a development of what is called the *bel canto* technique. We also see how the decline of a perfect sound ideal overlaps with the emergence of a character just as eloquent, but which is offered by a variety of means of expression, including vocal ones.

In the classical period, the recitative advanced the action of the plot, and arias and ensemble pieces were (with rare exceptions) destined to a stationary phenomenon, a means to express an emotion or to depict a situation which remained stable during the respective number. During early romanticism, there are fewer and fewer instances of *secco* recitatives (with continuo or keyboard instruments accompaniment): ever the active element, it now features orchestral accompaniment, which highlights the importance and significance of the message it carries. Expressive singing is now joined with orchestral colours, and the recitative thus opens the doors to the possibility of an increased variety of moods and emotions. The *recitativo secco* and the *recitativo accom-*

pagnato require different singing techniques, and on two levels: a particular tone quality, and an exact reading of the score, as required by the right balance of dynamics and duration between soloist and orchestra. Towards the apogee and the end of romanticism, courtesy of Richard Wagner and Giuseppe Verdi, the recitative will undergo a total transformation.

Numbers such as arias, duos etc. live on, but only in form (and Wagner will permanently delete, after *Lohengrin*, the borders separating them). In practice, they gradually open up to movement, to action, and so appear extended ensemble pieces which advance the action of the plot and which are no longer interrupted by recitatives.

Connected to a more consistent recitative, with a richer accompaniment and, above all, featuring a text which carries a romantic charge, aria as such gains in force and significance. The ABA form is generally maintained, but the cult of a transformed, augmented, and ornamented A reaches paroxysm (see Pulignano 1978). Cadenzas seem to never end. Singers, with their experience of the rich baroque and classical repertoire, again try to impose their point of view, going so far as to change the score and, as the undeniable stars of the lyrical stage in the dawn of the 19th century, even to sing completely different arias. Composers, among whom Rossini was the most outspoken, oppose such practices, and start writing their own cadenzas and ornaments. Which didn't, of course, stop singers to try to impose their own versions. I wouldn't call into question their qualification to change the score, I will only say that these traditions survived, and are perpetuated, along with the written score.

Singers pushing themselves beyond their limits led to the appearance, in early romanticism, of some very difficult scores. Up until classicism, voice types were more inclusive, more general. Thus, a soprano had to be able to sing all that was written for a soprano voice. Often the differences between a score for a soprano and one for a mezzo-soprano were approximate. Even today there are sopranos who will sing mezzo-soprano roles, and vice versa, particularly roles from the classical repertoire.

A major specialization occurs at the beginning of the romantic era. The diversification of the repertoire and of the musical and vocal means of expression generates subclassifications which define voices and at the same time limit them. We only rarely see singers who can approach the entire repertoire of the former vocal types. A soubrette soprano will never be able to sing the dramatic repertoire. What we know by the German term *Fach* is born, that is, a system of voice classification which defines both the type of voice and the dedicated repertoire. The term is relative, as are many others in the field of opera music, and has its advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, it

limits a singer's access to only a certain number of titles; on the other hand, it protects performers from excesses harmful to their career and from voice disorders caused by the desire to go beyond the physiological limitations of the vocal apparatus.

Many subcategories appear: lyric coloratura soprano, dramatic coloratura soprano, dramatic soprano, light-lyric soprano, soubrette soprano, coloratura mezzo-soprano, character mezzo-soprano, character tenor, acting tenor, dramatic tenor, cavalier baritone, lyric baritone, dramatic baritone, acting bass, character bass, heavy acting bass.

The change in the way composers write their scores goes hand in hand with the development of the singers' performing capacities. A larger orchestra requires bigger voices. The singers' vocal range in its turn determines the appearance of the *Fächer*, which delimitate ever more precisely their repertoire. As for the change in aesthetic ideals, it leads to the disappearance of the castrato roles and to a limited use of countertenor voices.

