



Introduction

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There seems to be an essential relationship between performance and scholarship of the Lied. Performers often enrich their interpretative imaginations by turning to scholarship and learning more about the historical contingencies from which songs sprang, scholars are regularly invited to untangle the complexities of the Lied for concert audiences, and efforts to understand the Lied as an act of performance (rather than only as a text to be “read”) have recently intensified within the academy, placing the genre once again at the cutting edge of interdisciplinary research. Yet the process by which scholarly inquiry and practices of performance mutually benefit one another can seem mysterious and undefined. This is the case in part because the transactions between scholars and performers of the Lied that are so critical to its vitality largely take place on an ad hoc and informal basis in the library, rehearsal studio, and seminar room, or in the relatively ephemeral context of music festivals and conference workshops.

One such venue for interdisciplinary exchange among practitioners of the Lied was the Song Scholarship and Performance (SSP) Program at the Vancouver International Song Institute (VISI), held at the University of British Columbia each summer from 2010 to 2014. Conceived, organized, and led by Benjamin Binder in tandem with pianist and vocal coach Cameron Stowe, SSP brought together a faculty and student cohort of musicologists, music theorists, singers, and pianists for lectures, master classes, seminars, and performances focused on a particular theme within the Lied repertoire.¹ A special feature of SSP was a workshop format in which the entire cohort closely studied an individual song together and shared insights and perspectives in a free-flowing discussion. Binder then worked to concentrate the musings of the group into ideas with which student performers could experiment in real time, further provoking new

¹ The regular SSP faculty (other than Binder and Stowe) were musicologist Susan Youens, music theorists Deborah Stein, Harald Krebs, and Richard Kurth, and Germanist Sharon Krebs. Visiting faculty included musicologists Richard Kramer, Sherry Lee, Vera Micznik, Michael Musgrave, Kristina Muxfeldt, Rebecca Plack, and Jennifer Ronyak, as well as literary scholar Jane K. Brown. Performance faculty from VISI often visited SSP sessions and participated directly in program activities as well.

observations and creative possibilities for performance and interpretation. Contributions to the discussion were always wide-ranging in their orientation, touching upon matters related to cultural and political context, facets of the poets' and composers' biographies, textual and musical analysis, historical performance practice (including written and recorded sources), the technical dimensions of vocal and pianistic execution, trends in current approaches to Lied performance, the embodied experiences of performers, and many others.

The Lied's tendency to challenge disciplinary boundaries was further illustrated at VISI in the summer of 2011, when the student singers and pianists in the festival's other programs asked Binder and Stowe to meet with them to provide some guidance as to the scholarly resources they should be consulting when preparing art songs for performance. These students were inspired by the rich and nuanced conversations flowing out of SSP and wanted to be able to have access to that group's store of knowledge after they left VISI. Binder and Stowe came up with a few specific suggestions – Susan Youens's books on Schubert and Wolf, Graham Johnson's liner notes for the Hyperion Schubert Edition (now the basis of his three-volume encyclopedia for Yale University Press), and certain book chapters from the Cambridge Companion series and other edited collections, for example. But their main message to students was that there really is no master compendium of art song scholarship, no one-stop shopping in the library that would answer all of one's questions about a song, and that in a nontrivial sense, an art song performer has to be their own musicologist, literary scholar, and music theorist, tracking down information from an array of primary and secondary sources in order to meaningfully situate the poet, text, composer, music, and context of any given song. For their part, the musicology and music theory students in SSP found their understanding of the repertoire transformed by working with performers at such close range, as evidenced by the evolution of the texts they wrote for the SSP lecture recital concert after attending and participating in rehearsals and coachings of their assigned songs. Many of these young scholars were also active performers, and the singers and the pianists in the program had significant experience with serious musicological and analytical research as well. In this way, the students' developing professional identities themselves exemplified how the Lied inevitably brings together a variety of humanistic disciplines for so many of its most devoted adepts.

