

OPINION

by Assoc. Prof Eduard Sarfyan

on a dissertation work for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor" in a professional field 8.3. Music and Dance Art, scientific specialty Music Studies and Music Art, doctoral program Music Studies and Music Art with author

Zhang Yuan

title of the dissertation

The Influence and References of the European Classical Art Songs on the Chinese Vocal Works

Academic supervisor Prof Toni Shekerdzhieva-Novak

General presentation of the procedure and the materials presented for review

Zhang Yuan's **dissertation**, titled *The Influence and References of the European Classical Art Songs on the Chinese Vocal Works* meets the regulatory requirements for the award of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor". The candidate has presented a work of 161 pages, which in its volume and content meets the requirements for a complete and valuable scientific development in the field of vocal music art.

The **abstract** is 47 pages, in which the author skillfully synthesized essential highlights of the research, which in turn are able to fully reveal the content of the dissertation work.

The personal **artistic biography** of the doctoral candidate reveals rich artistic work accompanied by numerous prestigious awards from vocal competitions.

The **contributions** of the work listed by the author correspond directly with the goals and tasks of the research set in advance.

Brief biographical data for the candidate:

Zhang Yuan is a mezzo-soprano, professor of vocal music, deputy director of the Middle School of the Shenyang Academy of Music, visiting professor at the Hebei University of Ethnic Studies. She is currently a doctoral student at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts "Prof Asen Diamandiev - Plovdiv, under the supervision of Prof Toni Shekerdzhieva-Novak.

In 2007, she is admitted to the Shenyang Academy of Music where she receives Master's degree. She graduated in 2010 and remained at the same university as a teacher. She has participated in international and national vocal competitions many times, from which she has been awarded a significant number of prizes. She is the winner of the **Gold Medal** of the Liaoning Province Television Young Singers Competition; **First Prize** in the Teacher Category of the International Vocal Competition in Pattaya, Thailand; **First Prize** in the Teacher Category of the China-Korea International Vocal Competition; **Third Prize** in the Bel Canto Teacher Category of the Second National Competition for Teachers and Doctoral Students in Vocal from Higher Schools. Her students

have repeatedly won prizes in international and national vocal competitions. She has held numerous solo concerts, opera duets and educational music concerts. She has been invited to participate in music concerts in Singapore, South Korea, the United States and other countries. She compiled and published "Selected Songs of Aaron Copland", published two monographs and over ten articles in well-known national magazines.

The dissertation presented by Zhang Yuan is structured and formatted according to the requirements. The text is 161 pages long, including an introduction, six chapters, a conclusion, contributions, and a bibliography, including 46 titles, of which 42 are in Chinese and 4 by Bulgarian authors.

The **object** of the study is the European art songs. The **subject** of the scientific research is related to the influence of the melodic structure of the European art songs and the creative styles of the Renaissance on the formation of today's contemporary Chinese vocal art. The **purpose** of the work is based on the influence of the characteristics and achievements of classical European vocal music on Chinese vocal art. A number of **tasks** have been set, which are developed in the individual chapters and their subsections. Methods of comparison, analysis have been used and, following the factual circumstances, future trends in the aspect of international cultural exchange have been predicted.

In the **Introduction**, the author clearly and convincingly presents the object, subject, goals, tasks and methods of research in the presented dissertation work.

The **first chapter** presents the development of the European classical art songs, where the author clearly defines the definition of art song, the types of art songs and their development, examining the song work of authors such as Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, Wolf, Mahler, R. Strauss, Mendelssohn, Hugo Wolf, Gustav Mahler, Tchaikovsky and many others. Or in general terms, works by Italian, Russian, German and Austrian composers in a wide time range are examined.

Chapter two focuses on the development of the Chinese vocal music, genre, and research on vocal performance.

Chapter three examines the influence of the German art songs on the Chinese vocal works, emphasizing the style, main features, artistic value of German art songs, and the significance of Schubert's work in teaching vocal music in China.

Chapter four presents the influence and relationship between the French art songs and the Chinese vocal works, analyzing their development and stylistic characteristics.

Chapter five examines the influence of the Italian art songs on the Chinese vocal works through a similar set of methods and means used in the previous two chapters.

Chapter Six presents the influence and references of European classical art songs on the Chinese vocal works.

Contributions:

The contributions of the presented dissertation work are mainly expressed in the following aspects:

1. Building a bridge for cultural exchange between China and Europe through the dissemination and performance of European classical academic songs.

2. Chinese vocal music enriches its own musical cultural heritage by learning and borrowing from European classical academic songs, and promotes the international development of Chinese vocal music.

3. The dissertation comments on the cultural exchange between the Eastern and the Western modern aesthetics, from a historical perspective and the new ways of thinking that are opening up for musical composition.

4. The comprehensive influence of European classical academic songs on the Chinese vocal music has been proven.

5. This influence is not only manifested in the style and techniques of musical works, but also in their profound enlightenment in many aspects such as the aesthetics of the Chinese vocal art, the promotion of education, and cultural exchanges.

6. Solid prerequisites have been created for the Chinese vocal scene to continue to absorb and take as an example the advantages and characteristics of the European classical vocal music, so as to promote the continuous development of the Chinese vocal art.

Based on the above, I give my positive assessment of Zhang Yuen's dissertation on the topic *Influence and References of the European Classical Art Songs on the Chinese Vocal Works* under the expert scientific supervision of Prof Toni Shekerdzhieva-Novak. I believe that the dissertation fully meets the requirements of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria. I propose to the esteemed scientific jury to award Zhang Yuen the educational and scientific degree "doctor" in professional field 8.3. Music and Dance Art.

08.09.2024 г.

Plovdiv

Reviewer:

/Assoc. Prof Eduard Sarafyan, PhD/