At the beginning of the 1830s, male singers begin thinking of high notes not in terms of falsetto (a stronger head voice), but of covered sound, an Italian invention which revolutionized singing and, with it, composition. Tenors, for example, were no longer able to sing very high notes, but, in exchange, high register male voices gained in decibels, so that performers were heard over larger orchestras and ensembles.

The soprano heroine fits in the dramatic soprano vocal type, requiring dramatic agility. The notion of dramatic soprano will undergo major changes over time: a full-lyric soprano today can sing the *bel canto* dramatic repertoire, whereas a dramatic soprano will not venture, on physiological grounds, the *bel canto* repertoire. A vocal instrument trained to produce very loud sounds and to stand an extremely demanding repertoire, as that of the dramatic soprano *Fach* (or as we understand it today), will not be up to the *bel canto* repertoire, where taste continues to require that beauty of sound and flexibility come first. As the aesthetic ideals changed, and with them, the audience's expectations, so new vocal subcategories were created. New ways of producing sound appeared, stressing the singer's ability to deliver expressive vocals and to tower over an ever-larger orchestral and choral instrument. As a consequence, voices developed differently and no longer have the flexibility required to approach the *bel canto* repertoire. This is yet another proof that the lyrical industry of the 21st century needs to implement the *Fach* system.

According to www.operabase.com, which keeps details of more than 700 opera theatres, the most frequently performed composers throughout the

2012-2013 season were romantics. At the end of the day, audience approval is crucial in determining the success of an opera. Romantic and verist operas are number one spot, therefore I believe that the respective heroine roles, including monologues, still represent an important part of an operatic soprano's activity.

The monologues' analysis shows how opera changed over time. The whole is reflected in the part. The way a performer mentally and physically prepares for performing a monologue can influence their concept of the whole role. On the other hand, monologues, even if they may be more exposed, or illustrative for a character, are not always that role's most difficult part.

One of the fundamental issues in approaching a role is the initial analysis: collecting information from various sources, studying the score, to which are added the primary experiences in singing it. The image born is of necessity complex (even if it varies with the performer's intellectual level or the stage they are in in preparing the role). For this initial analysis, which can determine repertoire decisions, the systematic approach I suggest might prove effective. It can even influence a *de veto* decision in accepting or refusing a role. The more complete the information a performer has from the very start, the more competent and informed the career decisions they make.

Elsa of Brabant: character and music

If we had to define Elsa of Brabant in just a couple of words, we could say that she embodies the incapacity of mortals to maintain a prolonged contact with the ideal, the absolute, the supernatural (Ciomac 1967: 56). Elsa comes close to a miraculous being and has a presentiment of it. As in Mihai Eminescu's poem *Luceafărul* [The Morning Star], Elsa is the unwitting witness of the sacred intermingling with the profane, of the desire of an immortal soul to descend into the bosom of earthly love (Ciomac 1967: 57), revealing the truth of knowledge through love. Like Faust, Elsa is responsible for her own tragedy, as epitomized by the impossibility to prolong more for than a second the communion with the ultimate truth, with revelation. Richard Wagner asks us of course to read all this between the lines and decipher the symbols ourselves, but such details are all the more important in painting Elsa of Brabant's picture. Elsa finds herself face to face with miracle, but misses the communion with it. This doesn't make her small or weak, it is just her nature. Elsa is a woman and acts on intuition and feelings, she loves in the most natural way there is. Symmetrically, Lohengrin misses the encounter with a happy couple life because of his wish to be accepted just as he is, because of his inflexibility as a man dedicated to a mission.

Wagner had a particular vision on miracle: in poetic works it will not, as it does in religious dogma, suspend the nature of things, but instead render them intelligible to feeling (Wagner 1983: 172). Elsa understands the human feeling of plenitude of love, but it conflicts with another sentiment, just as human: doubt, fear of the time when miracle will have ceased.