The transdisciplinary dialogue and blurring of professional identity that is so characteristic of the Lied community has yet to be expressed in published musicological scholarship in a more explicit and deliberate

way. Our book aims to address this gap. It is in the spirit of dissolving boundaries, of standing at the crossroads of performance and musicology, that the contributions to this book are made. Through the investigation of a specific song, cycle, performer, and/or performance context pertaining to the Lied repertoire of the long nineteenth century, each chapter in this book sheds light on the process by which musicological exploration may lead to new approaches to performance and vice versa. Our collection opens up diverse avenues for performative experiment and aims to inspire performers to participate in an ongoing conversation with Lied scholars interested in performance. The book is therefore less a guide to performance and more a written analogue to open-forum, experimental song coaching as practiced at SSP. It also invites musicologists to engage further with contemporary performers and performance as they pursue the questions that matter to them.

In its focus on performance, this book continues with trends that have been established over the past few decades within Lied studies. Prior to these developments, the study of Lieder was somewhat more resistant to the “performative turn” than, for example, other areas in historical musicology, especially opera studies. This state of affairs was due in part to the central importance of text–music hermeneutics as a method of revealing potential meanings within specific songs. For its time, this approach itself had been revolutionary in its interdisciplinarity; prominent scholars such as Susan Youens and Lawrence Kramer were leading figures.² Early studies of the aesthetic and cultural implications of performing Lieder included those by Christopher Gibbs, Lawrence Kramer, David Gramit, Eric Van Tassel, Reinhold Brinkmann, and Suzanne Cusick, on topics including reception, cultural meaning in performance, historical performance styles, and the feminist analysis of Lied recordings.³ This focus on performance has continued and been expanded, often involving the editors and many other authors within the present volume, as well as scholars such as Kristina Muxfeldt, Lorraine Byrne Bodley, and Paul Berry.⁴

² See, for example, Youens, *Heinrich Heine and the Lied; Hugo Wolf and His Mörike Songs; Hugo Wolf: The Vocal Music; Retracing a Winter's Journey; Schubert's Late Lieder; Schubert, Müller; Schubert's Poets*; and countless journal articles, book chapters, and other publications. See also Kramer, *Music and Poetry; Music as Cultural Practice; Franz Schubert; Song Acts*; inter alia.

³ See Gibbs, “The Presence of Erlikönig”; Gramit, “Lieder, Listeners, and Ideology”; Van Tassel, “Something Utterly New”; Cusick, “Gender and the Cultural Work”; and Brinkmann, “Musikalische Lyrik,” especially “Praxis,” 113–18. Kramer engages somewhat speculatively with performance and listening contexts in the work cited in footnote 2; see also Kramer, “Sexing Song.”

⁴ See Muxfeldt, “Frauenliebe”; Bodley, “In Pursuit”; and Berry, *Brahms among Friends*.

This earlier and more recent work has seldom remarked, however, on how the primarily historical investigation into Lied as performed might offer meaningful fodder for Lied performance as it is practiced today. While strands of such speculation can occasionally be seen – for example, in the Epilogue to Ronyak’s *Intimacy, Performance, and the Lied*, or the collection of interviews with contemporary singers at the end of Loges and Tunbridge’s *German Song Onstage* – they are still not normally the focus of musicological investigations, and performance-oriented musicology on the Lied outside of the Anglo-American sphere (including German-language scholarship) has also not typically reflected on implications for the present day.⁵ We seek to intervene directly in this discussion through the contributions to this volume, asking: “What might musicological research on historical, cultural, and aesthetic questions within performance have to offer Lied performers today? Can it inspire new ways of thinking about song for performance, presenting song in performance, or other modes of experimentation?” In this effort to rethink current performance practices or aesthetic assumptions through historical research, Loges’s recent work on the historical and potentially present desirability of breaking up cyclic works in performance forms an important starting point and inspires us a great deal in our efforts here. There have of course been ongoing investigations within the sister field of historically informed performance practice research that are also very relevant to the questions we pose; these include, most recently, Daniel-Leech Wilkinson’s project *Challenging Performance*.⁶ While the aims and concerns of performance practice research are often quite different from those that we pursue in this book, they can be seen as part of a parallel effort to connect research and performance in new ways.

