The German school of singing: a compendium of German treatises 1848-1965

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Keywords: German Vocal technique, Heinrich Ferdinand Mannstein, Friedrich Schmitt, Ferdinand Sieber, Julius Hey, Bruno Müller-Brunow, George Armin, Paul Bruns, Franziska Martienssen-Lohmann, Frederick Husler

URI: http://hdl.handle.net/2022/20802

Date: 2016-04-14

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Type: D. Mus.

Abstract:
The German school of singing is often characterized by the principles of a muscular approach to respiration, an overexpansion of the chest, a darker tonal preference, fabricated laryngeal position, and an emphasis on text over vocalism. Singers, teachers of singing, musicologists, composers, and conductors rely on astute observations and intensive study of historical artifacts, including original writings, translated work, and secondary analyses to understand the German approach. English-speaking audiences typically “know” German technique through English language writings or translated versions of scholars such as Richard Miller and German pedagogues such as Marchesi, Stockhausen, and Lehmann. However, omission of some seminal writings by German pedagogues not yet translated to English limit a full understanding of both the evolution of German technique and its applicability to teaching singing today. This analysis documents the approach to singing advocated by nine German pedagogues beginning in the mid-1800’s through the middle of the twentieth century. Using original German writings from these authors as sources for this review, it becomes clear that as the German style developed, there was a desire to move away from other European techniques, particularly Italian principles, to create a unique German method. Yet ultimately, many Italian ideas remained in the German approach. By comparing the beliefs and singing techniques of important German authors, a chronological appraisal of German style identifies the essentials of a German school of singing. These include Italian fundamentals of diaphragmatic-costal breathing, elastic tension of the breath musculature, imposta (breath-resonance connection), chiaroscuro tonal quality, an importance of head voice in blending registers, use of consonants in balancing a tone, and a gestalt approach to singing. These principles were modified to fit German preferences and taste.

Files in this item

Name: Whitener, Joshua

Size: 1.411Mb
Format: PDF

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The German Confederation (German: Deutscher Bund) was an association of 39 German states in Central Europe, created by the Congress of Vienna in 1815 to coordinate the economies of separate German-speaking countries and to replace the former Holy Roman Empire. It acted as a buffer between the powerful states of Austria and Prussia. The Brothers Grimm, who compiled a massive dictionary known as The Grimm, also assembled a compendium of folk tales and fables that highlighted the storytelling parallels between different regions. Karl Baedeker wrote guidebooks to different cities and regions of Central Europe, indicating places to stay, sites to visit, and giving a short history of castles, battlefields, famous buildings, and famous people. How To Germany Newsletter Sign-up. German School System. German public education makes it possible for qualified kids to study up to university level, regardless of their families' financial status. The German education system is different in many ways from the ones in other countries, but it produces high-performing students. The overwhelming majority of German students attend public schools. The whole German education system, including the universities, is available to the children of bona fide expatriates. The catch, of course, is that the classes are conducted in German, which is usu...