Elsa is the embodiment of such archetypes. The desire to know disturbs the fragile immanence of the miraculous, dispelling it. Elsa, Wagner himself says in the autobiographical work *Note to My Friends*, is the other half of Lohengrin's sacred nature, the antithesis the hero already carries within himself, necessary by virtue of his particular masculine essence, she is that spontaneous, innocent being in whom Lohengrin's enlightened and voluntary essence aspires to find deliverance (Ciomac 1967: 64).

The intensely dramatic moment when Elsa understands her error and Lohengrin divulges his true identity constitutes not only the opera's climax, but also the finishing touch of Elsa's portrait. To reach such a level of density of action, the composer, as he himself explains (Wagner 1983: 178), elevated both the heroes and the moment itself above the ordinary human dimension by rendering the miraculous and the miracle poetic (which perfectly corresponds with human nature, except that Wagner raised its faculties to an emotive potency impossible to attain in ordinary life) – the miracle which must not be left outside of life, but must stand out in such a way that it is situated above ordinary life.

Elsa's aria from *Lohengrin* is in many ways very different from other arias I have performed: it doesn't have a well-defined melody, but rather sounds like an accompanied recitative, and there are times when voice comes second, it is just comment of what the orchestra does. There are moments of evocation, of mood, of frozen instant.

When I then considered the proper approach to this aria, the proper tone, the proper way to create this world, I became aware of a detail I believe to be most important: the tranquillity which pervades the monologue. In this scene, everything is like a dream, a memory, everything is full of light and uplifted vibration, as Elsa is touched by the miracle. Therefore, in addition to a perfect command of the text, to respecting the score and searching for technical and timbral solutions, the singer must be able to acquire a peace of mind, a radiating aura of natural tranquillity swallowing all unrest, carelessness, worry. It's true that the external elements, such as the director's vision, the costume, the lights are of great help, but one must really believe time stands still, and with it the audience, holding their breath, and that one exudes, breathes and "sounds" light. Such things belong to an area very difficult to explain and theorize.

This role also has some particular challenges. Elsa's melodic route abides for a long time in the passage zone between the middle and the high register, therefore requiring serious technical approach and uninterrupted vigilance. As well, the phrases are long, they often will not allow "sneaking in" a breath, so that a thorough practicing of the air column is mandatory. These technical practices are obviously recommended and even indispensable in approaching any role. Still, a certain character, with a certain story set on a specific music, will have its particular challenges with their particular solutions.

To complete this portrait, here are Emanoil Ciomac's extremely poetical words on *Lohengrin*:

> Many saw, as did Liszt, in *Lohengrin*, a divine character. The opera does convey the feeling of a white, mysterious sunlight being shed over the frost, misty countries of the North. A glimmer of a bejewelled chalice, of whitish waters, of a breastplate bathed in silver, of a kerchief in the moonlight, of hieratic, pure swan wings. It is, to use Théophile Gautier's words, *a symphony in white major*. Everything floats in a mystical atmosphere. The surreal poetry is, because of its essence . . . one particularly musical. It is like an otherworldly isolation, from which Wagner, with fresh, spontaneous, youthful means, stands up effortlessly . . . melancholically. (Ciomac 1967: 71)

The aria *Einsam in trüben Tagen*: an analysis

The first draft of the score didn't feature the aria *Einsam in trüben Tagen*; the emotion of Elsa's dream was almost completely absent. Telramund would have accused the girl of the murder of Gottfried and would have predicted Elsa's marriage to an unknown young man; then, Elsa would have pleaded her innocence, in the hope of being rescued by an unknown man. The knight would have therefore appeared as a result of Telramund's premonition, and not because Elsa had invoked him, the score again lacking most of the drama of the young girl's dream from the final version.

In this aria, Elsa's state of transcendence paints her a full-length portrait: a dreamy girl, with a predisposition to live in a world of fantasy, later to be tortured by the forbidden question. Without being able to control her curiosity, and strongly influenced by Ortrud, she will give in to pressure and will ask the name of her knight, thus sealing her fate (Meier 2009: 1).