When one thinks about published studies of song that reach out directly to Lied performers, instructive guides for performance may first come to mind, such as those by Deborah Stein and Robert Spillman, Richard Miller, and Shirley Emmons and Stanley Sontag.⁷ While such practical guides will always have a valuable place in the field, we seek instead in this book to model a different sort of interaction between performance and musicology: one in which musicologists investigate the issues that most concern them while keeping both past and current worlds of performance in view, and in

⁵ Ronyak, *Intimacy, Performance, and the Lied*, 215–20; Loges and Tunbridge, eds., *German Song Onstage*, 262–80.

⁶ Leech-Wilkinson, *Challenging Performance*, <https://challengingperformance.com/interviews-recordings/daniel-leech-wilkinson/>. The website describes both publications and performance projects as component elements.

⁷ Spillman and Stein, *Poetry into Song*; Miller, *Singing Schumann*; Emmons and Sontag, *The Art of the Song Recital*.

which performers share their own perspectives, whether these be related to musicological work or depart in important ways from it.

The essays in this collection provide numerous demonstrations of how musicology and performance can productively interrogate and transform long-held assumptions about the Lied held by the other. These assumptions concern topics such as *Werktreue* aesthetics and concert practices; the authority of the composer vs. the performer; the artistic value of lesser-known, incomplete, or compositionally modified songs; and the traditions, habits, and prejudices of contemporary song recitalists regarding issues like transposition, programming, and theatrical or dramatic modes of presentation. Several essays cast iconic Lied protagonists in a new light (e.g., Schubert's *Mignon*) or reveal new dimensions of meaning in classic song cycles (e.g., *Dichterliebe*, *Winterreise*, *Frauenliebe und -leben*). Many essays also show how the practices of Lied singers and pianists (both amateur and professional) can upend our entrenched view of certain songs or the repertoire as a whole through their intervention. Alternative contemporary approaches to Lied performance not yet addressed in the musicological literature, including particular examples of mixed-genre programming and theatrical interventions in the song recital, receive critical attention as well. A new picture of the Lied emerges in this volume that emphasizes the protean, migratory, and adaptable qualities of the genre as it travels across a multitude of performance contexts, such as from public to private, or from the conventional voice-and-piano configuration to choral, orchestral, and chamber music arrangements. Finally, we also confront the challenges that exist when bringing musicology and performance together, due to the persistently different central concerns of each discipline.

Benjamin Binder starts out by exploring the Lied's adaptability in the opening chapter, "In Search of Song: Richard Strauss's 'Schlechtes Wetter' between Poem, Music, and Performance." Heine's poem thematizes the very idea of interpretative adaptability as an essential dimension of poetic and artistic creativity, a core idea that Binder identifies as central to Strauss's own musical setting as well as to the additionally diverse performance approaches – which themselves tend to draw out quite divergent meanings – that have attended Strauss's song. Focusing on Elisabeth Schumann's performances of the song as part of her tour of the United States with Strauss in 1921, as well as more briefly on his own performances of the song with soprano Sari Gruber, Binder shows how these performances invite additional readings of the poem and song that would be unlikely to emerge from the text or score alone. Binder asserts that this type of investigation into performance offers a level of interpretative flexibility

for performers today, while it also questions attempts to fix meaning within musicological approaches to specific songs. Heather Platt continues and intensifies Binder's focus on a single star performer of the past, chronicling the success of the German immigrant baritone Max Heinrich, known as the "Wizard of Song," in song recitals throughout the United States from the 1880s until his retirement in 1903. What seems most to have captivated his American audiences was his steadfastly dramatic approach to singing Lieder. Platt looks closely at Heinrich's stylistic choices with respect to his own performing edition of Schumann's "Die beiden Grenadiere," in which Heinrich made slight alterations to aspects of Schumann's original score at the close of the song to highlight his own dramatic reading of the scenario. For Platt, Heinrich's evident success with his dramatic approach to Lieder, especially in songs that encouraged it the most, challenges scholars and performers today to think about how different approaches to contemporary Lied performance do or do not make the repertoire likely to appeal to a broad, diverse, and potentially large audience.