Another argument for Wagner's choice to introduce the aria *Einsam in trüben Tagen* in Act 1, scene 2, is Lohengrin's appearance from upriver, which

Elsa had already imaged; she announces Telramund that her rescuer will come and fight for her – "Des Ritters will ich wahren, er soll mein Streiter sein!". In the preliminary draft, then, Lohengrin's arrival would have generated surprise, rather than lead to the denouement of that tense moment (Newman 1991: 107-108).

The aria is organized into three sections: three stanzas sung by Elsa; the King; Telramund; and the men and women intervening from time to time (when the aria is performed outside its context, which happens frequently, these interventions are shortened). The structure is as follows:

- instrumental introduction (mm. 1-16)
- vocal-instrumental intervention 1 (mm. 17-60)
- stanza 1 (mm. 61-86)
- vocal-instrumental intervention 2 (mm. 86-93)
- stanza 2 (mm. 94-123)
- vocal-instrumental intervention 3 (mm. 123-203)
- stanza 3 (mm. 204-227)
- vocal-instrumental intervention 4 (mm. 228-388).

The first stanza ("Einsam in trüben Tagen", Ex. 1) reveals her hopelessness.

Ex. 1. *Wagner,* Lohengrin, *the aria* Einsam in trüben Tagen, *piano score, Act 1, scene 2, mm. 59-68.* (*see Wagner 1851: 14*)

There follows an intervention of the puzzled men and King, who question Elsa's dream. She goes on with the second part of her story, describing the knight she imagines (second stanza, "In lichter Waffen Scheine", Ex. 2) and showing an unwavering certainty that he will rescue her from the King's and Telramund's accusations. The King's and the chorus's short interjections are

accompanied by an inconspicuous orchestra which anticipates, through the motif of the Holy Grail from the Prelude (see Ex. 3), the arrival of the mysterious knight.

Ex. 2. *Wagner,* Lohengrin, *the aria* Einsam in trüben Tagen, *piano score, Act 1, scene 2, mm. 91-95.* (*see Wagner 1852: 19*)

Ex. 3. *Wagner,* Lohengrin, *the motif of the Holy Grail.* (*see Wagner (ed.) 2005*)

In the third part of the dream, Elsa's faith in her rescuer is apparent in the repetition of the closing verse of the second stanza, "Des Ritters will ich wahren, er soll mein Streiter sein" (Ex. 4). There is a significant increase in the King's and chorus's interventions, on 89 bars of dialogue between those present at the court of the King of Brabant.

Ex. 4. *Wagner,* Lohengrin, *the aria* Einsam in trüben Tagen, *piano score, Act 1, scene 2, mm. 205-209.* (*see Wagner 1852: 24*)

Lohengrin's opening tells the mysterious story of Holy Grail being sent to Earth and revealed to mankind, and Act 1 begins with a fanfare at the court of the King of Brabant, in a political context worn by conflict. When Elsa is summoned by the King to defend herself against the accusations of having killed her brother (vocal-instrumental intervention 1 and stanza 1), the orchestra's sound changes, and Wagner uses the woodwinds' warm tones to create a contrast between the grandeur of the royal court and the arrival of the innocent girl. The oboe becomes a symbol of purity, of longing, but also of Elsa's suffering, being associated with the wrongly-accused girl's lament; compared with his previous operas and dramas, Wagner adds, in *Lohengrin*, an even greater number of flutes, oboes and bassoons (Rosenberg 2016: 31-32), the oboe having the same function in Senta's and Elisabeth's arias from *The Flying Dutchman* and *Tannhäuser*, respectively.

Throughout the aria *Einsam in trüben Tagen*, Elsa is mainly depicted by the woodwinds (flute and oboe in particular), which determine her role in that dreamy atmosphere, namely, that of a pure nature, while the bassoon, by contrast, draws Ortrud's and Telramund's portrait. The simple descending chromatic melody is meant to illustrate the great sorrow of the loss of the heroine's brother, and her desperate cry of help to God. The dynamics *piano* and *pianissimo* offer the possibility of experimenting with low volume levels, something which Wagner rarely used. The sudden woodwind and strings *tremolo* intensifies Elsa's melody, as she sings, on a dotted rhythm, the verse "Da drang aus meinem Stohnen ein Laut so Klagevoll". Both instruments and the voice are ominous, and the melody is teeming with melodic delayed attacks on an E♭ major pedal which renders the atmosphere tense until the phrase's culmination in a *fortissimo* A♭ major, while Elsa sings "der zu gewalt'gem Tönen weit in die Lüfte schwoll". The agitation quickly dies away, making room for the return of the ethereal melody from the aria's beginning, with an octave *glissando* towards e♭″. The following conjunct melodic motion ends with the aria's lowest note, an e♭′ describing the girl's meditative state while she sinks into a sweet reverie, "ich sank in süssen Schlaf" (the end of stanza 1) (see Meier 2009: 11-12).

In vocal-instrumental intervention 2, the chorus sings abrupt phrases which expose the confusion generated by Elsa's strange behaviour, and King Heinrich forces her to confess her sin with a solo flute on chromatic ascending half-steps. The more straightforward the King and the chorus speak, the more Elsa withdraws to the safety of her wonderful dream, the harp playing a tonic chord arpeggio.

Lohengrin's motif (the Holy Grail), played by the strings, advances as Elsa begins to talk about her revelation (stanza 2), telling the story of the

knight, again, on a dotted rhythm showing the girl's emotional tension. The consequent of Lohengrin's motif is taken over by the woodwinds, the tempo accelerates, and the trumpet plays a variation of the motif when Elsa describes Lohengrin's horn. The harmonic background, tense-relaxed, the low volume level and the orchestra reduced by half contribute to Elsa's slipping even deeper into her reverie, the girl declaring, once more, that she would be rescued by the knight: "Mit züchtigem Gebahren gab Tröstung er mir ein: des Ritters will ich wahren, er soll mein Streiter sein" (see Meier 2009: 13).

The music comes again to a halt when the chorus, accompanied by the full orchestra, sings, in symmetric, four-bar phrases, Elsa's motif (vocal-instrumental intervention 3), accusing her of having murdered her brother. But the King wonders if indeed Elsa remains guilty of the murder and bids Telramund to reconsider his opinion; the King's declamatory melody resembles a recitative which continues with Telramund's answer on the bassoon. Telramund can't be convinced not to charge Elsa with murder, and the dialogue between the two men stops when the King decides that only God can be the judge and decide who will rule the country. The melody on bass clarinet and trombone illustrates well this conclusion (see Meier 2009: 13-14)

The last vocal intervention, which concludes the aria, ends with the woodwinds playing Lohengrin's motif again, marking thus a return to Elsa's dream. The dotted rhythm reappears, of a declamatory nature this time, suggesting hope and the certainty of being rescued. The culmination, Elsa's statement "mich glücklich soll ich preisen, nimmt er mein Gut dahin" (bar 223), slows down after the orchestra compresses and only strings, flutes and bassoons are left. Wagner comes with a melodic peak at the end, when Elsa reaches an a♭″, preparing Lohengrin's entry in scene 3 (see Meier 2009: 13-14). The melodic tension accumulates as the aria unfolds. The hope which has been present in stanza 1 is continuously questioned by the other characters, but in stanza 3 Elsa will state loud and clear (a♭″) that she is confident she will be rescued, a certainty which now nobody will any longer be able to doubt.

Throughout the aria, the focus moves from Elsa's lamentation to the mystery of the knight in her dream, as the orchestra anticipates this moment by playing the motif of the Holy Grail: the girl's helplessness is no longer under the spotlight, because her liberation is near. *Lohengrin* is not the only instance of Wagner's deciding that the female character should call her lover through a dream – he had done it before, in *The Flying Dutchman* (Senta's aria, Act 2, scene 3).