Where Platt focuses on one particular star performer's stylistic choices, Natasha Loges addresses in part the important contributions of another nineteenth-century virtuoso – Clara Schumann – in connection with her argument that we need new, flexible performing approaches to deal with the beloved but politically problematic song cycle *Frauenliebe und -leben* by Robert Schumann. In the chapter "Fragmenting *Frauenliebe und -leben*: Reading and Performing Alternative Lives and Loves," Loges first enriches the ongoing musicological discussion concerning Schumann's cycle, specifically arguing that the poems as Schumann sets them present an account of a woman's life that would have been unrecognizable to real women, including prominent women writers in Schumann's time. She goes on to suggest that one profitable way to present the cycle today would be to fragment it, allowing other instrumental works, musico-poetic perspectives from other Lieder, or even spoken poetry to offer context on the limited perspectives of the cycle's songs. Her position takes historical inspiration from Clara Schumann's own concerts involving the cycle and is supported by some modern, successful analogues. The impact of the fragmentary performance of classic cycles, as well as the role of particular performers in contributing to such fragmentation, is also taken up by Laura Tunbridge in "Robert Schumann's 'Ich groÙe nicht': Unsettling the Song Cycle." Tunbridge looks at a few interlocking issues that pull apart at attempts to firmly hold together Schumann's *Dichterliebe*, whether these concern key relationships among the cycle's constituent songs or hermeneutic arguments about the songs' ultimate meaning and tone or important turning

points in the cycle's narrative. Facts of performance practice that have long attended the cycle are central to Tunbridge's questioning of these musicological traditions. For example, when the cycle is transposed for low voice (in the version circulated during Schumann's lifetime that is practical for a lower-voice tessitura), many standard arguments about the cycle's supposed harmonic coherence must be deeply reconsidered. Furthermore, one particular song – "Ich grolle nicht" – has had such a life of its own beyond the cycle, including in the voice of the legendary soprano Wilhelmine Schröder-Devrient, that it demands an interpretative investigation beyond whatever is suggested by its place in the cycle, including matters related to voice, persona, and poetic context.

In "Schubert's *Mignon* and Reimann's *Mignon*: Advocacy and Analysis in the Arrangement of Little-Known Lieder," Frankie Perry shifts the focus away from performance traditions surrounding established nineteenth-century masterworks to the much more recent Lied arrangements of Aribert Reimann, often composed for prominent Lied performers. Reimann, a composer who has a long personal history of working as a collaborative pianist for Lied singers such as Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, has composed arrangements of groups of nineteenth-century Lieder that are inventive while also paying clear homage to the musical language of the originals. Reimann also advocates for lesser-known Lieder by canonical composers in his arrangements, including those written very early in composers' careers or that only come down to us as fragments. Perry analyzes Reimann's specific aesthetic procedure as an arranger in the case of his project on Schubert's *Mignon* settings. Perry argues that Reimann intervenes in the worlds of musicology and performance at once: He argues for the worth of works too easily dismissed as first or immature attempts and introduces prominent performers to this less-performed music in a new guise. Jennifer Ronyak focuses on new arrangements of Lieder as well in her chapter "Locating the Wanderer's Solitude in Choral and Nonsolo Performances of *Winterreise*." However, instead of taking into account new vehicles for elite solo singers, she turns to a kind of performing group yet to be explored in this collection: mixed choruses. Ronyak looks primarily at two very recent choral settings of large parts of Schubert's *Winterreise* (by Thomas Hanelt and Gregor Meyer, both of whom Ronyak interviewed), as well as a related student performance of the cycle that was given at the Berlin University of the Arts. In each case, Ronyak takes "Der Leiermann" as her central example, a striking choice for choral arrangement given the song's particularly stark sense of isolation, even in the face of the presence of the hurdy-gurdy man. Asking whether the collective forces of either a

choir or – in the case of the student singers – a small group singing unison together can offer a convincing perspective on the protagonist's solitude, Ronyak finds divergent answers based on the different musical details of each nonsolo performance scenario.