In this music drama, the orchestra is still an accompanist, and the composer is still interested in a distinct melodic line, which sets *Lohengrin* apart from his other works. Famous for the extremely difficult parts he assigns to his female

characters, Wagner chooses for Elsa a style rather closer to the Italian *bel canto* tradition, very different from his last works. Unlike Brünnhilde from *The Valkyrie* or Isolde from *Tristan and Isolde*, the challenge that this role poses is the requirement of a powerful voice, able to sustain the expressive legatos throughout this music drama; nevertheless, the stress lays not on the singer's force, but more on their ability to voice all of the role's nuances without beginning to look tired.

In fact, this scene is an abstract of the whole story of the knight and features a dramatic bridge culminating with Elsa's statement that she will give herself completely to her rescuer. In the girl's dream, the emphasis is on the lyrical melody and on the emotion-charged text, as is also apparent from the various phases Elsa goes through: despair, hope, and certitude, reminiscent of the *bel canto* tradition. The vocal range is relatively small for a dramatic soprano, from e♭′ to a♭″, but the middle register offers excellent dramatic opportunities, especially with the leaps leading to the a♭″ culmination.

Wagner often operates with keys which share the fundamental and are one chromatic half step apart, so that Elsa's motif (introduced at the beginning of Act 1, scene 2) is in A♭ major, one semitone lower than the motif of the Holy Grail from the drama's Prelude, in A major. This solution is by no means a novelty with Wagner, because the same relationship is also present in the *Ring* tetralogy – the Valkyrie are associated with B major motifs and the Nibelungs with B♭ major motifs. Far from being a coincidence, the close connection between the keys of Elsa's and Lohengrin's motifs gives away their positions: a young girl who, despite her purity, will never be the equal of a character of divine nature; as such, their love is doomed to be short-lived as early as the beginning of the work.

The amplification of the poetic scope of Elsa's phrases is also specific to Wagner. The composer uses an impressive palette of nuances to depict the girl, in a splendid comparison of her pure soul with the cunning wickedness of the two kings. The striking scene from Act 2 shows Ortrud and Telramund at night, watching, full of hate, the castle from where they had been cast out by Lohengrin, an image superposed with that of sweet Elsa confessing her feelings to the same night. The low voices – mezzo-soprano, baritone – stand for the abyss, and the soprano's voice sings high enough for the differences to imprint in the listener's mind (see Constantinescu 1979: 179-180).

As a conclusion

The monologue must come out as a unique moment, marked by individuality, accompanied by a correct reading of the score and by stylistic accuracy. As an

experience which the performer shares with the public, it is born and dies away, leaving behind, at best, an emotional transformation of the listener, as important as it is small. Music being strictly tied to the time factor, it exists only when the musician performs it. But we must understand that this draft is not a recipe for success for a young performer. The favourable outcome of a public musical act is the result of a complex equation, which is not the subject of this essay.

The objective aspect (the data the performer collects) will always conflict with the subjective aspect (the person it comes in contact with). The danger I signal in this conclusion is that of mistaking one for the other, because the objective is almost non-existent in opera. This is why the performer's psychological preparation must render him informed but flexible, individualistic but able to adapt to unforeseen circumstances.

I wished to set forth a detailed, ideal process to approaching a monologue, believing it should be part of every opera singer's concern. There is a lot of pressure and expectation today as regards stylistic and artistic musical refinement. With the basically unlimited access to information, the requirements of conductors and directors on the one hand, and of the critics and audience on the other hand, have become virtually impossible to satisfy everyone. As a paradox, there is the interesting fact that the subjectivism of any opinion, as competent as it might be, and I am talking about musical professionals, musicologists and critics, becomes law for a certain period of time and in a certain geographical area. Performing has changed its rules over time, as witness this past century's recordings. Thus, a paper such as this one is meant to offer the performer a foundation in preparing for the moment they (the producers) come face to face with the public (the receiver). By doing so, any contact the performer will establish with the conductor, the director, or directly with the public, will be facilitated, and they will have greater chances of setting foot on the path to success.

English version by Maria Monica Bojin

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