The last two main chapters emphasize how performers' advocacy and experimental performance contexts for Lieder have worked to bring Lieder by unknown women composers to the public, as well as songs by well-known composers to audiences that do not normally encounter Lieder. Stephen Rodgers, in "Analysis, Performance, and the Deep Nineteenth Century: The Case of Marie Franz," argues for the importance of following the trail of nineteenth-century Lied composers who may have published even just one short opus, in the many cases that those small public contributions are of intriguing or even stunning quality. Rodgers demonstrates this kind of historical and analytical attention to the "deep" nineteenth century by looking at several songs of Marie Franz, a woman composer for whom researchers can still produce only a meager biography. While most of Rodgers' chapter is taken up with presenting and illuminating two of the most striking of Franz's songs, the chapter also takes stock of many recent professional efforts to get lesser-known repertoire onto the stage, onto the airwaves, and into the contemporary consciousness. As in Binder's essay, Rodgers' exploration of Marie Franz's Lieder shows how traditional approaches to conceptualizing and analyzing song need not be discarded but rather may be fruitfully adapted through the prism of performance. Lisa Feurzeig, in "Crossing Boundaries: Lieder in Mixed-Genre Performance and the Intersection of Research and Praxis," recounts and analyzes a series of thematic, mixed-genre, and often extremely kaleidoscopic concert events that she produced with collaborators over the years, many of which featured nineteenth-century Lieder. Feurzeig and her codirector John Sienicki put on a series of such shows while also researching the Vienna Volkstheater tradition, two enterprises that dovetailed as the pair discovered how that tradition foregrounded improvisatory practices and diverse performance events. These shows, which emerged primarily in university contexts, also involved individuals with a range of greater and lesser professional skill in both musical and literary performance, features that could continue to inspire efforts to find new places for Lieder on today's stages. Especially important to Feurzeig's concept of concert design is the idea that historical, theatrical, literary, and poetic texts, topics, and traditions often coincided in such interesting ways that exploring these with students in very practical terms can be an excellent mode of pedagogy.

We conclude this book with the chapter “Singers Speak about Musicology and Performance,” for which we interviewed five prominent Lied singers at different stages in their careers. We asked them to comment upon both the productive and the problematic relationships that they observe between performance and musicology as both are practiced today. Our conversations both cheered and challenged us – often at the same time – and have left us continuing to ask questions about both the boundaries and fluidity between these two ways of exploring and engaging the Lied repertoire.

Our book is dedicated to Susan Youens, whose career has produced a body of scholarship that has been invaluable to both performers and musicologists for more than thirty years. Youens’s work has often laid at the heart of interdisciplinary exchange within the Lied community, and yet this particular facet of her work has largely remained hidden from wider recognition. Youens’s pioneering studies of the core repertoire, including its composers, poets, and performers, delve deeply and thoughtfully into previously unknown aspects of the Lied’s social and cultural dimensions, unearthing historical material and critical insights that continue to provide a fertile and much-needed contextual foundation for the work of performers and scholars. Youens’s passionate and enduring commitment to performers, demonstrated most obviously by her frequent collaborations with renowned singers and pianists of the Lied, is also emblematic of the kind of cross-disciplinary dialogue we extend and reflect upon in this book. In so doing, we also pay tribute to Youens, whose work both on the printed page and within the world of Lied practitioners at large has established the basis for this very dialogue. While challenges will always remain when looking for the most meaningful bridges between our respective fields, we hope that for scholars, performers, and students alike, this volume will illustrate the productive relevance of Lied musicology and performance to one another and provide useful models of the paths that can be taken back and forth between the two disciplines, opening doors of interpretative artistry and intellectual discovery.